Third Sector Politics in the New Local Governance

Tanya Suzanne Merridew

"There has been a loss of strategic control. Local democracy is being destroyed under the guise of community empowerment. We need to get an ideological grip on the relationship between local government and community before expediency leads us somewhere we don't want to be. Theoretical explorations of this question need to be fed into the political process before it's too late."

(Councillor Sheffield City Council, 1997)

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acknowledgements

Summary of Thesis

This thesis explores the operation of third sector politics within the changing context of local governance. Throughout the history of urban policy the concept of community has formed a recurrent, if fluctuating theme (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993; Raco, 1998a). Recent literature has tended to assume the emergence of a new local governance characterised by restructured local political relations. A related strand of thinking suggests that within this new context, the community role has been elevated. The recent turn to community seems to present a vision in which public participation is something of a panacea to secure successful and lasting urban regeneration and more effective local governance.

The tendency within the literature has been to focus on new institutional configurations rather than the detailed operation of the new arrangements. This thesis seeks to assess in detail how the third sector is engaging in processes of local governance and the mechanisms that support this. The research focuses on the fine-grain of spatial and institutional representation of community interests and the form and function of community politics. It develops this focus through a specific concern with the operation of community politics and the constitution of governance roles through two in-depth case studies conducted in the North-East. These provide contrasting examples of third sector organisation and co-ordination, thus highlighting the locally distinctive nature of third sector politics. The thesis concludes that attempts at specifying changing local governance and models of community engagement have tended to ignore the complexity of community politics. Therefore, it is argued that future theoretical developments need to address these complexities in order to capture any change in the form and nature of local political relations in general and third sector politics in particular.

Contents

Part IV Case Studies

Chapter 5: The Politics of North East Regionalism

Chapter 6: A Study of Third Sector Politics in South Tyneside

Chapter 7: A Study of Third Sector Politics in Newcastle's East End

Part V   Conclusions

Chapter 8: Conclusions

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Changing urban governance and the turn to community

This thesis explores the development of community sector politics within contemporary frameworks of urban policy and urban governance and the possibilities and constraints of community involvement. It is widely held that Britain has entered a new era of urban policy and a new terrain of urban politics with some commentators declaring that this has opened up new opportunities to 'bring the community back in' (Robinson and Shaw, 1991) and for increased community engagement in local decision-making. This reflects the return of community to mainstream urban policy (Atkinson and Cope, 1997: 202) driven by central government localism. However, as Cochrane states there is a tendency for government to,

> "... use 'community' as if it were an aerosol can, to be sprayed on to any social programme, giving it a more progressive and sympathetic cachet." (in Atkinson and Cope, 1997: 202)

Some commentators also suggest that these shifts signal new possibilities for community empowerment (Davoudi and Healey, 1995; Mayer, 1995). Although other commentators have been reticent about the notion of community empowerment, (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994; Barr, 1995; Nevin and Shiner, 1995) there has been considerable debate over the new opportunities for more active involvement by the community sector in local governance. For example Davoudi (1995a: 229) notes the 'considerable local leverage' which has been exerted through partnership programmes. The increased concern with community arises amid a growing literature focused on the emergence of 'a broader and more fragmented governance' (Valler et al, 1998: 3). These changing modes of city governance reflect broader changes in social and economic structures. The term governance expresses the shift away from the 'universalist hierarchical welfare state' to a system that encompasses a much broader range of local actors and a fracturing of agency responsibility (Davoudi, 1995a: 226). For some the reconfiguration of local institutional frameworks has opened up local policy processes, for example Harding claims that:

> "Local governance is...about different interests clarifying what they want for or out of particular places, assessing how feasible their desires are, courting those interests who might support their objectives, bargaining with others on what place their desires might have within a wider urban development agenda and setting up formal or informal coalitions with others to achieve at least some of their aims." (1995: 49)

This indicates some of the important changes occurring in the management of urban areas (Healey, Cameron, Davoudi, Graham and Mandani-Pour, 1995), however, according to

1

Harding such changes remain under-explored within the literature on UK urban politics. Whilst broad readings of the shift towards governance note the institutional fragmentation, declining local authority influence and an increasing role for the private and third sector engagement in policy making and service delivery, this obscures detailed differences in process and outcomes. The processes of change are spatially and temporally distinctive and in some cases marked by institutional stasis (Mayer, 1995: 244). Therefore, although processes of local state restructuring have been regarded as a 'revolution' (Audit Commission, 1998: 1) debates over restructuring are underpinned by fundamental questions about the precise form of state restructuring and the nature of more localised policy-making. These themes form the context for developing an understanding of the ideological shift towards community and the increasing emphasis upon community engagement in public policy reflected across a range of policy spheres and initiatives. Urban policy in particular has been framed as undergoing a 'sea change' since the introduction of City Challenge in 1991 (Davoudi, 1995; Raco, 1998b).

City Challenge emphasised the need for 'local initiative' to benefit local people (Atkinson and Cope, 1997: 210). Subsequently the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), effective from 1994, continued to stress the importance of local initiative enacted through partnership between the public, private, community and voluntary bodies. It was claimed by the DoE (1995: 22) that community sector involvement in regeneration would result in better decision-making, more effective programme delivery and sustainable regeneration programmes - claims reiterated by the in-coming Labour government. In 1997 the Regeneration Minister Richard Caborn declared:

> "The government places great importance on the real involvement of local communities in the whole range of regeneration activities. It is important to the success of regeneration programmes to involve as many people as possible. This can lead to better decision-making, enhanced programme delivery and improved sustainability." (in Raco, 1998b: 3)

This highlights the cross-party appeal of partnership and community (Eisenschitz and Gough 1993) and some practitioners have argued that the introduction of the SRB has led to an overwhelming consensus amongst policy makers and practitioners such that it seems the 'end of history has come to urban policy' (Planning, 1997: 1202).

Whilst current policy is infused with the rhetoric of community involvement this is by no means a new concern. Salmon notes that whilst urban policy initiatives have ascribed some importance to the concept of community since 1968, this relationship has fluctuated (Nevin and Shiner, 1995: 309). Recently Raco has argued that 'urban policy in Britain has long been characterised by circumscribed and fluctuating institutional structures of community involvement' (1998b: 2). Eisenschitz and Gough describe the relation between urban policy and community as cyclical arguing that 'community tends to reappear in just those periods

when it is most under pressure, especially in times of economic crisis' (1993: 143) (1). A review of UK public policy reveals the ascendancy of community during the 1960s with the rediscovery of poverty (Hoggett, 1997: 8) and the parallel expansion of the community work profession (Taylor, 1995).

Whilst the principal of state welfare provision remained intact there were increasing concerns over unmet social needs in areas characterised by persistent deprivation. The growth of local campaigning groups, for example around public housing, helped to raise awareness of inequalities and combined with a belief that public involvement could help increase policy effectiveness. Whilst campaigners focused on the question of how to improve resource distribution, government policies tended to view 'urban problems' from a social pathology perspective (Stewart in Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 349). This perspective centering on notions of the 'cycle of deprivation' and 'culture of poverty' stressed the failure of individuals and families to manage poverty (Stewart and Taylor, 1995). Given the extent of welfare provision the dominant explanation given for continuing poverty was the behaviour of individuals and families and the communities in which they lived. For Eisenschitz and Gough (1993: 7) poverty was understood as being reinforced through a number of local factors, such as housing and environment, which contributed to the experience of poverty, thereby justifying locally targeted interventions. Although the social pathology model did not appear to constitute a foundation for encouraging community involvement in policy processes, Hoggett (1997: 9) notes the links drawn between the experiences of poverty and the need for community development strategies.

Initiatives to tackle deprivation founded upon the social pathology model included the Community Development Projects (CDPs) which were set up by the Home Office and ran from 1969 - 1978. Whilst community development strategies may have used participation as a means of averting potential problems (Taylor, 1995), the CDP, which gave impetus to many grass roots initiatives during the 1970s, ultimately challenged the notion of 'ameliorative social pathology' (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997). Various reports produced by CDPs highlighted the limitations of locally based solutions to poverty and the structural causes of deprivation. By the 1970s grass roots pressures were increasingly influencing community organisation and participation, often supported by local government decentralisation (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997) and the expansion of local authority led community work. Community workers developed a renewed interest in political education and urban social movements, such as feminism which highlighted the 'personal as political' around issues such as play and health (Taylor, 1995: 102). The increasing importance of the state within community development, illustrated by local authority decentralisation initiatives, has been interpreted as a means of 'social control' (Cockburn, 1977; Craig, 1989) or as 'strategies of incorporation' (Hoggett, 1997: 9) responding to growing discontent and conflictual relations at the local level.

3

From the 1980s attention was increasingly drawn to other forms of social division such as race and gender. These themes were taken up through municipal strategies of decentralisation centering on community identities beyond place and emphasising equal opportunities. However by the 1980s Taylor notes the 'unraveling' of the community concept, paralleling the breakdown of the 'monolithic' state marked by growing struggles between central government and the local state (1995: 103). The initiation of privatisation programmes under the Conservatives, the capping of local authority spending and increasing public dissatisfaction over local services led to an increasingly defensive local authority stance:

> "They sought to gain public support for their services and role, some developing decentralisation policies and new opportunities for participation in local decision-making in order to bring their services closer to their constituents. Many authorities provided resources to community organisations, while left-wing authorities in particular developed equal opportunities policies to improve access both to services and jobs for marginalised groups." (Taylor, 1995: 103)

However, Thatcherite antipathy toward local government resulted in a curtailing and redirecting of resources away from local initiatives toward centrally implemented programmes. The abolition of the GLC and other metropolitan counties signaled a significant demise in local experimentation and was symbolically important in the curbing of local government activities. Hoggett asserts that under Thatcherism community became a metaphor for the withdrawal or absence of state provided services (1997: 10). Thus, for example, policies dubbed community – such as community care – called for individualised and privatised solutions to care provision. This combined with an explicit challenge against community organising through Thatcher's declaration against the existence of society. In the realm of urban policy increasing priority was being given to the importance of property and physical regeneration over and above social concerns.

The next major re-positioning of public policy around community occurred during the late 1980s and early 1990s when there was growing hostility towards property-led urban policy and increasing concern over social and economic marginalisation. The effective exclusion of local communities from local economic development processes or its benefits was, for example, openly criticised by the Church of England in Faith in the City (Commission on Urban Priority Areas, 1985). Moreover towards the end of the summer of 1991 'urban riots' had broken out in Cardiff, Oxford and on Tyneside (see Campbell, 1993). Politically and economically the dominant model of property-led regeneration was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. Subsequently, renewed concerns with community have formed one

element of the partnership approach to urban policy in the 1990s. The fluctuating interest in community and its implementation as part of different political projects highlights both the adaptability and ambiguity of community (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993; Eisenschitz, 1997) - characteristics that render analysis and interpretation highly problematic.

1.2 Community as a Contested Concept

'Community' and 'community action' have long been contested concepts within social science (Cater and Jones, 1989; Keating, 1991; Newby, 1980). Noting this confusion surrounding the meaning and uses of the term community some have questioned its analytical validity (Cockburn, 1977; Hoggett, 1997; Stacey, 1969). For Hoggett the notion of community is infused with power and is therefore a 'continually contested term' (1997: 14) however as a policy with 'no enemies' it has become enshrined within various policy initiatives seeking to address the 'urban problem' (Cater and Jones, 1989, 181-182). Hence, any investigation into third sector politics requires an appreciation of the historical ambiguity and analytical limitations of the community concept.

In 1955 Hillery declared that the community concept embraced 'a motley assortment of concepts and qualitatively different phenomena' (in Stacey, 1969: 136). For Williams the complexity that surrounds community arises from tensions between the historical development of the concept based upon a sense of direct common concern and modern applications portraying particular modes of common organisation (1976: 66). The earlier usage referred to either social groups or certain forms of relations based upon shared interests, characteristics or identities. The more recent development of community emerged in the 19th century in the context of industrialisation and a desire to re-establish more immediate or local social relationships, reflected for example through experiments in alternative forms of group living. On the subject of community Williams concludes:

> "What is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organisation (state, nation, society, etc) it seems never to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term." (1976: 66)

Whilst criticising a tendency to romanticise the past, Newby (1980) argues that persistent concerns over the loss of community and the desire to rejuvenate community provide a continuing rationale for empirical investigation. Newby identifies distinctive uses of community as a criticism of industrial society, as localism and as a tool through which to indicate the effects of rapid social and economic change. The first usage reflects a concern for the loss of community that emerged in 19th century Britain founded upon and a nostalgic tendency to mourn the loss of close-knit relations (1980: 5). According to Newby, the Romantic Movement of the late 18th and early 19th century adopted the emblem of community to signal the demise of the rural idyll. From these foundations have emerged

5

enduring cultural associations of the greater authenticity of rural relations. The notion of community as localism refers to the demise of 'locally-based social relationships in determining the lives of local inhabitants' (1980: 8). However in this application Newby notes a tendency to substitute actual local social relations with the desire for more localised relationships and the renewal of community relations to promote social stability. This *ideological* use of community often ignores the quality of such relations, which Williams has described as the 'mutuality of the oppressed', portraying instead idealized, harmonious relations (Newby, 1980: 9). Underpinning this is the assumption that the quality of human relations depends upon reinstating territoriality and local social structures. The third use of community surrounds the breakdown of traditional working class neighbourhoods socially, economically and physically. In particular from the 1960s the demise of community has occurred through the collapse of the industrial base and through physical redevelopment of traditional working class areas. This 'whittling away' of traditional working-class communities built around coal mining, shipbuilding and iron and steel has led to the decline of:

> "...the strong sense of shared occupational experience, the distinctive sub-cultures, the overlapping loyalties between workplace and neighbourhood and the closely-knit cliques of friends, workmates, neighbourhood and kin which many of the inhabitants understood community to mean." (Newby, 1980: 11)

From these three strands the normative and thus ideological aspect of community is apparent - bound up within the concept of community are value judgements about the way that society should be and idealistic notions about how society has been in the past. This idealism permeates recent attempts to return to or re-build community in order to 'overcome contemporary social malaise' (Evans, 1994: 106). Thus Hoggett concludes that in considering community its 'imaginary dimension' is as important as any other (1997: 6).

Such insights begin to reveal the historical ambivalence and emotive elements of community that render definition so difficult. Notwithstanding this difficulty a vast array of definitions can be extracted from the literature – Hillary in 1955 identified ninety-four (Newby, 1980: 13). Despite this apparent complexity Newby argues that it is possible to distill the various definitions into three distinctive categories. First, community is used to denote a 'fixed and bounded locality', second a 'local social system' and third a 'type of relationship' (1980: 13). However even these different uses remain problematic. Using community to refer to a locality fails to indicate the nature of relations that exist between different members of that locality. The use of community to indicate a local social system refers to sets of social relations existing to a large extent within a locality. Whilst this may seem to offer more analytical potential, again, the nature of those internal relations remain unexamined. Newby refers to the third sense of community as 'communion', a type of a social bond, or common identity evoked through the notion of community spirit. He argues that this has been the most widespread use of community. However, overall Newby

acknowledges that both academic and policy discourse often blur these distinctions. Central government policy recognises a distinction between interest groupings and spatial communities (DoE, 1995: 7-10) but then tends to deploy community simply to denote the target area of regeneration strategies.

One important influence in debates over community remains the work of Tönnies. His work in the 19th century distinguished between *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* to refer to the different social relations or forms of human association characterising pre-industrial and industrial society respectively. For Tönnies industrialisation threatened the stability created through intimate and rigid *gemeinschaftlich* relations often associated with the church or family. Newby highlights the saliency of Tönnies work in understanding the contingent nature of locality:

> "...*gemeinschaft* relationships were linked to the 'community of place' only in so far as those who affirmed a 'community of blood' (kinship) and a 'community of mind' (friendship) wished to live a reasonable proximity." (Newby, 1980: 15-16)

This understanding of community extends beyond territoriality however, and lends itself to confusion between a local social system and relations of communion. Also historically, additional confusion has arisen through the hi-jacking of Tönnies model as a device for describing social relations in the form of a rural – urban continuum. Assumptions that that 'where people live determines how they live' (Newby, 1980: 23) began to be challenged through community studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s. For example Young and Willmott's 1957 study 'Family and Kinship in East London' revealed a high degree of stability and homogeneity in Bethnal Green supported by kinship networks. Conversely, Pahl's 1965 study 'Urbes in Rure' of commuters revealed the extent of mobility, anonymity and isolation in rural Hertfordshire. This work helped to disengage the assumed relation between community and locality and helped open up questions about the relationship between locality, local social system and communion. According to Newby:

> "...geographical milieux may help to determine social relationships through the constraints which they place on people's access to one another and on scarce material resources...if social relationships and institutions are constrained in such a way to render them locality-based there may be a local social system – or mostly self-contained community – where spatial factors have some effect upon social relationships." (1980: 29)

For Newby this situation arises *not as a result of particular features of the locality* but due to the inability of inhabitants to establish relations outside the locality. This position has some resonance with more recent work (Cox and Mair 1988, 1991) which uses the concept of local dependence to reflect the interest which various actors have in the reproduction of particular social relations within a locality. Harvey (1989a) has been concerned with how spatial forms influence development of social processes and to a degree institutionalise

7

them. This approach builds around the central question raised through the locality debate of in what ways locality is important in the development of social relations.

During the late 1970s commentators began to question whether a sense of communion constituted a basis for a new urban politics. This drew upon the question of whether locality-based social networks could be mobilised in the form of community action (Newby, 1980: 36). However, there were also concerns that community was being eclipsed through the erosion of local autonomy via centralisation processes. From this perspective there was a concern that 'parallel vertical ties to centralised decision-making bodies (were) replacing the horizontal ties of local autonomy' (Newby, 1980: 33). This dual concern with the operation of social networks, their role in local political processes and potential undermining has resonance with more recent debates. In particular the interpretation of state restructuring as opening up a new localism has created renewed interest in the concept of networks and the creation of horizontal linkages. One strand of the 'network debate' focuses on the building of 'social capital' through community networks. In some ways it appears as though debate has come full circle.

At various stages in the evolution of commentary on community it has been suggested that given the analytical weaknesses of community the concept should be abandoned altogether (for example Evans, 1994; Stacey, 1969). Stacey proposes an alternative approach based upon an analysis of institutions and their inter-relations within specific localities. Stacey argues that the presence of inter-related locality-based institutions may signal the existence of a local social system worthy of investigation (2). In this case local social system refers to the way that different institutions operate and the processes or social mechanisms involved in connecting different institutions (1969: 141). Stacey's insights have particular salience given the recent interest in institutional approaches by regulation theorists and others (see for example Healey, Cameron, Davoudi, Graham and Mandani-Pour, 1995; Healey, 1997; Raco 1998b).

Recent debates exploring urban governance have paid particular attention to the role of institutions and the operation of institutional relations and networks. However, this work does not necessarily abandon the community concept in order to take up these alternative theoretical concerns. Rather, it might be suggested that frameworks including a concern for community and for institutions and networks are being used to explore new patterns of governance. One reason for retaining the concept of community is that despite the confusion which surrounds the term it remains of 'practical and ideological importance' (Newby, 1980: 37). Evidence from public policy over the past fifteen years would certainly seem to support such a claim. As Healey (1997) has argued, local ties do remain important and by seeking to open up questions of community it may be possible to gain insights into

the processes of social change and the way in which macro processes impact upon locality (Newby, 1980). Given the ambiguous nature of community, highlighted in the above discussion, it is important to specify the particular context and specific processes through which community engagement is taking place (Newby, 1980; Eisenschitz, 1997; Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). It is only through exploring the precise conditions under which community is being implemented that its role can be analysed and interpreted. One of the key features of the contemporary concern with community is its positioning within localist agendas as part of new local partnership arrangements.

1.3 The Context

The current context for the emergence of new institutional frameworks and new forms of urban politics is the restructuring of the state and local state. In Britain this has occurred within the broader framework of global economic restructuring, the increasing mobility of capital and the political project of neo-liberalism. Shifting patterns of social, economic and spatial relations are manifested in and supported by the structures of governance and new sets of urban politics (Davoudi, 1995a). Eisenschitz and Gough (1993, 1998) highlight the way in which these new politics have developed in particular around local economic initiatives (LEI). The growth of LEI constitutes one element of a neo-liberal project seeking to establish new societal values as previous norms and structures of socialisation have unraveled (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Key to the recasting of relations between state, capital and labour has been the 'withdrawal' of the nation state from economic regeneration and the expansion of LEI and the politics of locality. Within the new politics of LEI, welfare concerns elide with or are subordinated to economic concerns. An important aspect of the neo-liberal project has been the attempt to impose new values on society, undermining universal principles of welfare provision, which are substituted for locally differentiated LEI. New relations between the state and civil society are marked by a new local politics characterised by collaboration between different interest groups and partnerships involving different elements of the private sector, the state and voluntary sectors.

This re-positioning of policy initiatives around the third sector, through LEI and the diminution of state welfare provision has been subject to various interpretations. The promise of LEI is to help build an efficient local economy based upon co-operative relations characterised by consensus and democracy (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1998). For some therefore the process of institutional fragmentation and new localist agendas offers potential opportunities for local government and community politics (Healey, Cameron, Davoudi, Graham and Mandani-Pour, 1995; Mayer, 1994, 1995). Others however have argued that these changes signal the long-term decline of local government autonomy (Cochrane, 1993; Lovering, 1995). A new emphasis upon locality and political pluralism has arisen alongside claims that increased capital mobility requires regions and cities to become increasingly

competitive to ensure their economic survival. This is reinforced through the system of competitive bidding for funds, as exemplified through City Challenge and SRBCF (Ward, 1997).

An important emergent strand of theory is that of institutionalism, emerging through the 1980s and 1990s- developing understanding of the social, economic and political and the interplay between economic decisions and dominant cultures. The institutional turn, though more sensitive to action-oriented accounts, whilst stressing the importance of and multi-faceted nature of agency rejects the notion of autonomous individuals. It rejects both the notion of the individual as autonomous actor and simply as subject of structural forces, and recognises the embeddedness of individuals in webs of social relations. These webs form around organisations including the household, firms, government and voluntary groups interact with one another and how these organisations are stimulated through people contextualised within certain social relations that lead to strategies and procedures

> "In this activating work, an organisation is connected to, and embedded in, the webs of relations which form the social milieu of the various participants."
> (Healey, Cameron, Davoudi, Graham and Mandani-Pour,1995; 18)

Governance studies focus on the way in which specific arrangements of governmental and extra-governmental institutions, organisations and practices may address political tensions (Jessop, 1995). Whilst theoretical insights into these new configurations vary in their interpretations some key themes have emerged (Lovering, 1995). In particular is a concern with fragmentation and complexity.

Major institutional changes have occurred through, and, are reflected in changing approaches to urban policy and economic development. Despite the erosion of local government autonomy in the 1980s there is a sense in which localities are expected to carve out their own economic and social destiny and so it has been suggested that urban governments must seek to develop,

> "...an institutionally based set of local networks and alliances through which wider, global, economic forces can be better 'held down' at the local level."
> (Raco, 1998a: 957)

From this perspective future economic prosperity is dependent upon strong institutional relations. Amin and Thrift (1995) express this as 'institutional thickness' and Healey et al (1995: 279) as 'institutional capacity'. This links to the broader theme of localism which permeates current academic and policy discourse highlighting a new role for the local as a dynamic economic, social and democratic space (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 359). According to Lovering (1995: 111) this new localism, stressing the importance of cities in creating their own economic futures has transformed government, the corporate and

voluntary sectors. Institutionalism and localism have converged through claims that the appropriate organisation of institutional relations is the foundation for economic success, the site from which changes will emanate (Raco, 1998a) and requires the mobilsation of local actors to develop locally-based strategies and solutions. Thus the local terrain is no longer just a terrain of struggle (Massey in Lovering, 1995) but also of opportunity (Jones, 1997). As cities and regions have become increasingly concerned with external issues of place marketing as a means of securing their place within the restructured global economy, a parallel shift has occurred in the internal (re) construction of place. Community is now an important element within processes of internal relationship building:

> "...the apparatus of local governance gets on with the practical business of constructing 'community' out of the institutional and personal material to hand." (Lovering, 1995: 118)

Lovering, amongst others, suggests that although this discourse of localism has been influential, it is also 'misleading' (1995: 110). In particular, institution building does not necessarily equate with economic success. And whilst Lovering notes the growth of competitive urban policy which has led to the dominance of place marketing in LED and community-building he questions both the content of strategies and the outcomes. Moreover this approach has tended to underplay the political nature of urban policy and the importance of central controls (Ward, 1997). Thus Lovering concludes, there is a fundamental difficulty of trying to organise around place when ' the economic and social meaning of place is becoming increasingly problematic' (1995: 124) (see also Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Thus, there is a need to locate changing patterns and processes of governance within:

> "...the context of wider processes of economic and political restructuring." (Cochrane, 1993: 3)

Within this context concerns have arisen over the nature of community sector engagement in urban political and state restructuring. Community is becoming increasing central to new forms of welfare delivery and contributes to a re-casting of political attitudes and norms. The emergence of localist agendas and an emphasis upon collaborative politics has led to claims that there is a new and elevated role for community within urban politics. Whilst this new localist scenario may appear to offer a greater degree of pluralism a number of commentators have expressed caution (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994; Eisenschitz and Gough, 1998; Lovering, 1995; Peck and Tickell, 1994). In particular new opportunities are likely to be bounded by pressures to subsume conflicts of interest for the greater benefit of the locality. This is reflected in new institutional structures of governance, such as public-private partnerships, which are core to current urban policy and which increasingly need to demonstrate evidence of community and voluntary sector involvement.

Partnerships are a core institutional mechanism through which community involvement is being mediated, and the degree to which partners are involved in the construction of urban policy depends on 'the way in which these institutional relations are constructed' (Raco, 1998b: 3). Despite the long association with urban policy and its current elevation, partnership, like community, remains a somewhat elusive concept. Given the ambiguity of partnership (Mackintosh, 1992) definitions tend to rest on broad generalities such as:

> "...a coalition of interests drawn from more than one sector in order to prepare and oversee an agreed strategy for the regeneration of a defined area." (Bailey, Barker and MacDonald, 1995: 1)

Whilst Mackintosh's influential work on partnership stresses the benefits that may arise from partnership working including synergy and budget enlargement it also acknowledges partnerships as sites of negotiation. This indicates the varied interests and tensions often at the core of multi-agency regeneration partnerships. Partnership working is therefore associated with a number of practical, political and pragmatic problems (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 351). Furthermore, fundamental concerns have arisen regarding the institutional and political context within which partnership is being implemented (Peck and Tickell, 1994). In contrast to the notion of a devolved localism, Peck and Tickell suggest that:

> "...new local partnerships will tend to be fragile, corporatist-style coalitions, constructed with a view to getting one over the competition and, above all, getting the money." (1994: 253)

Despite these critiques, partnership like community is of ideological and practical importance in contemporary policy contexts. Additionally, new partnership arrangements provide the institutional framework through which it is being claimed that opportunities are arising for a new community sector politics. This reinforces the idea that central government is creating a significant impetus towards a more reinvigorated community politics. The third sector involvement has been extensively promoted by New Labour drawing upon communitarian ideas. Twin themes of policy are the importance of community and citizenship (DETR, 1998). One of the key themes of the new Labour administration has been the building of citizenship. This has been at the heart of the recent White Paper Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People (DETR, 1998) which stresses the need to forge new links between local authorities and their communities. Driver and Martell (1997) argue that:

> "New Labour sell community as the hangover cure to the excesses of Conservative individualism." (Driver and Martell, 1997: 27)

For Driver and Martell this appears to signal the reinvention of government through collective action in the community (1997: 26). However Kearns argues the recent concern with citizenship has its genesis in a Thatcherite interest in citizenship that emerged in the late 1980s (1992, 1995). Policies couched in the language of citizenship were according to Croft and Beresford (1992) a means of discharging responsibilities rather than developing

needs and rights based agendas. However others have seen the opening up of potential opportunities for community empowerment, as Eisenschitz and Gough (1998) remark, local pluralism promises to empower disadvantaged groups. Thus for some empowerment is an idea 'whose time has come' (Clarke and Stewart, 1992: 18) and it has been declared that without 'community empowerment...urban policy cannot hope to succeed' (Labour Planning and Environment Group, 1994: 3). Thus interwoven into debates surrounding the role of the third sector in local governance is the theme of community empowerment. However Stewart and Taylor (1995) note there is a complex relationship between involvement and empowerment and that attention needs to focus on the pre-existing conditions upon which the empowerment agenda is being over-laid. Whilst Cochrane (1994: 132) suggests that a cynical view is probably a be-fitting response to claims about potential empowerment he concedes that fragmentation may 'encourage the growth of more challenging politics'. Crucially, following Stewart and Taylor (1995) the degree to which City Challenge or SRB may act as mechanisms of empowerment depends firstly upon the attitude and approach of public agencies and secondly on the ability and attitude of third sector organisations to respond to the new context.

The ambiguity that surrounds 'community' is reflected in official policy discourse (Atkinson and Cope, 1997: 211). This parallels the lack of clarity surrounding partnership and the lack of consensus amongst policy-makers or practitioners over the meaning of community consultation, empowerment or capacity building. Further in requiring community involvement central government compounds a lack of clarity with a lack of understanding of the community sector and its needs (Skelcher, McCabe, Lowndes and Nanton, 1996; Taylor, 1997). This is perhaps unsurprising given the diversity within the community and voluntary sector (Knight, 1997; Taylor, 1997). One manifestation of this is the tendency within policy to conflate the community and voluntary sector and treat them as a unified entity, despite recognition of distinctions between them (DoE, 1995) (2). Following the Community Development Foundation (DoE, 1995) community groups are seen as being predominantly operated and controlled by volunteers made up of local residents. Voluntary groups, operate on a not for profit basis but are more formalised and may not rely upon volunteer labour. The Community Development Foundation has however also noted a blurring of this distinction through the phenomena of 'bridging organisations' containing elements of both (DoE, 1995: 9). This ambiguity by the state in it's treatment of the community and voluntary sector may reflect the dynamic nature of relations between the state and community and voluntary sector, Knight concludes "...there is nothing fixed about voluntary action: what it does or how it relates to the state." (Knight,1993: 26). However central government requirement for community involvement is not the only dynamic that is shaping community politics within contemporary governance, there are also grass-roots pressures.

In general there is an assumption apparent in the literature that although there may exist barriers there is potential for a reinvigorated third sector politics exercising increasing influence in urban policy processes. Whilst there may be questions over precisely what role has been carved out for the third sector, debate has focussed on the ability of communities to respond to the demands being placed upon them or to exploit these new opportunities. This has been reflected by a growing interest in 'community capacity building'. The DoE (1995: 129) define local capacity as the building of individual, institutional and infrastructure development and community empowerment. This is to be achieved through a mixture of skills, knowledge, resources, power and influence, which according to the rhetoric ensures that the community sector can play an active role in policy implementation and service delivery whilst it's structures remain responsive to local needs. For Putnam (Taylor, 1998: 826) the existence of social capital in the form of networks, capacity, and experience underpins effective local government. In turn social capital is regarded as being dependent upon traditional small-scale community activity. Taylor recognises both the importance of informal networks or 'power circuits' in legitimising the representative function and holding formal organisations to account and the need for resources to support such networks. For Healey (1996) social capital – the building of trust, shared norms and networks of communication provides the foundation for intellectual and political capital. In Healey's analysis 'institutional design' (arenas and processes) is important for fostering collaborative capacity.

Despite the widespread desire for capacity building the problems of developing and sustaining community and voluntary sector engagement have long been noted (for example see Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997). The first of these is the problem of who the community or third sector are. Following Dalby and Mackenzie (1997: 101) local communities may not exist 'in a pre-given form' and are often constructed around a specific issue. Additionally, Brent argues that community as a tool of representation and social policy is something which has been imposed from the outside rather than as a 'authentic self-generated local manifestation of identity' (1997: 69). Following Harvey, the ambiguity of community means that there may exist different or conflicting interpretations, or alternatively:

> "Well founded communities can exclude, define themselves against others, and erect all sorts of keep-out signs." (quoted in Raco, 1998a: 7)

Thus community excludes as well as embraces and is often marked by splitting within communities (Brent, 1997: 73). Indeed, the complexity and multi-dimensional character of community in contemporary settings may compound these exclusionary tendencies. As Crow and Allen argue:

> "...contemporary community life, with its interlocking networks of differentiated relationships, is as much about division and exclusion as it is about integration and inclusion." (quoted in Churchill Everitt and Green, 1997: 116)

Additionally Collins (1997) argues there are complex relations between language, social identity, and the different local and national contexts in which contests over community take place. Questions thus arise over who defines community and what makes the social and political identities of communities in specific contexts and how this is achieved. For Ball and Stobart 'ideas of community identity are flexible, dynamic and ever on the move" (1997: 128), highlighting the problematic nature of constructing or inventing community. They argue that the potency of community identity depends upon community history and strength of shared experiences, emphasising the spatial and experiential coherence of community. They conclude that where there are disputes over different community constructions (for example communities of action or identity) it is usually the local authority version that dominates. For Brent (1997) community practice is always ambivalent (see also Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993) and may either present opportunities for marginalised groups or act as a tool for exerting social control (1997: 80). Additionally, place may involve different ideas of community and different sets of community practices (Brent, 1997: 70). This ambivalence means that unpacking the meaning of community depends upon analysing particular struggles in specific times and places.

Raco (1998b) contends that current weaknesses in the development of local community politics stem from the powers and representative structures of new institutions, and an overriding concern to provide political legitimacy for urban regeneration agencies. Thus, drawing on Colenutt and Cutten (1994: 239), the nature and effectiveness of community involvement in partnerships is an ambiguous issue:

> "...community politics in any given area is fraught with divisions, tensions and conflicts." (Raco, 1998b: 7)

Raco concludes that varying opportunities and difficulties created by regeneration programmes have helped produce differential community interests. Thus further research is required into different types of communities established in different contexts due to variable constraints and opportunities. Such claims help to highlight the *construction of community interests* through partnership relations, rather than as a pre-given entity.

In contrast to claims of empowerment Eisenschitz and Gough argue that the emergent brand of pluralism is one of 'restricted choices' (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1998) and that the local specificity of policy both reduces potential politicisation and undermines universal values associated with welfare state provision. Thus current versions of pluralism being enacted through new institutional structures offer only limited forms of democracy. They contend that the fragmented local state helps to reduce demands and expectations and that networks and quangos reduce rather than enhance local accountability. For Eisenschitz and Gough this new fragmentation is a means of managing class struggle as opposed to the democratising potential highlighted by others such as Mayer (1995).

For Eisenschitz and Gough (1998) the dominance of capital and its mobility cannot be assumed and therefore in some places it may not be able to dominate local policy agendas. This ties in with claims by Cox and Mair over local dependency (1993, 1995) discussed above. These insights suggest that the nature and form of local partnership relations will arise through the interaction between broad processes of economic and state restructuring and the specific local conditions of particular localities. Eisenschitz and Gough (1998) seek to emphasize the importance of local contingency in shaping the outcome of new institutional structures and policy processes. They stress the need to focus on the contingent factors regarding the specific struggles and particular strategies being adopted. There is a need to specify precisely emergent patterns and processes of governance and how this varies across localities where outcomes will vary due to the interaction between structural constraints and specific contingencies. This combines an insight into how interests are mediated and represented within the micro-politics of social action (discourse, language organisation of arenas of interaction) and the processes of agenda construction. Analysis therefore needs to explore who is controlling the processes, what contingent processes are occurring within the overall structural constraints and how sustainable emergent governance relations are. This suggests a need for fine grain research to explore precisely how and in what ways third sector politics may be evolving as part of the new relations of governance.

Mayer (1998) identifies two main theoretical frameworks through which to analyse community politics. The first is through theories of urban politics and the second is through drawing on the urban social movement (USM) literature. Whilst the former constitutes the analytical basis of this thesis, the distinctions between the two are not very exacting and it is worth reflecting on some of the main themes of the latter. Whilst a prime motivation for the development of new institutional relations and politics has been driven by central government, it has been argued that there has been a tendency to down-play the complexities of a community sector movement, which is not simply a one-way, top-down process (Eisenschitz, 1997). The literature on urban social movements, a collectivised form of citizen involvement, may contribute to explaining how new forms of community involvement are arising. Both Harvey (1973) and Castells (1976) in their analysis of USM link the allocation of urban spaces with the formation of homogenous neighbourhoods and the formation of USM which then seek to control a larger share of resources (see Newby, 1980).

The essence of social movements is as a challenge to the form and content of dominant policy promoting new values, ideologies, and understandings. One definition offered is that:

> "Social movements are collective social actors defined by both their (dis) organisation and their aims. Although movements may encompass organisations with dues-payers and membership lists, their overall structure is not fixed and is forever in process of becoming - movements are emergent

phenomena. Their aims are always oppositional to established power, but the specific content of their objectives and whether their stance is resistant or transformative, reactionary or progressive, may shift according to their content and internal development." (Fainstein and Hirst in Stoker, 1997: 182)

Different authors cite the increased significance of social movements in the 1960s (Keating, 1991) and 1970s (Lowe, 1986) and the growth of grass-roots activism. This growth in activism has been linked to the increasing remoteness of local authorities and an increasing contribution by community organisations to political life. However in the UK context the legacy of economic restructuring has been the "...decline of working class involvement in local forms of political representation and a reduction in the legitimacy attributed to them" (Clarke in McCulloch, 1997: 58). Highlighting the gender-divided nature of political representation, E.P Thompson commented in 1970 on the decline of the institutions which were the 'the sinews that bound that male-dominated working class community together- the trade union, the friendly society, the working men's club, the co-operative society' (in McCulloch, 1997: 58). Thus McCulloch notes,

"The organisationally fertile working class of the past did not need community development: it has its politics." (1997: 58)

More recently however it has been claimed that processes of economic and political restructuring have reinforced the position of social movements. Although there may be reduced opportunities for opposition politics (Cochrane, 1993), Eisenschitz argues the lack of political representation and the failure of urban policy has given new impetus to social movements:

"Disadvantaged communities are increasingly aware of the failure of attempts to help them and consequently are adopting bottom-up policies aimed at their empowerment which broaden the canvas upon which they operate." (Eisenschitz, 1997: 162)

Thus previous collectivist concerns are being replaced by a new emphasis upon enhancing local democracy:

"Grass-roots movements attempt to renew the libertarian impulse...these are the new social movements that have arisen in the wake of the death of socialism, the assumed disappearance of the working class and the emasculation of local authorities." (Eisenschitz, 1997: 183)

Although keen to distinguish between social movements and other third force organisations, Stoker (1991) recognises there has been a blurring between the former and the latter. This has occurred through the over-lapping of broad-based protest organisations and small-scale community-based welfare projects as community and voluntary groups become drawn into partnership processes (see Stoker and Young, 1993). Thus although integral to the new relations of governance, and sometimes evolving through central and local government initiatives Keating contends that growing pressures of pluralism arising through social movements have created 'a major problem for city governance' (1991: 83).

Mayer (1995) claims that social movements can play a key role in determining local outcomes via processes of bargaining, negotiation and struggle in new and expanded local political arenas. Again, however the ability to respond to the demands being made varies from place to place (Keating, 1991: 93). Fainstein and Hirst argue that social movements extend the boundaries of local politics, however, they may often only have a limited impact and have a tendency to become absorbed into the mainstream, a problem made more acute by dependency upon public money (Stoker, 1997: 182). Further, internal tensions and varying sets of interests may undermine coalitions with other groups, which are necessary for exerting political power (Keating, 1991: 88). Lowe reflects on the problem of developing relations:

> "...one of the main problems facing new local movements is precisely how to penetrate or harness established networks of associational activity, which are often informal and relatively unstructured." (Lowe, 1986: 64)

Additional problems arise through attempts to 'divide and rule' community activists and without tangible successes groups may fall apart (see Taylor and Hoggett, 1994). According to Keating successful groups may also get diverted into more technical or administrative procedures, or co-opted into more clientistic or corporatist arrangements with local political elites (1991: 93). Thus an important dimension to the analysis of urban social movements are the institutional forces and processes which help to undermine social conflict (Lowe, 1986). Whilst the USM literature provides important insights into the underpinnings of community action and group mobilisation, this thesis is primarily concerned with the patterns of community engagement emerging through contemporary urban politics. It does not explore in-depth the motivations for the emergence of community interest groups nor the motivations of individual community activists. Thus the theoretical framework builds primarily out of models of urban politics.

1.4 Summary

This introduction to the thesis has set out the claims regarding a new era of urban policy and urban management. Related to these shifts are claims about a new, elevated role for the third sector. Whilst the terms of this debate are imprecise reflecting both the nature of the third sector and the conceptual tools upon which much of the literature relies, the practical and political importance of the sector remains. However more work is required to explore the precise roles of the third sector – detailed exploration of how it is becoming involved and what role it is playing. Following Raco (1998a) analysing the processes of third sector engagement may offer materials through which to reflect upon the nature of emergent local governance.

Specifically the thesis aims to specify the changing politics of community involvement in and around urban policy through which new sets of urban politics and structures of urban policy are emerging. The research - seeking to evaluate new pattern of community engagement in local governance and the implications for third sector politics - explores different theories of urban politics and examines claims about new modes of co-ordination and community engagement in local political processes. These theoretical insights are located within the broader framework of regulation theory which provides an overarching analysis of the restructuring of the state and within which some specific claims have been made concerning community politics. Thus Chapter Two sets the overall context and considers contribution of regulation theory. Chapter Three reviews different theories of urban politics and sets out some key models concerned with contemporary third sector politics. However the theoretical review reveals the paucity of research exploring concrete manifestations of community. The research examines the changing organisation and relations within the community sector and the changing relations between the state and the community and voluntary sector in order to reflect upon the potential promise or limitations of community governance. Additionally it provides a window on how new institutional relations are being constructed (Raco, 1998) in the shift to a supposed broader local governance. The following chapter considers potential bridges between broad restructuring approaches and the transformation of urban politics and community politics in particular. In particular one of the weaknesses of perspectives on LEI (Eisenschitz and Gough 1998) and in discussions of the community and voluntary sector have been the under-theorisation of the state. However regulation theory has sought to address this and within this writing some key claims have been made about the nature of emergent urban politics and the implications for the community sector.

PART TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 2: Regulation Theory, State Restructuring and Third Sector Politics

2.1 Regulation Theory and Urban Politics

This chapter considers how broad narratives of restructuring may inform work on changing local governance and the ascendancy of third sector politics. In particular it sets out the main contribution of regulation theory and explores its development in the UK context and application to urban politics. The review of regulation theory helps to situate the work and to define the limits and tasks of the thesis. Thus the chapter provides an overview of regulation theory, how it has developed and its application to urban politics. Whilst acknowledging the critiques of early regulation theory and its application to urban politics, and subsequent developments in the regulation approach (1), it sets out some of the important claims which have been made with regard to the third sector.

Regulation theory was developed in France during the 1970s through the work of Aglietta (2). The central concern of regulation theory was to explain the durability of capitalism and, in particular, how existing capitalist social relations are reproduced despite inherent internal contradictions. Aglietta argued that since reproduction is not guaranteed, it depends upon the ability to regulate the omnipresent contradictions (Painter, 1991). This occurs through 'structural forms' which:

> "...act to regulate and stabilise the accumulation of capital and the reproduction of capitalist social relations." (Painter, 1991: 24)

These structural forms are understood as 'complex social relations, organised in institutions' which are the result of previous class struggle (Jones, 1994: 3). Thus the reproduction of capitalism occurs through a series of 'historical-institutional epochs' within which the capital-labour relation is reproduced (Peck and Tickell, 1992b: 348). This is expressed through the concept of regime of accumulation, built upon the 'twin pillars' of an accumulation system or dominant mode of economic growth and the mode of social regulation (Tickell and Peck, 1992a: 192). The regime of accumulation, regulated by a set of structural forms, denotes a relatively stable, crisis-free phase of capitalist development. Whilst defined in a variety of ways, modes of regulation or modes of social regulation (MSR) are "...the historical and contingently determined socially embedded institutions, complete with networks, social norms, customs and laws" (Jones, 1997: 835) (3). The MSR can be viewed as the dominant ensemble of relations, institutions, norms and practices anchored in particular places at

20

particular times (Goodwin et al, 1993: 73). The MSR acts to secure the reproduction of the dominant accumulation system over the medium term by 'accommodating, mediating and normalising crisis tendencies' (Peck and Tickell, 1992b: 349), albeit on a temporary and partial basis. The MSR and accumulation system are autonomous systems which become stabilised together through chance discoveries rather than deliberate action, resulting in 'structural coupling' thereby creating relatively stable blocs (Jessop, 1990: 328). Thus where stabilisation does occur it is 'the contingent outcome of social and political activities' (Painter, 1995a: 278). Inevitably however the regime of accumulation breaks down as tensions and conflicts build up due to fundamental antagonisms at the core of capitalist social relations. Subsequently new forms of structural coupling between accumulation and regulation may arise, the precise form being historically and geographically contingent.

Whilst regulation theory is primarily concerned with economic change, political processes play a key role in these explanations. Therefore Painter (1995a) argues that regulation theory has the scope, although not fully realised as yet, to contribute to the analysis of urban politics. Painter identifies three main reasons why regulation theory has potential use in urban political analysis. First it provides a context within which to locate urban political change by providing an overview of economic restructuring and the changing role of cities associated with this. Second, regulationist accounts seek to explore the interconnections between changes in political, economic and socio-cultural spheres. Thirdly by viewing economic change as being 'partly the product of, changes in politics, culture and social life' (1995a: 276) it avoids the problems of economic determinism associated with structural Marxism which accord only a secondary status to political processes. Additionally, Painter argues that the regulationist concern with transition between historical epochs helps draw attention to the dynamic nature of political institutions and processes and hence may contribute to historically embedded accounts of urban politics (1995a: 282). Through acknowledging the dynamism of urban politics, regulation theory may offer the prospect of helping to uncover qualitative changes in the institutions and processes of urban politics. It is useful to explore the way in which regulation theory has developed and thus to consider how it has been applied to the study of urban politics. Regulationist analysis of transition has to a large extent been predicated upon the notion of a putative shift from Fordism to some form of post or neo-Fordism. Following from the above discussion the claimed breakdown of Fordism has implications for urban politics and in turn changes in urban politics impact upon the processes of transition. The interplay between these processes has become of increasing interest to regulationists.

2.2 A Transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism?

Regulation theory provides a powerful narrative of economic transition and has in part been provoked by recent economic restructuring. Within the UK regulationist literature there has been a tendency to express this re-casting of relations as being a shift from Fordism to post-Fordism. As Peck and Tickell argue, early regulation theory treats Fordism and the putative shift from Fordism, as being something of an 'article of faith' (1992b: 347). Debate has tended to centre on the notion of a paradigmatic shift from Fordist mass production and consumption to some form of post-Fordism (Hoggett, 1987; Stoker, 1989, 1990). In the UK this transition has its origins in the 1970s and the emergence of economic, social and political crisis arising from the breakdown of inter-linked elements of the post-war consensus. According to Hall and Jaques the post-war consensus was comprised of various, far-reaching and inter-locking settlements underpinned by economic and social innovation. These formed part of:

> "...the twin pillars of the postwar settlement: a modernising capitalism and a
> labour and democratic movement intent on social and economic reform." (Hall
> and Jaques, 1989: 25)

The development of new industrial technologies allowed for the mass-production of goods. The new industrial structures were embraced within a broader economic settlement committed to full employment and mass consumption. In the social sphere, key welfare and educational reforms were introduced including the setting up of the NHS and a major public house-building programme was undertaken. New social settlements included the (re)ascendancy of patriarchal relations, including the (re)domestication of women and new political settlements evolved in party politics through to international relations. These settlements remained largely intact until the 1970s when the long post-war boom of the 1950s and 1960s, characterised as 'Fordism', began to disintegrate (Peck and Tickell, 1992b: 348; Esser and Hirsch, 1994: 76). Increasing unemployment and inflationary pressures combined with falling productivity and profitability. The viability of the Keynesian welfare state came under increasing scrutiny as it failed to fulfil its role in minimising cyclical recession (Peck and Tickell, 1992b: 348). The modernisation of British capitalism domestically has been unequal to overseas competitors creating internal tensions that were exacerbated by the oil crisis in 1973 and the subsequent IMF intervention. The effect of these processes was to expose long-term structural weaknesses in the British economy resulting from the slow pace of modernising British capitalism (Hall and Jacques, 1989: 29). These economic problems led to and were compounded by political crisis. The emergent political struggles were expressed through disputes in the labour movement and conflict over public expenditure constraints. As Cochrane (1994: 119) argues in the UK 'economic failure and political failure were closely linked'.

Regulation analysis has been concerned with the search for new forms of production and complementary regulatory institutions. In particular one strand of this has been with a post-Fordist scenario of flexible labour processes and flexible production. Thus some commentators have focussed on the possible emergence of flexible specialisation characterising the production process and new flexible firms. Following Aglietta (Painter, 1991: 32) a key aspect in the emergence of a neo-Fordism is the development of a new regulatory ensemble. This includes changes in the labour process, specifically the reorganisation of the production of goods and services so that the costs of reproducing labour power are reduced. Thus privatisation processes are central to this new neo-Fordist scenario.

Whilst much of the early regulationist work has been based upon the claims of a putative shift from Fordism to post-Fordism this characterisation has been widely critiqued (see Hudson, 1989; Sayer, 1989; Cochrane, 1993; Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Hudson (1989), for example, is unconvinced by the notion of a paradigmatic shift given the experience of the older industrial regions (OIRs) which displayed only a partial shift to Fordist patterns of mass consumption. Thus, Fordism can therefore at best be seen as an ideal type, unevenly reflected sectors and localities. Eisenschitz and Gough (1993: 169-170) are also critical of the notion of an 'epochal change from Fordism to flexible accumulation, which fragments, decentralises and informalises not only production but social life and culture'. They conclude that individualistic enterprise, co-operative relations and localised culture characterised as post-Fordist are the result of capital mobility, centralisation, global markets and class conflict, traits regarded as Fordist. Sayer (1989) provides various critiques of the post-Fordist debate in particular arguing that it hinges on the 'uncertain' concepts of Fordism and Fordist crisis. For example he questions to what extent analysis has successfully shown the crisis of capitalism to be one of Fordism - since the problems he argues are not internal to the system but based in the forces of global competition. He also questions the notion of flexibility arguing that 'capitalist industry has always combined flexibilities and inflexibilities' and that current processes may just be creating 'new permutations' of this (1989: 671). His main objection is however that economic success is not based upon 'relative commitments to mass production or flexible specialisation but to do with broader 'environmental' characteristics' which lie in the realm of education, the forms of capital, state-capital relations, the nature of the labour market and culture (1989: 691). Despite concerns over the theoretical validity of the post-Fordist concept, it remains influential within regulationist discourse, with more nuanced approaches being developed. One of the ways of exploring the links between regulation theory and urban politics is by exploring the changing forms and institutions of the state and local state and the shifts in urban policy.

2.3 Regulation Theory and State Restructuring

In considering the role of urban politics in specific MoR Painter (1995) highlights the importance of the welfare state in Fordist MOR:

> "...in many ways it is analysing the link between the welfare state and the urban arena that regulation theory has the most to offer the study of urban politics." (1995: 282)

Despite acknowledging the difficulties of 'operationalising the concept of Fordism', Jessop sets out the different ways in which the putative transformation to post-Fordism and a post-Fordist state can be understood (1994b: 253-254). First, through changes in the labour process, and, a shift away from the dynamic of mass production. Second, through changes in the mode of macro economic growth. Third, through changes in the social mode of economic regulation, including a shift away from collective consumption. Finally, through changes in the general patterns of social organisation, for example through the decline of the nuclear family household and social collectivisation (4).

Jessop argues that capital has sought increased *flexibility* in response to problems of resistance by organised labour, the stagnation of mass production, competition from low-wage economies, falling productivity and increasing welfare costs. In the sphere of macro economic growth this has been translated into strategies of flexible and permanently innovative patterns of accumulation and new organisational patterns. In relation to the social mode of economic regulation, post-Fordist characterisations are based on supply side innovations and flexibility expressed through 'leaner, flatter, more flexible forms of organisation' (1994a: 20). Changes in structural forms and regulatory processes seek both to manage the crisis of Fordism and escape from it. Thus the crisis of Fordist accumulation and the destabilising and crisis of the Fordist KWS has led 'a fundamental restructuring and strategic re-orientation' of the state (Jessop, 1994b: 251). Given the critical relationship between processes of international economic restructuring and domestic political strategies,

> "A key analytical task is, therefore, to distinguish the particular ways in which political strategies intersect with the underlying processes of restructuring." (Hoggett, 1994: 43)

Jessop identifies two dimensions to state restructuring; first the shift from a KWS to a Schumpeterian Workfare State (SWS) and second a 'hollowing out' of the nation state. According to Jessop the SWS seeks to secure social and economic reproduction on the basis of innovation in production and markets to strengthen national structural competitiveness through supply side interventions. As part of this process social policy concerns are subordinated to the needs of labour market flexibility and/or constraints of international competition. This 'productivist re-ordering of social policy' (1994: 24) has been marked by a break in commitment to full employment and re-distributive welfare. For some,

these transformations signal the possibility of a 'new times' (Hall and Jacques, 1989) based upon a re-organisation of societal structures (Goodwin et al, 1993: 67). The nature of this societal restructuring is the subject of ongoing debate. According to Hall and Jaques (1989) the crisis which emerged in the 1970s was to provide the impetus for two central developments. Politically, a key transitional event was the election of the 1979 Conservative government, marking the failure of the Left to establish a new modemising agenda. This created the political space in which Thatcherite strategies for dismantling the post-war settlement could be asserted. This combined with a second dimension of change: the search for new regimes of accumulation (Hall and Jaques, 1989: 32). In particular, multi-national companies were seeking to meet the increasing pressures of international competition leading to a restructuring of the UK economy. Thus the emerging Thatcherite project both facilitated and was given momentum by restructuring processes, providing a basis for a re-casting of economic, social and political relations.

Various elements of the Thatcherite neo-liberal programme sought to deliver new modes of societalisation promoting new norms, attitudes and expectations. This included education policies stressing training and enterprise, strategies to promote popular capitalism, for example through small business policies, self-employment and the expansion of home ownership and a re-modelling of social institutions around themes of customer satisfaction and value for money. This distinctive brand of neo-liberalism (Duncan and Goodwin, 1988) has been characterised as an attempt at privatising social relations through expanding and de-regulating the private sector and encouraging a more entrepreneurial culture. Such strategies were reflected in institutional relations and norms of conduct, which help regularise economic relations (Jessop, 1994a: 30). New relations and practices were carved out within the state such as the introduction of more flexible working practices and decentralised structures. Workfarist style programmes were designed to reintegrate the unemployed and welfare functions were increasingly seen to be the remit of the community and voluntary sector. Under the ideology of citizenship there was a re-invigoration of the informal sector including the redefinition of women and families as care providers and the expansion of a devolved voluntary sector (Kearns, 1995). In one speech Thatcher declared:

"I believe that the volunteer movement is at the heart of all our social welfare provision. That the statutory services are the supportive ones, underpinning where necessary, filling the gaps and helping the helpers." (quoted in Wolch, 1990: 6)

25

2.4 A Post-Fordist Shadow State?

Whilst there is little work on the third sector in regulationist accounts, some relatively recent work on the voluntary sector has produced some interesting insights and some broad reflections on the re-negotiation of the relationship between the state and the third sector. According to Wolch (1989, 1990) there is a lack of analysis regarding the reasons for voluntary group existence and the extent and basis of geographical variation in voluntary activity. Further, the political and economic role of the voluntary sector remains largely unexplored:

> "Research shows a paucity of political-economic analysis of the voluntary sector, particularly studies of the relationship between voluntary organisations and the state." (1990: 4)

Wolch argues that analysis has tended to neglect the ways in which voluntary initiatives may influence state policy and, how state structures and strategies, in particular times and places, influence the structure of the voluntary sector and it's ability to effect social change (1990: 14). Due to the 'longstanding *institutional interdependence*' (1990: 15) between voluntary organisations and the state, Wolch claims that state restructuring has culminated in the formation of a 'shadow state':

> "The voluntary sector has in effect become a shadow state: that is, a para state apparatus with collective service responsibilities previously shouldered by the public sector, administered outside traditional democratic politics, but yet controlled in both formal and informal ways by the state. The shadow state may be seen as a 'corporatist' strategy, designed to create 'partnership' with components of civil society, and necessary to the continuing legitimacy of the state." (1989: 201)

The history of the state and local state relations with the voluntary sector is characterised by fluctuation and complexity. Voluntary organisations, as the original providers of welfare services, especially housing and health, were gradually over-shadowed by the burgeoning state sector. This shift to state provision was aided by criticism that voluntary institutions were overly paternalistic and unable to meet the growing demand for welfare services. The consolidation of the welfare state led to the voluntary sector adopting new campaigning and co-ordination roles, for example through the creation of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

The pursuit of national planning by Labour led to tensions with local authorities over reduced local autonomy (King, 1995). The growing influence of the professional during the 1950s and 1960s was also a threat to local political autonomy as the calibre and expertise of elected representatives came under increased scrutiny (Gyford, 1985). Yet, the 1960s also witnessed a growing discontent with welfare state services and a renewal of interest in the voluntary sector as service providers. The welfare state was increasingly viewed as over-

bureaucratic and wasteful leading to ineffective governance. There was a gradual return to voluntary sector involvement in the delivery of health and social services, this time however, under the control of central government:

> "In the 1960s and 1970s, the central government began to incorporate the voluntary sector into the welfare system via a variety of outreach, institutional co-ordination and funding efforts." (Wolch, 1990: 84)

Local government re-organisation in 1974 led to important changes in the internal organisation and processes of local government (Butcher et al, 1990). The process of creating larger administrative units, justified through claims of efficiency, was accompanied by the rhetoric of adopting more business like practices in the running of local government. Butcher et al (1990) claim that this both undermined the influence of some professional groups and, advanced the notion that community problems could be resolved through developing more corporate management structures. During the 1960s and 1970s closer relations began to evolve between the state and the voluntary sector. Whilst the state began to exert more control over voluntary bodies, national voluntary bodies were becoming more actively involved in state policy-making. At the local level new welfare pluralism was to be supported through co-operative partnership arrangements supported by decentralisation strategies. Butcher et al suggest that although the changes were largely 'cosmetic' they added to the remoteness of local government, entrenching the process of 'bureaucratic paternalism' and elevating the status of local level party politics creating increased political conflict (1990: 23).

The radical political responses enacted through Thatcherism were predicated on claims that the welfare state had removed various activities from the reach of market forces thereby creating inefficiency and bureaucracy. The 'selective dismantling' (Wolch, 1990: 16) of state welfare and increasing emphasis upon the voluntary sector formed a key tenet of Thatcherism. Central within New Right ideology was the notion of 'rolling back the state' to encourage free markets, self-help and enterprise. Such rhetoric built upon moral claims that the welfare state had created a 'dependency culture' (Hall, 1989). Thatcherism sought to re-order 'public and private responsibilities for social welfare and economic growth' (Wolch, 1990: 91). The voluntary sector was regarded as 'more flexible, innovative, and efficient' than the 'cumbersome' state sector (Wolch, 1990: 93), delivering welfare in a more responsive way. Additionally it was claimed that the re-ordering of welfare services would help reduce public expenditure. Such policies reflected the Conservative values of individualism, self-reliance and voluntary initiative (Wolch, 1990: 94). The state was portrayed as a residual service provider filling the gaps left by the voluntary sector.

Whilst state restructuring and privatisation have created possibilities for the voluntary sector, it has also created new sets of problems and constraints:

> "Such use of voluntarism as a local state political and policy instrument (bolstered, oddly enough, by central efforts to 'strengthen the voluntary sector'), further necessitated the central state controls placed on voluntary bodies during the 1990s." (Wolch, 1990: 107)

Cuts in public expenditure, portrayed as a necessary macro-economic strategy to reduce inflation and increase the competitiveness of British capitalism, were targeted at local authorities thereby forcing cuts in capital expenditure and labour-intensive services (Wolch, 1990: 93). The voluntary sector has been an integral component in the restructuring of state relations under Thatcherism. It's role in delivering policy has been elevated whilst simultaneously attempts have been made to restrict it's deployment by politically antagonistic Labour authorities. Consequently, the voluntary sector has become caught in a tension between incompatible local and central government motivations and expectations. For Wolch the result of these 'conflicting demands' has been the increasing politicisation of the voluntary sector (1990: 17). Although Wolch understands the voluntary sector as a 'newly contested terrain' (1990: 4) in the processes of state restructuring there may also be ways in which the 'shadow state' is helping to absorb some of the tensions surrounding the state. For example from a regulationist perspective the voluntary sector may be an important element in the search for 'post-Fordist' flexibility, responsiveness and innovation. As a political strategy the shadow state may help break down universal welfare provision but in a politically acceptable way that stresses, for example, increased responsiveness to particular needs. Additionally, although there is some debate over the cost of voluntary sector service provision, the sector has traditionally been characterised as relying heavily on unpaid and low-waged labour and having erratic working conditions:

> "...these labour process characteristics enabled substantial flexibility in state utilisation of voluntary organisations as service providers" (Wolch, 1990: 94).

The curbing of local state spending has reduced some sources of voluntary sector finance, whilst privatisation processes and central government funding have created new opportunities for some elements of the sector. The principle change in the relation between the voluntary sector and state is the new contractual 'partnership', paralleling calls for local authorities to adopt more strategic or 'enabling' roles. The new financial provisions to support the voluntary sector (Wolch, 1990: 97) have been accompanied by new administrative procedures disadvantaging the smaller, less well financed organisations (Knight 1993, 1995; Wolch, 1990). Additionally, Croft and Beresford suggest that the cost of broadening of voluntary sector responsibilities has been increasing state penetration into the management and priorities of voluntary organisations justified on the grounds of efficiency and accountability (Wolch, 1990: 95). The expansion of the voluntary sector as 'junior partner' in welfare provision has taken place within certain parameters influencing its nature

28

and activities:

> "...establishing public authorities as the senior funding 'partners' seriously
> undermined the autonomy of the voluntary sector. This loss in autonomy
> occurred as organisations conformed to state-mandated guidelines about their
> service delivery and financial activities, and they were subject to increasing
> scrutiny with respect to political activism." (Wolch, 1990:101)

Such claims are in contrast to the ideas of flexibility, responsiveness and innovation which are supposed characteristics of some post-Fordist futures. In summary, the changes enacted through Thatcherism and continuing through the present administration have led both to expansion and restriction of voluntary sector activity. However the changes have affected different parts of the sector differentially, working against smaller, less formal agencies. The re-invention of the voluntary sector, as an alternative to local government, is claimed to offer the prospect of a more responsive and economical route to welfare provision. However, Taylor (1996) questions the impacts upon voluntary sector organisation and activity whilst Knight concludes that a 'protean and hard to classify' voluntary sector is undergoing privatisation (1995: 3). Eisenschitz (1997: 165) who argues that to the Tories the voluntary sector was a 'stepping stone to the privatisation of welfare' echoes this. A similar view is taken by Knight who concludes:

> "In ten years time we are unlikely to be talking about the voluntary sector. The
> differences between the private and voluntary providers in the community care
> market are ...much less than might be imagined. Moreover those differences
> are likely to reduce in the future with the creation of an independent sector.
> The problem for the independent sector is that it will be dependent on state
> money." (1995: 5)

This raises critical questions about relationships of dependence between the community and voluntary sector and the state, and how far it is possible to conceive of an autonomous third sector. Moreover, the implications for the sector have been obscured by the ambiguity that surrounds the whole notion of the voluntary sector which like community has widespread political appeal (see Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). According to Wolch different rationales are used in support of the shadow state encompassing both ideological and pragmatic positions. At an ideological level the shadow state is presented as a being a devolved alternative to the crisis-ridden state. Pragmatically the right (neo-corporatist) justifies this development as offering efficient and flexible service delivery without increasing the state apparatus and is politically expedient since groups are incorporated in the political process. On the left the shadow state offers the promise of a welfare pluralism which is co-ordinated, participative and meets local needs. The shadow state analysis raises important questions about the changing relations between the voluntary sector and the state. Wolch suggests that this changing relation has created a new politicisation of the voluntary sector as part of struggles between the central and local state. This exemplifies the importance of local politics in shaping the final outcome of these struggles. Regulation theorists have

29

increasingly begun to explore ways to approach the analysis of the local state and local politics.

2.5 Regulation Theory, the Local State and Urban Policy

The crisis of the welfare state in the UK was also 'fundamentally a crisis of local government, which has led to a substantial restructuring of the local welfare state' (Cochrane, 1994: 121). Regulation theorists have developed a concern with the relationship between broad processes of economic transition and emerging patterns and processes of local governance (Mayer, 1995: 241). Some of this work stems from the ESRC Local Governance Research Programme, set up to explore theoretical and empirical concerns relating to the restructuring of economic and political institutions and relations. The aim of comparing and contrasting different theoretical approaches to new regimes of urban and local governance (Hay and Jessop, 1995) was premised upon the assumption that a growing range of non-governmental actors have increased power and influence within local arenas (Goodwin & Painter, 1995: 345). The restructuring of the state and local state and the accompanying institutional changes have led to the emergence of new political forces at the local level. There is a relatively new but growing body of work seeking to apply regulation approaches to local government and the local state. Within this work by Goodwin et al (1993) explores emergent forms of urban politics arising in connection with the changing role of the local state.

Whilst the analysis of links between economic, social and political processes within regulation approaches may provide potential tools for urban political analysis (see above discussion), Goodwin et al argue these tend only to be dealt with in a very generalised way:

> "...the actual manoeuvres, processes, and relations through which economic and social forces are translated (often untidily) into state activity are rarely examined." (Goodwin et al, 1993: 68)

Thus rather than overemphasise the impact of national processes upon the local state they seek to explore in detail how social and economic forces are reflected in state activity and to identify the qualitative changes occurring in the nature of local politics (1993: 69). They argue that 'locally differentiated spaces of regulation' occur not just as a result of the interaction between spatial structures and social relations but also because:

> "...local agencies are often the very medium through which regulatory practices are interpreted and ultimately delivered." (Goodwin et al, 1993: 69)

They attempt to re-focus the debate by arguing that dramatic changes in the general style and content of urban politics have produced varied outcomes in different places and seek to analyse the changing nature of regulation at the local level. However there is something of a

tension in their work, which demonstrates the power of national processes and the loss of local autonomy.

The local state is viewed as part of an ensemble of institutional relations, which collectively contribute towards regulation. Thus Goodwin, Duncan and Halford (1993) examine state and non-state regulatory forms in their study of Sheffield, Bracknell and Camden in order to explore connections between the local state and specific local social, cultural and economic conditions. They argue there is a need to spatialise regulation theory through theoretically integrating processes of uneven development with an understanding of the role of local agencies in interpreting and delivering regulatory practices and relations:

> "...instead of regimes and modes rather abstractly floating around in some general sense we can picture then as an ensemble of relations and institutions that are anchored in particular times at particular places." (Goodwin et al, 1993: 73)

The analysis focuses on how regulation operates at the local scale, the interaction between practices of regulation and accumulation and how local spaces of regulation fit into wider political and economic structures. They explore social and political issues within a framework of uneven development by developing a concern with the mode of regulation through mid-level concepts of societalisation and structured coherence (5). The mode of regulation – the dominant institutions and practices comprises both structural (organisational) and strategic (discourses and perspectives) 'moments'. Goodwin et al (1993) note the key role played by the local state under 'Fordism' in sustaining both of these moments. This included the organisation and delivery of welfare and the maintenance of consensual politics that were core elements of the Keynesian welfare state (KWS).

According to Painter (1995) although there is a lack of regulationist analysis regarding the functions of urban government and local level institutions of the state under the Fordist MOR, this was a central element in the operation of the KWS. Urban government was involved in providing elements of the social wage in the form of goods and services, such as council housing. This helped to subsidise the cost of labour reproduction and so help maintain consumption levels. Additionally, the state was involved to a large degree in economic and social planning often through urban government. Thirdly, one element of the Fordist MOR was the provision of infrastructure systems to assist in the reproduction of labour. Finally, the organisation of local state institutions under Fordism was characterised by hierarchy, centralisation and the dominance of procedural concerns. Hoggett (1987) suggests that urban government was able to provide a limited range of standardised services to the local population. However as Painter notes (1995: 284) these organisational features could not be assumed to be a necessary element of the Fordist MOR.

31

In addition to organising and providing services the local state also reproduced strategic moments of the Fordist MOR by reinforcing sets of ideas and consensual politics which were core to the KWS. For example Goodwin et al note that Fordism and the KWS were built upon patriarchal norms:

> "...the welfare state is not just a set of services, it is also a set of ideas about society, about the family and about women, who have a centrally important role within the family, as its linchpin." (1993: 72)

In addition to these features of urban government, Stoker (1989) emphasises the importance of political processes in sustaining the Fordist mode of regulation, with local elections providing some legitimacy to Fordist arrangements and some organised sections of the working class gaining increased political powers albeit within certain parameters.

One theme of concern within these debates is the changing function of urban governmental organisations in the shift from the KWS to the SWS (Painter, 1995: 288). Following Goodwin et al (1993) restructuring has involved both a re-shaping of institutions and strategic discourses. They identify the importance of the state and local state in developing new modes of regulation - which due to uneven development requires planning and management at the local as well as national level – reflected in the varied practice of the local state. The structures and strategies, or institutions and relations, of the restructured state are vital in attempts to regulate the current crisis. However the state is itself subject to regulation, so that the dominant structures and strategies contribute to the forging of new social and political settlements (Goodwin, Duncan and Halford, 1993: 84). Whilst Jessop has expressed this as a shift from KWS to SWS, shifts in the form of local state activity are uneven, producing variation in regulatory forms and processes and thus influencing local politics. Overall Goodwin et al (1993) conclude that crisis has undermined the local political coalitions which supported growth and social stability. However, any transition to a more privatist post-Fordist future will occur as a series of movements which will be highly uneven, partial and bitterly contested.

Following crisis and increasing tensions in the political system, new local state forms and political strategies have emerged. The breaking down of labourism and collectivised service provision is one central trait in this transition, having an impact on the form and nature of local politics. Some early accounts, for example Hoggett (1987), identify decentralised modes of service delivery as possible elements in a shift to neo-Fordist labour processes, characterised by customer care, leaner, more flexible structures and new management ideology. Additionally, Goodwin et al (1993) note the changes in the nature of urban policy, which have formed one element in the shifting central-local state relations. The re-organisation of the state apparatus has included the creation of new supply side agencies,

such as UDCs introduced in 1981 and TECs in 1990. A range of non-elected private sector bodies emerged which largely by-passed local authorities (Haughton and While, 1998). These brought into sharp focus questions over the form of state intervention, how this is controlled, and, who benefits from it (Atkinson and Moon, 1994:143). Within the sphere of urban policy, there was a significant expansion in local economic policy. This turn to locally generated strategies was supported by a framework of intra area competition, providing a new 'political driving force' (Cochrane, 1994: 121). Harvey (1989) defines these new ways of encouraging local economic development and employment as a shift from urban managerialism to 'urban entrepreneurialism':

> "The task allotted to the private sector at the beginning of the 1980s was to deliver a centrally prescribed entrepreneurial shot in the arm to the rather slow-moving and cumbersome bureaucratic practices that were perceived to be the vice of the public sector." (O'Toole and Usher, 1992: 218)

Haughton and While (1998) argue that during the late 1980s and early 1990s cities were drawn into increasingly entrepreneurial styles of governance, characterised by new forms of coalition politics, local boosterism and inter-locality competition (see also Lovering, 1995). Thus urban entrepreneurialism combined local boosterism with the use of local government powers to try to attract external funding, investment and employment (Harvey, 1989: 7). According to Harvey this change in urban policy was influenced both by the internationalisation of the UK economy and by the Conservative neo-liberal agenda. Barnekov argues that urban policy was re-formulated as part of the wider strategy of privatism (in Atkinson and Moon, 1994: 171). Throughout the 1980s the business sector began to take on a more prominent role in urban policy processes. Whilst dismantling tripartite forms of corporatism at the national scale, new corporatist relations were being formed between the state and business at the local scale. Thus in conjunction with an ideology of market discipline, Thatcherism sought 'the informal and formal involvement of business interests in new state forms below the level of the nation state' (Peck, 1995: 23).

One form of state-business relation which was not new, but which became much more visible and formal during the 1980s, was the public-private partnership (Bailey et al, 1995; Haughton and While, 1998). The public-private partnership, as a vehicle for urban regeneration, was premised on the notion of private sector leadership supported by the state (Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Because of the speculative nature of property development, even at the height of the property boom, the state was underwriting the risk of much private sector investment. However according to Peck, government support of the private sector was not just confined to finance, rather, business interests were being 'mobilised, given their form and presented with their function by the state' (1995: 17). Peck argues that although the rhetoric of private sector leadership was central to Thatcherite ideology the reality was based upon a 'fusion' of state and business power, bringing into

question the whole notion of business leadership (1995: 25). Thus rather than withdrawing from urban policy the state has become more involved in constructing the private sector role. Peck's analysis of business leadership moves away from notions of business representatives as 'autonomous social actors' by locating them within their institutional context (1995: 26) and understands the business localism of the 1990s as a 'central government articulated localism' (1995: 33).

As public-private partnerships became both more formalised and visible during the 1980s, local governance was 'almost obliged' to have at least the appearance of public-private partnership (Haughton and While, 1998: 7). This reflected an important localist strand within Thatcherism, which was used in conjunction with market ideology in the construction of business representation (Peck, 1995: 30). Central government promoted business leadership through 'common sense' arguments that local business was best positioned to understand local problems and could apply market values to their resolution. Whilst Kearns claims that the government were prone to 'moral hectoring' of the business sector to secure their co-operation (in Peck, 1995: 31) others have argued that there was a new found 'enthusiasm for local activism' on behalf of the business sector (Jacobs in Bassett, 1996: 540). However, Peck (1995) suggests that this enthusiasm is perhaps unsurprising given the blurring between benefits accrued by individual businesses and benefits to the wider community.

The increasing importance of public-private partnerships during the 1980s reflects the development of new institutional frameworks of governance. Cochrane has argued that the 1980s was essentially a period of experimental attempts to resolve the political and economic crisis bequeathed from the 1970s (1993: 19). However by the late 1980s property-led regeneration was coming under increasing scrutiny. The Audit Commission had begun to question the apparent complexity and idiosyncratic flavour of regeneration policy (Atkinson and Coleman, 1997) and questions arose as to who was benefiting from regeneration programmes. This combined with mounting fears over a growing and uncontainable 'underclass' manifested through increasing urban social unrest (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Healey and Davoudi (1995) argue that the result of economic restructuring was to render life in some places qualitatively different both economically and socially, echoing Jessop's analysis of Thatcherism as a 'two-nation' project. They argue that dominant political and economic structures actively marginalised some groups, set apart from the mainstream by different sets of cultures and norms. For Eisenschitz and Gough the scale of economic problems further weakened the Right's enterprise strategies which were based upon a moral and psychological view of unemployment (1993: 164). Concern over the 'inner city' problem led in 1988 to the Action for Cities programme. However whilst this highlighted the role of state as facilitator, it was premised on a 'bootstraps' strategy (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993) in which the inner cities would need to help themselves, led

by the private sector pursuing a predominantly economic, rather than social agenda. Concerns over weak co-ordination led to the introduction of the CATs and Task Forces (see Atkinson and Moon, 1994: 118) and a gradual re-introduction of the local authority role following criticisms by the Audit Commission over the fragmented nature of urban policy initiatives. Property-led regeneration and the so-called trickle-down approach became both politically and financially untenable following the 1987 stock market crash that preceded recession and the undermining of property-led development. As a consequence new forms of state intervention emerged and there was an apparent softening of approach under the Major government. New frameworks have emerged which form the foundation upon which claims concerning a broader urban politics have evolved.

The 1990s have been marked by a concern with developing broader coalition and partnership models emphasising the role of local state and the community and voluntary sector. This has been summarised as a 'putative transition from the entrepreneurial late 1980s and early 1990s towards a more inclusive approach to urban regeneration' (Haughton and While, 1998: 1). A re-constructed urban entrepreneurialism under Major from 1990 onwards 'tempered' private sector leadership and embraced cautious moves toward more inclusive policy processes with regard to local authorities and the community and voluntary sectors. It has been claimed that this signalled a shift toward more people-based approaches (Haughton and While, 1998) reflected in the City Challenge initiative in 1991 and the SRB in 1994. Both of these policy initiatives required collaboration between the public, private and community and voluntary sectors. Increasingly local government powers were to be exercised in partnership with the business and third sector. This broadening of urban policy under Major has continued under Blair's Labour Government, but with continuing commitment to competitive approaches. The effects of this supposed inclusionary approach to urban policy have manifested themselves in a number of ways with regard to community and voluntary sector practices and politics. Additionally, the new institutional frameworks have been part of a fundamental restructuring of central-local state relations, with the suggestion of more autonomy for local government (6).

2.6 Critiques of Regulation Theory and New Perspectives

Regulationist approaches and particularly the idea of post-Fordism have been subject to considerable criticism. Additionally, as yet the scope for using regulation theory to explain changing urban politics is limited. Painter outlines some of the main critiques of regulation theory drawing on Bonefeld and Holloway (1991). This includes the criticism that regulation theory is teleological; history unfolding according to some inevitable logic as it moves from one regime of accumulation to the next (see also Lovering, 1995). Secondly, regulation analysis has been accused of functionalism, explaining the origins of the mode of regulation

according to its effects in securing capital accumulation. Further, it has been argued that there is a tendency toward technological determinism, stressing the role of technological innovations in driving social development. Finally, regulation theory has been criticised for overstating the coherence of the mode of regulation and under-emphasising struggle. Whilst regulationists have responded to some of these critiques early regulation theory is characterised by explanatory weaknesses.

However, despite the problems and criticisms outlined regulation theory remains a powerful narrative (Valler et al, 1998). As previously suggested, the recognition of complex and interrelated processes and structures of regulation may be useful in developing analytical frameworks for the study of new and complex patterns of urban politics and governance. Additionally, regulation theory provides a useful route into exploring local specificity and unevenness (see Painter and Goodwin, 1995). Whilst attempts to apply regulation theory in the sphere of urban politics have been 'sporadic' (Painter, 1995: 292), the growing concern with the analysis of the politics and practices of the local state has led to new developments within regulation theory. This focuses specifically on the state, political factors and the role of space (Jones, 1997: 832). This body of work opens up an explicit engagement with two central weaknesses (Stoker and Mossberger, 1995: 213). First, the macro orientation and the nature of the explanatory framework offered by regulation theory:

> "... there are, as yet, no adequate regulationist explanations of the structural transformations and/or strategic reorientation of the local state. At best we have more or less plausible regulationist contextualisations of these shifts."
> (Jessop, 1995: 321)

Following Stoker and Mossberger (1995: 213) there is a lack of clarity over the precise forces of transition. In particular they argue that the notion of 'unintended outcomes' which lie at the heart of regulationist understanding of processes, may avoid economic determinism but yields little explanatory substance.

The second problem is the understanding of historical transition within early regulationist accounts and the need to avoid teleological analysis (Jessop 1994). Painter and Goodwin consider how regulation theory can be developed without having to endorse specific historical accounts based upon particular ideal types, such as 'Fordism' (1995: 337). Specifically they endorse the need for more concrete work and the re-casting of *regulation theory as a method* to provide a historically and geographically grounded account of the development of capitalism. Such an approach enhances the value of regulation theory for studying transformation in local governance, accommodating the distinctiveness of specific historical accounts. In particular, the institutional complexity of governance is accommodated by regulationist concern with a diverse set of interconnected regulatory forms and processes (Painter and Goodwin, 1995: 345). Recent developments in regulation theory explore 'ebbs and flows' in the reproduction of capitalist relations. This approach

based upon concrete research, moves away from a concern with modes of regulation to a concern with regulatory processes based upon social practices (Jessop, 1997; Jones, 1997; Painter, 1995; Painter and Goodwin, 1995,1997). According to Painter and Goodwin, regulation is the contingent outcome of interacting social practices. Concrete research is required because regulatory processes have their own histories, geographies and spatial structures and arise through concrete social practices (1995: 336). Second, the uneven development of regulation means that spatial differentiation may affect regulatory processes. An important contribution by regulation theory is in accounting for the 'operation and unevenly developed fabric of capitalism' (Jones, 1997: 831) highlighting regulation as process.

Painter and Goodwin (1995) argue the MOR over-states stability whilst simultaneously under-stating conflict. They argue, moreover, that the discontinuity between different phases of accumulation is over-estimated since capitalism is under constant upheaval, stable periods or modes of regulation are both rare and brief. Further the MOR tends to take the focus away from human action and the importance of strategy and social practices through focusing on structure and form. Thus:

> "In discussing concrete cases it may well make sense to talk about 'regulatory processes' or 'tendencies towards regulation', rather than coherent 'modes of regulation' (Painter, 1995: 290)

Again this would strengthen the argument for more concrete research investigating regulatory practices which are constituted through unevenly developed social practices (Painter and Goodwin, 1995: 335-336). Recognising the ebb and flow of regulatory processes across time and space creates a growing concern with more detailed, nuanced accounts of specific regulation. Through concretisation, the tendency to adopt ideal types is avoided. This is critical given regulation theory's concern with describing and explaining processes of actual political and economic change and uncovering the 'necessary relations and the causal mechanisms which generate events' (Painter and Goodwin, 1995: 349).

The explanatory framework of regulation theory has been criticised for creating a tendency towards 'analytical short-circuiting', arising from a failure to specify links between economic transition and social and political change (Goodwin et al, 1993: 68; Peck and Tickell, 1992). In order to avoid simply reading off local change from broader macro-economic change some commentators have sought to develop 'mid-level concepts' in an attempt to explain transitions in local governance (Jones, 1997: 831). Jones, for example, is concerned with developing approaches to institutional inter-relations. Others have argued that regulation theory needs to be combined with other theoretical insights. One strand of this is around governance. The local state and local governance cannot be understood simply through their role in relation to regulatory processes since:

"The institutions and practices of local government have their own histories and patterns of development." (Painter and Goodwin, 1995: 347)

However neither can the local state be fully understood outside of these broader relations. Thus it has been suggested that regulation theory needs to combine with other theoretical insights concerning the state and local governance, which includes theories of business representation and community and voluntary sector politics (Valler et al, 1998). This is exemplified through Jessop's work (1997) on the inter-play between regulation theory and theories of governance. Jessop (1995; 1997) seeks to draw on the insight of governance theories, whilst remaining sensitive to it's weaknesses. In particular Jessop advocates working at the interface between regulation theory and governance without conflating these different theoretical strands. By identifying weaknesses within each paradigm as well as highlighting areas of similarity and difference between the paradigms Jessop concludes with some optimism on the scope for theoretical and empirical development.

One strand of this theoretical development is an increasing concern with discourses that combine with material practices to underpin regulatory processes. Jessop (1995) has argued that in order to develop the explanatory power of regulation theory and take on governance concerns explicitly there should be increasing focus on strategic action. This would require an account of the strategic capabilities of actors as individuals and groups to respond to changing economic conditions, an exploration of the strategies they are pursuing and the inter-relation between the capacities and strategies of different actors or sets of actors:

> "This in turn suggests that one way to link regulationist and governmentalist concerns is through more focused analyses of institutional, organisational and discursive mediation of economic change." (1995: 321)

Jessop's approach builds on the regulationist concern with the socially embedded nature of economic processes and can claims Jessop help develop theoretical insights into governance concerns with negotiation and co-ordination. This leads to analytical concern with institutional design and patterns of institutional co-ordination and the discursive constitution of regulatory processes (7).

One direction in which the concern with explanation is developing is through linkages with regime theory. New developments within urban regime theory have attempted closer integration with regulation theory (Haughton and While, 1998). For example, Painter and Goodwin (1997) argue that regulatory processes are grounded in complex networks of institutional relations and social practices. One expression of these networks are urban regimes, which may help to highlight specific regulatory processes within complex systems of governance. Using the concept of 'habitus' Painter (1997) argues that the methodological limitations of regulation theory for analysing and interpreting urban politics maybe addressed

through developing links with a re-worked urban regime theory. In particular his focus is upon relations between political practice and the processes and sites of regulation and counter-regulation (cultural norms, institutional forms and state structures). Although regulation theory is useful in explaining the dynamics of regulatory processes once they are established, following Jessop, there is a need to 'examine the mediation of regulation in and through specific social practices and forces' (Painter, 1997: 127). According to Painter this mediation is precisely the focus of regime theory, which may help explore the relationship between urban politics and the regulatory processes:

> "What is required is an approach to the analysis of urban politics that can unravel the causal processes that explain whether they are grounded in the mode of regulation, in practices that are counter-regulatory, or in other spheres of social life that have no strong relationship to the regulation of capital accumulation at all." (Painter, 1997: 127)

For Painter regimes are dynamic forms which are continually being formed and undermined, and therefore have some similar attributes to regulatory processes. The regime exists as an attempt by a coalition of social forces to govern and does not necessarily result in successful governance; regimes are a site of struggle between reproduction and crisis in reproduction. Thus regime theory's concern with politics and explaining political processes may help explain the emergence of regulatory practices. However, commensurability with regulation theory depends on how the social and political processes that help build or undermine a regime are understood.

According to Painter current regime analysis tends to view the underlying rationale for regime as stemming from the rational choice of individual participants. For example Stone refers to the 'selective incentives' which hold regimes together (Painter, 1997: 133). Thus individual players will expect to accrue particular benefits, which may only be realised over the long-term due to their membership of the coalition. The grounding of regime theory in rational choice or voluntaristic decision-making is problematic for regulation theory. Painter seeks a way out of this theoretical incompatibility by turning to the theory of practice as developed by Bourdieu. For Bourdieu social practice is neither the product of structural forces nor of individual decision-making and uses the concept of habitus to try to bridge these two extremes (Jenkins, 1992). According to Bourdieu social practice is generated through habitus (Painter, 1997: 136). This perspective acknowledges the social relations within which practice is generated; and which predisposes people to act in certain ways. Practice is produced on the basis of shared cultural attributes, for example shared values, beliefs and norms. According to Painter habitus may be a useful concept for explaining participation or non-participation in regimes by particular interest groups. Through this approach the whole notion of rational-decision making is problematized (Painter, 1997: 137) and a new set of cultural factors and influences are introduced to contribute to a richer explanation of political behaviour. Thus:

"Questions of bureaucratic culture, ethical judgement, irrational assumptions, trust and mutuality, local chauvinism, political ideology, and a host of others take their place as potential parts of a multicausal explanation of political behaviour." (Painter, 1997: 137)

In particular Painter highlights the variable types of knowledge which different sets of actors may possess and which may influence their strategies. The habitus of community organisations can be:

"Quite variable but can include knowledges based in combination of concrete experience and abstract ideals; common sense frequently based on 'them and us' or 'David-and-Goliath' metaphors; cultures of self-help coupled to rhetoric of civil and social rights." (1997: 138)

Painter suggests that the voluntary sector may have a habitus grounded in different themes including self-help, charity and service provision, based around different organisational structures and varying degrees of professionalism. The temporal and spatial nature of habitus highlights the fluid nature of these characteristics. For example, the creation of the 'shadow state' has drawn the voluntary sector into more formalised contractual relations with the state. This has potentially created new sets of norms and changes in internal cultures and may influence how voluntary sector organisations perceive their role and the role of those around them. Thus regime formation and purpose are affected by dominant ideas about what is feasible, helping reinforce ideas about the way problems and solutions are defined.

Despite linking structural forces and individual behaviour, habitus is perhaps more useful for thinking about how regimes operate rather than for explaining the reasons why particular actors participate in regimes. In particular Bourdieu neither explains how social groups form nor how they operate, as Jenkins claims:

"Bourdieu offers no theorised understanding of social groups or social (group) identity." (1992: 92)

Moreover Jenkins asserts that Bourdieu's analysis has a weak conceptualisation of process, therefore making it difficult to assess the role of causality (1992: 96). Thus there may be severe limits on how habitus in it's present state may help unravel the processes underpinning regime formation and thus it may be more appropriate for thinking about the way in which regimes operate. Whilst these new developments open up the potential for new ways of analysing urban politics, this research is specifically concerned with the emergence of new political forms emerging around third sector involvement in new frameworks and processes of governance. This thesis builds around earlier approaches to third sector politics and the claims that have been made within this, drawing in particular on the work of Mayer (1994, 1995). Mayer's work on urban politics is specifically concerned with new institutional relations (Painter, 1995: 288) and attempts to provide a framework

through which to try to explain changes in community and voluntary sector involvement in new systems of local governance.

2.7 Regulation Theory and Third Sector Politics

This chapter is specifically concerned with the way in which regulation theory may inform an account of changing community politics in contemporary governance. An important contribution to this area is the work of Mayer (1994, 1995, and 1998). This work highlights ways in which regulationist approaches may contribute to, and inform, an analysis of community politics whilst opening up broader theoretical and methodological concerns. Mayer attempts to clarify fundamental shifts in the form and function of the local state (Amin and Thrift, 1995a: 46) and show how these are being reflected in *new patterns of urban politics*. Mayer claims that the form, role and orientation of urban politics are characterised by qualitative changes in the nature of policy processes. These are now seen as being driven by a *broader set of actors* (1995: 231), including the community and private sector, interacting through more *co-operative sets of relations*:

> "In these novel co-operation processes, spanning different policy fields and bringing together actors from very different backgrounds, bargaining systems have emerged which exhibit round-table structures and are characterised by a co-operative style of policy-making where, instead of giving orders, the local authority moderates or initiates co-operation." (1996: 322)

Clearly such a reading of new policy forms has significant implications for the position of third sector politics. A central claim in Mayer's discussion of local governance is the ascendancy of local politics and increased 'salience' of the local state whereby local and regional actors are increasingly active in promoting themselves within the global economy (1995: 233). This has produced new patterns of urban governance and politics, which although varied now displays 'three parallel trends'. First, the local political system, as opposed to the central state, is increasingly involved in the organisation of production and reproduction to attract capital investment. Second, related to this, is the increasingly 'entrepreneurial' nature of cities expressed through the mobilisation of local politics around economic rather than social concerns (1995: 232). Third, Mayer notes an expanded local political sphere and the emergence of new collaborative forms involving new co-ordination and bargaining systems (1995: 232). These new institutional relations that have restructured the sphere of local political action (1995: 240) form the focus for an investigation into the changing form and character of third sector politics.

Emergent governance is one in which local government functions and processes are fundamentally altered. Mayer claims there has been a shift away from local government as service provider and centre of decision-making toward local government moderating and

managing intersecting areas of interest through increased engagement with non-state sectors. Although attempts by local government to address restructuring through involvement in local economic initiatives and strategies are not a new phenomenon, Mayer identifies qualitative changes in the nature of engagement. Specifically, she suggests there has been a shift to more strategic approaches:

> "Gradually, these activities have consolidated into more systematic economic development policy oriented explicitly towards nurturing 'growth' and, supposedly, employment." (Mayer, 1995: 233)

These new forms of economic intervention, emphasising competition and local labour market flexibility, contribute to a more 'entrepreneurial local state' (Mayer, 1995: 232). This represents a shift away from the demand-led Keynesian welfare state and the commitment to full employment (8). Local economic strategies are increasingly combined with welfare subordination blurring the boundaries between these previously distinct policy areas (1995: 234). This reflects a shift away from a universal re-distributive welfare system (Mayer, 1995, Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993) and the erosion of traditional local state functions. This has been replaced, in part, by the growing involvement of non-state actors including the third sector and quasi-governmental agencies in welfare provision and employment strategies. The fiscal crisis of the welfare state has engendered a concern with innovative and flexible forms of social welfare achieved through a dual process of service privatisation and the elevation of non-governmental organisations. The outcomes of this process are a reduction in state spending, a move away from mass consumption norms and collectivist welfare toward:

> "...a fragmented and potentially highly uneven provision of social consumption-tied to economic performance -.... depending on the skills, political priorities and mobilisation of local political actors." (Mayer, 1995: 243)

For Mayer the third sector is an integral element within new pluralist forms of welfare provision as local authorities collaborate with neighbourhood initiatives and social movement organisations:

> "A plethora of municipally funded programmes have been established in social, environmental, and urban renewal policy domains, which tend to be hybrid programmes emphasising workfare and job creation while burdening non-profit (third sector) organisations with delivery and implementation or urban repair or social service functions." (1995: 236)

The new welfare structures create a 'parallel need for co-ordinating structures' (1995: 235), contributing to a raft of institutional changes. This is linked to Mayer's second axis of change, the expanded sphere of local political action based upon new bargaining systems and public-private partnerships. The 'more pluralistic' and 'in some ways more egalitarian' state forms (1995: 243) have expanded the sphere of local politics 'way beyond those of classical municipal politics' (1995: 236). This is expressed through and supported by partnership arrangements and new policy processes in which bargaining and negotiation now play a central role:

"The restructuring of the local welfare state...has expanded the sphere of local political action to include an additional set of actors: welfare associations, churches, unions, and frequently grassroots initiatives and community organisations." (1995: 237)

Whilst the growth of new agencies such as TECs and UDCs is well documented, Mayer highlights the creation of new departments, round tables and inter-agency networks. The institutionalisation of third sector or intermediary organisations makes them an 'integral part of the urban political landscape' (1995: 248) and according to Mayer might contribute to a new local social mode of regulation. In particular she argues that third sector organisations are being used to promote more flexible and casual welfare relations, in which there is an explicit attempt to link welfare provision to the state of the local economy. Thus co-operative relations emerging between the public, private and third sectors are important in changing consumption norms and helping erode principles of universal welfare provision (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). In this context the third sector may operate as a force in seeking to defend state welfare provision or be used as part of a strategy for overcoming or reducing struggle by delivering the new fragmented welfare.

Therefore institutional changes play an important role in supporting a new style coalition politics, encouraged by central state policies which require co-operative local structures through which to administer urban policy grants. It is claimed these new relations help resolve key tensions present in the Keynesian welfare state including high state expenditure, waste, inefficiency and political discontent. Attempts are made to secure more stable reproduction through a wider distribution of 'territorial management activities across a range of semi-public and private agencies (1995: 243).

"These local networks and bargaining systems address the limits of the centralised, hierarchical, bureaucratic-corporate structures that have characterised the Fordist state." (1995: 243)

According to Mayer cross sector collaboration fundamentally alters the form and style of local policy processes with traditional hierarchy giving way to 'novel co-operation' processes:

"The novelty consists in the fact that bargaining and decision-making processes increasingly take place outside of traditional local government structures, and that urban governance becomes based on the explicit representation and co-ordination of functional interests active at the local level." (1995: 237)

Mayer notes the broadening base of partnership representation with increasing involvement by private sector partners and the community (1995: 239). Although various elements of the third sector, including the church, (for example see Lawless et al, 1998) have long played a role in local welfare provision, Mayer asserts that such organisations are now being assessed for their potential contribution to alternative welfare systems. However whilst there may be an expanded base of community involvement and new forms of negotiation and implementation may privilege non-governmental or intermediary organisations, Mayer notes

43

that involvement by particular groups may depend on whether they are deemed capable to deliver welfare outputs. Despite this Mayer claims that new terrain of urban politics creates new opportunities for 'all local political actors' (1995: 239).

Within the re-organised urban governance the community role has been expanded and extended, within the limitations discussed above. In particular Mayer asserts that the role of community groups as intermediary organisations has extended to encompass the planning and implementation of policy processes. Thus Mayer implies that groups are involved in a variety of regeneration tasks and undertake lobbying and political functions (1995: 240). More explicitly third sector activity has undergone significant change as it becomes more closely linked with state employment policies (1995: 246). In highlighting the changing character of community sector activities Mayer cites both the growth in 'for profit' community initiatives and also the tying of new community initiatives and organisations to municipal programmes. From their different perspectives both Mayer and Wolch are concerned with the shifting division of labour between public, private and voluntary sectors and associated questions over the extent to which state or private sector logic may be penetrating the third sector and the processes through which this is occurring. This questions both the very existence of a discernible and independent community sector, and how the community sector is organising to co-ordinate involvement over an extended range of activities.

Mayer, developing Mackintosh's (1992) influential work in the social policy field, understands partnerships as ambiguous 'sites of continuing political economic negotiation' (Mayer, 1995: 239). Central to this is an evolving urban politics based increasingly upon negotiation and re-negotiation of social and economic relations:

> "In effect, what is 'going on' in partnerships is a version of the broader conflict over the future organisation and scope of the public sector." (Mayer, 1995: 239)

This ambiguity provides the terrain upon which agencies, including local government, may develop a new strategic role. Whilst partnerships are a key site of the new collaborative relations, Mayer notes considerable variation in the degree of co-operation achieved, and the degree of openness and responsiveness to different interests. Additionally processes will be affected by internal cleavages - not just between the community and private sector for example - but between different elements of the community sector (9). Thus, the concrete shape of bargaining structures and their degree of responsiveness and openness depends on:

> "...how actors at local level will seize and struggle over the opportunities and forms provided within this basic model." (1995: 245)

Hence, through the restructuring of the local state a potentially new set of third sector politics is emerging. Although the local state is seeking to mobilise local actors, the outcome is not

44

pre-determined (Mayer, 1995; Eisenschitz, 1997). Due to this openness in potential outcomes, Mayer believes that social movements, seeking more democratic patterns of urban governance, need to engage in struggles over new strategies and practices of urban management. Since all representational interests control some resources required for the successful implementation of policy, social movement organisations should seek to influence the structure of these new bargaining systems which offer a 'real basis for negotiation' (1995: 246). Thus the role of the USM is elevated under current versions of post-Fordism:

> "Social movements need to make use of the new channels and forums provided by the new bargaining systems to challenge the powerful trends towards inequality, which the post-Fordist regime entails, and to attack it's social forms of division and its political forms of exclusion in order to strengthen the democratic potential of the new forms of urban governance."
> (Mayer, 1995: 246; see also Painter, 1995: 287)

Mayer claims that communities can exert more influence over local strategies if they can mobilise and gain access to the town hall. Given the 'hollowing out' of the central state and loss of large-scale social blocks of the Fordist era, Mayer rejects the idea that such struggles should seek to reinstate national redistribution strategies. The focus of struggle over the processes and practices of urban governance is therefore at the sub-national scale. Whilst Mayer predicts an intense struggle (1995: 246) to overcome some of the problems associated with social, economic and political polarisation and fragmented local arenas the vision presented is one of optimism in terms of the ability of social movements to mobilise and influence strategy development (10).

Critically, Mayer argues that the concrete outcomes of restructuring are contingent and will vary according to particular local circumstances including *local political traditions and current balances of power*. This highlights the importance of 'local sediment' arising through, for example, past struggles as well as current power relations. This highlights the importance of local social relations in mediating broader processes of change, potentially acting as powerful barriers to the implementation of broader political projects. Various barriers may exist to the establishment of new mechanisms and practices of urban governance, including, the 'entrenched habits of those in power, routinised forms of party political competition, occasional powerful political representation of declining sectors, and institutional inertia' (Mayer, 1995: 244). Hence, within the overall patterns of the new urban governance identified by Mayer, the result is by no means certain:

> "...it is quite open whether social and political conflict will permit the actual establishment of these new arrangements as elements of a dominant mode of regulation." (1995: 244)

Mayer builds upon the regulationists central concern with the relationship between accumulation and regulatory forms to assess possible compromises in the new local governance and hence the opportunities and constraints for a new local politics (1995: 242). This approach focuses on changing modes of regulation; specifically how different aspects of

the new governance may address various elements of crisis in and around the local state. If new forms of state intervention and new institutional relations address problems within the state, they may, according to Mayer, pre-figure new forms of urban governance:

> "... capable of delivering coherent urban management rather than being mere transitional forms of crisis management." (1995: 242)

The mode of regulation is central in Mayer's framework, which assesses whether attempts to construct new structural forms have the contingent effect of regulating crisis tendencies. Given this explicit regulationist approach Mayer explores whether new forms of state intervention and new institutional relations are compatible with resolving old tensions and so help create stable accumulation conditions. The concept of compatibility is adopted by Mayer in an attempt to help expose causal relations. Economic success hinges on having specific institutional relations that support and are compatible with the emerging regime of accumulation (1995: 243). According to Mayer, by focusing on the relationship between the mode of regulation and accumulation regime, this concept offers more utility in the specific analysis of governance mechanisms than 'institutional thickness', used for example by Amin and Thrift. Institutional capacity may be defined as being 'the presence of many institutions of different kinds, with high levels of interaction and an awareness of a common enterprise' (Mayer, 1995: 243). The concept of institutional thickness refers to the presence of a range of institutions providing a basis for social networks. Institutional thickness also involves high levels of institutional interaction within the network, leading to clearly defined patterns of coalition or interest representation. It may also help reproduce particular local practices. Finally, there must be a common agenda supported by participants which Amin and Thrift refer to as being simultaneously a 'collectivisation and corporatisation' (1995: 102). However even they acknowledge that the term institutional thickness can seem 'very general, even vague' (1995: 101). Although institutional thickness may describe new patterns of relations and engender an empirical concern with the specific character of institutions involved in the new urban governance,

> "... it brings us no nearer to understanding how these institutions are tied together and how power flows through networks." (Murdoch, 1997: 744)

Mayer suggests that the concept is inadequate because strong institutional alliances are not, in themselves, sufficient to secure successful restructuring. Mayer cites the example of the NE where such alliances have acted as barriers to successful restructuring (11).

In summary, Mayer demonstrates how regulationist analysis provides a framework for analysing changing local governance and makes some important claims concerning the evolution of community politics. For Mayer the restructuring of the local state represents the institutionalisation of an alternative set of politics, in a process that is both 'controversial and painful' (1995: 248) and the outcomes of which remain uncertain,

"Whether local struggles and bargaining processes will result in more egalitarian and accountable models responsive to broad local needs, or in divisive models enforcing polarisation and marginalisation processes, one of the new characteristics of the emerging local 'welfare state' that distinguishes it from the past is its role in enabling negotiation with, and initiating activities by, 'outside' actors." (1995: 236)

Whilst Mayer's claims are clearly salient for this thesis, there are a number of critiques. Despite highlighting the broadening of policy processes, the analysis fails to illuminate the way in which institutional relations are constructed (Raco, 1998: 3) and the processes through which the third sector becomes institutionalised into the new political landscape. Others have expressed scepticism over the ability of deprived regions to carve out a new future for themselves and capacity of social movements to invoke fundamental change. Jessop (1994a: 27) argues that the shift to post-Fordism has occurred within a climate of 'creeping authoritarianism' in which political changes have been justified on the basis of improved service provision. Jessop thus interprets community and voluntary sector involvement as primarily driven by the central state. Peck and Tickell are also concerned with the localism of Mayer's work arguing that globalisation has reduced the 'bargaining power' of localities:

"While Mayer has sought to argue that progressive and liberatory possibilities exist in this new local politics of post-Fordism - as space for new political movements is seen to open up at the local level -such an interpretation is misleading." (1994: 281)

Similarly, Esser and Hirsch contend that local action is being undermined by a post-Fordist scenario which is likely to lead to intensified socio-economic division in a 'politically and socially explosive fashion' (1994: 81). Lovering (1995) argues that a misleading new localist discourse is dominating the analysis of restructuring which suggests that with effective organisation and management (i.e. network relations etc.) cities can carve a role for themselves in the global economy.

"The extent to which locality can really be regarded as a coherent crucible of social relations is, to say the least, contentious." (Lovering, 1995: 114)

Linked to the critiques of localism is the broader regulationist problem of failing to explain local change (Jones, 1997). Thus there is a failure to explore systematically the links between the changing role of local and sub-local institutions and movements and broader contextual changes (1997: 840). Jones critiques Mayer's 'localist approach' for trying to interpret local changes through a framework of macro level transition, thereby undermining comprehensive analysis (1997: 840). This leads to an inference of causal relations between macro change and local transition rather than a specification of particular causal mechanisms. Jones argues that Mayer relies on macro level causes due to a lack of integration through mid-level concepts, which would allow systematic links to be built

between the abstract MSR and concrete, individual events. More broadly, this criticism finds resonance in Hay's (1995) claim that the MSR concept creates a tendency to institutional fetishism or the understanding of local institutional change in terms of macro transition. Recent developments in regulation theory seek to address some of these issues through an implicit concern with social practices and regulatory processes in and around the local state.

This series of claims set out by Mayer regarding third sector engagement in local governance requires further exploration and assessment. Whilst setting out these influential claims regarding the role of the third sector in a changing local politics, Mayer's analysis provides few concrete examples to back her claims. As previously discussed, one of the key concerns emerging from new regulation perspectives is the need for concrete research to identify the precise nature of local changes.

2.8 Summary

Both Mayer and Wolch provide characterisations of new forms of community and voluntary sector involvement in emergent systems of governance. However whilst regulation theory provides a useful contextualisation of these characterisations, it has had limited value in explaining new patterns of governance. More recent developments in regulation theory yield a concern with regulatory processes and social practices. In turn this has led to calls for more empirical research. For example, Painter (1995) argues that the development of conceptual tools needs to be supported by extensive empirical research to help explain the mechanics of a new local governance and urban politics. Jessop has suggested that there are important overlaps between regulation theory and governance; however theories of governance need to engage specifically with theories of community and community politics if they are to yield explanations regarding new forms of community and voluntary sector involvement.

Chapter 3: Urban Political Analysis and the Third Sector

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores key perspectives on urban politics and assesses their contribution to the analysis of contemporary third sector politics within the context of changing local governance. Chapter 2, exploring the processes of state and local state restructuring, outlined claims that new sets of political relations are emerging within which the third sector has an elevated role. New modes of political co-ordination have been linked to new forms of 'urban management' (Healey et al, 1995) in which local government must enlist the support of others to pursue policy objectives:

> "The sheer growth in the volume of public, quasi-public, private and voluntary sector agencies now active in local service delivery necessitates complex processes of inter-organisational and *inter-sectoral bargaining and co-operation*." (Harding, 1996: 646)

New relations of governance imply a new set of urban politics based upon processes of consensus building and coalition formation (Stewart and Stoker, 1989, 1994).

> "The institutional map of local government has been transformed. It is possible to refer to the creation of a system of 'local governance' in which local authorities find themselves increasingly *working alongside* a range of other agencies in their localities." (Stewart and Stoker, 1995:194)

Within the emergent frameworks of urban governance it has been suggested that there has been a blurring of distinctions between the public and private spheres. However questions remain about the precise nature of emergent relations, the political processes which characterise the new governance and the operation and sustainability of emergent governance mechanisms. The re-formulation of governance relations has been explored through a range of governance studies many stressing the increasing importance of intermediary organisations in co-ordinating social relations through networks of *institutional relations*. Increasing interest has grown in the way that 'relations between economic activity and governance processes are actively negotiated in the micropolitics of social relations' (Healey et al, 1995: 16). The changing form of urban politics thus reflects the complex interactions between the public, private and third sector institutions which form the interrelated elements of a new governance framework (Valler et al, 1998). For Raco:

> "Analysis of urban governance requires an understanding of the functioning of the institutions involved." (1998a: 979)

Related to this are concerns about the relationship between institutional changes and urban political processes (Cochrane, 1993). In particular there is broad consensus over the emergence of fragmented governance in which local government influence has decreased and private and community and voluntary sector influence has increased. Thus, key themes are institutional *fragmentation and complexification* highlighted by Goodwin and Painter (1997) (1). Thus theoretical perspectives need to embrace an understanding of the role played by specific groups institutions and actors, how they are represented and the relations in which they are engaged. For Raco the new institutional landscape comprises top-down localist institutions that are financially and politically backed by central government, local institutions including local pressure and voluntary groups, and the local state linking the centre to local communities. The following discussion highlights the contribution of different models of urban politics to capturing the changing role of the third sector, identifying the key claims and particular foci of each perspective. The aim of the chapter is to provide a foundation upon which to develop the research design and begins by reviewing key aspects of the community power debate.

3.2 Revisiting the Community Power Debate

The re-shaping of urban politics through new structures and processes of governance has led to a renewed interest in the themes and concerns of the community power debate (Harding, 1996: 646). During the 1950s and 1960s the community power debate dominated US analysis of urban politics. The debate, dominated as it was by the question of 'who, if anyone, runs cities?' opened up an explicit concern with human agency (Harding, 1996: 637). Elite theorists were concerned with who rules, whilst pluralists were asking whether anyone rules. In addition the neo-elitists were concerned with how agendas were set and sustained. Each perspective deployed a different methodology through which to address the above questions. The debate, dominating US political analysis up until the 1970s has been influential in developing UK pluralist and elitist perspectives, advancing contrasting views as to the nature and operation of local political power. Interest group relations have traditionally been discussed through pluralist models - in which the leadership is responsive to a large number of groups competing with one another for influence over policy.

Whilst Harding argues that the debate had limited impact upon European research and methodology, Hampton notes the importance of pluralist theory in the British case studies of local politics (1991: 238). The recent resurgence of interest in the community power debate (Harding, 1996) perhaps reflects contemporary suggestions of a shift to a fragmented local governance in which it has been suggested there has been an opening-up of decision-making and increased citizen choice. Mayer (1994, 1995) has for example made specific claims about the dispersal of political power through the opening up of local policy processes

as discussed in Chapter 2. Duffy and Hutchinson claim there is evidence of more pluralistic processes based upon the new institutions and processes of governance:

"...partnership and participation have been the instruments for developing a more pluralistic model of direct democracy." (1997: 359)

Concerns with social plurality have led Judge to warn of the danger 'that in the 1990s we are all pluralists now' (Judge, 1995: 13). It has been claimed that the appeal of the pluralist approach is the ability to capture the complexity of modern governance. For example, Smith (1995: 226) argues this perspective benefits from casting doubt on the ability of one group to dominate society, given the range of social and economic factions which constitute society, whilst not concluding that power is widely dispersed. In so doing demonstrating, Judge's (1995: 14) argument that pluralism tends to be defined by what it is not. Whilst defining pluralism and evaluating its contribution is problematic given the different positions adopted within the model some core tenets can be identified (Judge, 1995: 14).

According to Judge the original pluralists were a reaction against elitists' views of power, portrayed for example in Hunter's 1953 study of Atlanta. Pluralists rejected the highly stratified view of power and conducted research exploring the questions of who governs and how they are involved in key decision-making. As Smith states 'the key feature of pluralism is difference or diversity' (1995: 209). Central to pluralism is the concept of fragmented and decentralized political power. The exercise of political power extends beyond the formal institutional structures of political power and representative institutions and different groups have access, albeit variable, to decision-making processes. Whilst acknowledging that some groups may establish closer institutionalised relations with the state, pluralists argued that no single group has permanent control and policy processes are perceived as fragmented and relatively uncoordinated (John and Cole, 1993). Politics is characterised by constant bargaining processes between different interests to achieve a consensual and peaceful outcome. Policy outcomes differ across policy spheres reflecting variation in processes, actors and power distribution. This uncertainty of policy outcomes provides an incentive for groups to engage in bargaining processes (Judge, 1995: 140). The government, seen as an independent agency, has a passive role in allocating resources to reflect the balance of influence between groups.

By the 1970s the growth of neighbourhood groups and increased grassroots activism raised a number of issues for the pluralist model. One issue was the relationship between social pluralism (number of groups) and political pluralism (diffusion of power) and how the growth in local groups impacted upon pluralist ideas. The growth of grassroots and community development-initiated activity was assumed to have created greater instability so that pluralists were asking whether anyone was governing and any policy areas were governable. Yates in 1977 claimed that the reactive and fragmented nature of urban policy processes

resulted in chaos or 'street fighting pluralism' (Judge, 1995: 24). Cities were rendered ungovernable by extreme mixes of political administration and community interests:

"...urban decision games turn into unstructured, unstable free-for-alls." (quoted in Judge, 1995: 25)

In Britain by the mid-1970s commentators were suggesting that the pressure of interest group politics was creating 'overload within the political system' (Smith, 1995: 219). More recent evidence from the US places less emphasis upon 'street-fighting' or 'hyper' pluralism and more upon the type of negotiations taking place within the corridors of the City Hall. Modifications within the pluralist model led to the notion of stratified pluralism, in recognition that 'different elites made different decisions in different issue areas' (Judge, 1995: 20). Despite this however pluralism has retained a distinctive concern with 'dispersed inequalities'. This 'benign' approach suggests that power is 'dispersed and non-cumulative' (Smith, 1995: 215), and that open and accessible policy processes are characterised by bargaining. An important critique of the pluralist approach centres on it's inability to acknowledge the ways in which interest groups may be excluded from policy processes, stemming from the shortcomings of pluralist methodology. Questions were raised concerning the selection of particular policy decisions for analysis. The methodological approach means that only those decisions reaching the policy agenda become the object of study. Thus pluralists were criticised for relying upon a methodology based upon observable phenomenon, yielding a limited understanding of power and a tendency to predetermine research findings. Building on Lukes (1974) analysis of power, pluralism was criticised for ignoring the 'second (undisclosed) face of power', the covert non-decisions through which the real operation of power is expressed. The pluralist method therefore obscures processes of causality. Structural critiques highlighted fundamental problems of research strategy and methodology which in particular obscured the 'third face of power', or:

"... the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions." (in Judge, 1995: 18).

Thus pluralist approaches are problematic since they 'do not examine the ideological and structural context within which policy is made' (Smith, 1995: 215). Despite the critiques, even some studies conducted in reaction to pluralism concluded there was evidence of pluralist processes (for example Newton's 1976 study of Birmingham). However Newton concluded that there was a pattern of cumulative inequalities amongst voluntary agencies, a position acknowledged in later developments of pluralism. Despite the various critiques pluralism remains a continuing influence in the discussions of urban politics, for example, in both urban regime theory and urban social movement theory. Also pluralist perspectives have been given additional impetus by advocates of post-modernism who stress the complex, fragmented and diverse interests that constitute modern liberal democracies (Smith, 1995: 225).

In contrast to pluralism, elite theory developed a more contextual approach, assuming the dominance of economic power. In this perspective an elite are able to determine societal goals. Elite theory builds around the notion of 'cumulative inequalities' and the limited and selective mobilisation of interest groups (Stoker, 1991: 120). According to Harding (1995: 39) it was Hunter's assertion in 1953 that systems of local representative democracy were a 'smoke-screen' behind which economic elites exert power and influence, which formed the centrepiece of the community power debate. Elite theorists also drew attention to the role of informal networks in urban politics, and the potential development of 'insider groups' which have influence at the core of local government (Stoker, 1991: 121). A third strand of elite theory development was local corporatism, the fusion of the state and particular private sector interests which were claimed to be particularly dominant in Britain in the mid to late 1970s. Critiques of pluralism emerged from those claiming to identify increasingly corporatist policy processes, undermining the notion of open and accessible policy processes. Overall, the elite perspective stresses the cumulative inequalities which local interest groups face in accessing resources, the limited ability of some groups to participate in local political processes and the distance between local authorities and much of their local constituency (Stoker, 1991: 123). For Stoker elite theory has limited applicability to help analyse the complex relations of contemporary urban politics, claiming that local authorities have opened up to new sets of relations with local interest groups, which in turn are better resourced and are seeking more involvement in local welfare provision.

Like pluralism, elite theory is concerned with operation of individual agency in urban politics and, like pluralism, was criticised for methodological weaknesses. It was claimed that research findings would simply reflect researcher's assumptions about where power lay. Linked to this a further criticism was that developing research on the basis of individual's reputations failed to account for the local social relations in which that individual was engaged. Therefore whilst exploring the question of 'who governs?' elite theorists did not explain why particular interests are powerful. More fundamentally, studies failed to demonstrate the links between reputations for power and concrete examples of the operation of that power (Harding, 1995). As the debate progressed the initial concern with 'who rules?' became modified to questions of, 'who sets the agenda and why aren't they challenged?' Stoker (1991) has argued that the changing context, in particular the opening out of local government and the strengthening of local interest group politics present a critical challenge to elite perspectives.

The community power debate dominated urban politics until the mid-1970s when neo-Marxist critiques adopted a structuralist analysis of urban politics and there was increasing concern with forms of local corporatism and changing relations between capital and organised labour. This perspective was based upon the hierarchical structuring of groups to which the state responded in a close relationship based upon consensus. Thus during this period concern shifted away from agency and political autonomy (Harding, 1996: 640). In summary Harding comments that the whole community power debate was undermined by vague notions of community and by conflicts over how to measure power (1996: 640). Additionally, the debate failed to address the importance of non-local factors, was overly concerned with individual behaviour and continued to reflect the assumptions made by researchers (1995: 40).

Overall the community power debate expressed tensions in the understanding of the operation of local power. The bias towards individual agency and the empiricism of accounts were key problems identified in structural critiques. Whilst the debate opened up questions about the operation of urban politics and the concept of power, one of the weaknesses which Harding has noted was the lack of concern with the concept of community. Despite these weaknesses the community power debate provides the foundation from which significant new perspectives in urban politics have developed. In particular the following discussion explores growth machine theory and regime theory, which have been particularly influential in recent debates on urban politics. Particular strands of the community power debate developed through regime theory include the informal relations of influence. Growth machines also indicate a 'partial revision' (Harding, 1995: 41) to the themes of the community power debate in particular seeking to explore urban change through individual action and the interrelation between different agencies.

More recently however there has been a renewed interest in explaining 'patterns of urban change by examining the actions and interrelationships of the principal agents that produce them' (Harding, 1996: 640). Whilst Smith (1995) concludes that pluralist approaches provide for an appreciation of the consequences for different interest groups including the state (1995: 226), others are more sceptical. Stoker (1991: 114) suggests that overall the community power debate fails to accommodate the complexity that defines contemporary relations between local government and local interest groups. In particular, the questions of how power operates and how to measure it are central to contemporary political analysis. Influential within these debates are theories originating in the States, in particular work on growth machines and urban regimes which focus on the actions and inter-relations between key agencies in urban development processes.

3.3 Growth Machines

Growth machine theory as advanced by Molotch (1976) took a new perspective on urban politics arguing that the key factor in local politics was the desire for economic growth. The work was premised on the idea of a local politics dominated by a pro-growth coalition centered on land development shaping the future of the locality through local policy (Logan et al, 1997). For Harding work on growth machines and regimes represent an important development in an emerging 'economy of place' (1995: 41). Harding comments that growth machines help refine elite theory through a particular concern with urban development and it's associated politics. In the work of Logan and Molotch (1987), Harding notes a shift away from structuralist accounts toward a concern with the role of individuals and interest groups (1995: 42). Additionally, the question of power shifts away from the question of 'who if anyone rules?' and becomes focussed on a more grounded set of questions. This includes who exerts influence over the physical development of places, how and why they are able to exert this influence and the outcomes of this.

Whilst growth machine theorists argue that business coalitions, held together by the goal of local economic development, are core to the shaping of local political processes theorists do not assume that the business interests necessarily dominate local agendas. In particular it is acknowledged that whilst the business sector have access to certain resources which allow them substantial influence over development processes, other interest groups can challenge their agendas. Growth machine theorists acknowledge that it is often low-income communities that bear the costs of development processes and that this can lead to conflict between growth coalitions and local residents (Cox and Mair, 1989). Whilst Cooke (1988) argues that analysis has tended to imply the pacification of the working class through the benefits of trickle down it is acknowledged that in some cases anti-growth neighbourhood campaigns may succeed in resisting pressures for development. Overall however there is little attempt by growth machine theorists to explore in depth the relationship between elites and community and voluntary sector groups (Cooke, 1988; Harding, 1995). This is perhaps surprising given Cooke's claim that:

> "To the extent that growth coalitions have existed in Britain they are more likely to have been formed by Labour local authorities, often directly through links between the organised labour movement and local industry." (1988: 194)

A further weakness of growth machine theory stems for little explanation of the circumstances under which particular agents become involved in elite coalitions. Following Harding (1995) this also includes a lack of clarity about the local authority role and what conditions may give rise to local government involvement in growth elites. Further difficulties arise from a limited conception of the state, a restrictive view of economic development as property development and an overly localist stance. Additionally, core methodological difficulties raised by the community power debate receive limited attention by growth

machine theorists, and there is little explicit discussion of methodologies employed (Harding, 1995: 45).

Whilst there are problems in importing this US-based theory to the UK context, Harding (1995: 47) argues that work on growth machines has helped extend UK concerns away from a narrow focus on formal local political processes, and acknowledges the long-standing pressures for public-private co-operation in the UK. However these themes may perhaps be more usefully developed through regime theory which seeks to explore variations within governing coalitions and develop regime typologies based around different patterns of power and local political formations (Logan et al, 1997: 606).

3.4 Regime Theory

Urban regime theory emerged in the mid-1980s in the US context as a response to the limitations of growth machine theories, shifting the parameters of the urban politics debate (Judge et al, 1995: 5). In contrast to elite perspectives regime theory argues no group has monopoly power in a complex world, and that the power to govern is created within the constraints and opportunities of the broader context. Whilst the community power debate asks who governs or who has 'power over', regime theorists are concerned with the social production of power and the capacity to act and achieve goals or 'the power to'. Analysis examines the internal politics of coalition building through which agendas are set and a shared sense of purpose and direction is established. Regime theorists attempt to embrace the complexity of causal relations underlying policy development and seek greater sensitivity to politics and the influence of central government on the nature and direction of local policies and coalition formation. The cross-sectoral focus of regime theory is potentially useful in studying patterns of governance; focusing on the interdependence, co-operation and co-ordination between governmental and non-governmental forces in meeting economic and social challenges (Stoker, 1995). It has been argued that regime theory offers new theoretical and methodological tools for the analysis of urban politics and urban leadership through a broadening of the community power debate (Haughton and While, 1998).

Regime theory has a concern with effective or strategic action stemming from co-operative alliances and relations based upon trust and recognition of mutual dependency. In emphasising the limited power of local government to bridge gaps between the state and market, coalition building is seen as a necessary and integral part of local state capacity to influence economic development. Complexity and fragmentation limit the capacity of the local state to exert control, although it is increasingly regarded as a mobilising or co-ordinating force. Thus governance depends on blending capacities with other non-governmental actors in regime formations. Haughton and While (1998) argue that coalitions

around LED are not inevitable but depend upon the ability to blend leadership, vision, commitment and resources, to build trust, combine resources and resolve differences to bring about individual and collective benefits.

The approach develops the community power debate by focusing on who achieves the capacity to act and under what circumstances. Within this approach central themes are the negotiation between different interests and the motivations for different actors' involvement in coalitions. Questions arise over how particular compromises are reached and the effect which these types of politics may have socially (Haughton and While, 1997: 5). The long term nature of regimes is significant, since co-operative relations need to be intensified to achieve complex non-routine goals. Thus regime theory extends beyond the parameters of formal power to the "...informal yet relatively stable group with access to institutional resources that enable it to have a sustained role in making governing decisions." (Stone in Stoker, 1995: 59). However, achieving co-operation in a fragmented context is assumed to be difficult and analysis explores the conditions under which partnerships are created and maintained and the extent to which they can sustain a capacity to act and influence developments in key policy areas.

For Stone, policy is shaped by the composition of the governing coalition, internal coalition relations, and access to resources. However the capacity to govern is always partial since social and institutional pluralism is constrained by systemic socio-economic variables. Analysis thus explores which actors have influence over decisions that lead to the reproduction of the locality, and, whether communities, places and interest groups have influence in the wider socio-economic system. This marks a distinction between 'the power within communities and the power of communities' (Harding, 1996: 646). Harding (1996) claims that regime theory generates a new set of research questions concerning the significance of contextual factors and the institutional and instrumental forces that encourage coalition formation.

Regime theorists attempt to provide a broad framework for explaining increasingly complex relations between local authorities and local interest groups through a layered model of power (Stoker, 1995). From the mid-1970s the growth of neighbourhood and interest group politics and a growing participation of voluntary and welfare groups in decision-making created a more pluralistic British politics. However, in contrast to the chaos of 'street-fighting' pluralism, regime theorists argue that a capacity to govern can emerge depending upon the 'power of social production' in which actors and institutions gain and fuse the capacity to act by blending resources and skills into a purposive coalition. Stone claims that the distinctive contribution of regime theory stems from its understanding of pre-emptive power or the 'power of social production'. This rests on the need for leadership in complex societies and the capacity of some interests within the coalition to provide leadership. From

this perspective power is about building the regime and achieving governing capacity. Exercising this power requires the manipulation of a strategic position and the control of resources to achieve a common sense of purpose. Despite governance being based upon a plurality of social organisations, groups in the city have differential access to regimes based upon unequal access to resources.

Harding (1995) reviews the main forms of power indicated within regime theory. Through the concept of 'systemic power' regime theorists are able to address the 'third face of power', namely non-decisions and ruling class hegemony. Following Stone (1980) business elites are uniquely situated to enhance the governing capacity of local regimes through systemic power. Systemic notions of power highlight the influence that political institutions and actors can exert through complex and interrelated networks. The concept of systemic power contextualises individual participants within the broader socio-economic system, thereby moving away from the individualist perspectives of urban managerialism (for a critique of urban managerialism see Cater and Jones, 1989). Despite the constraining force of systemic power other political forces and activity can be influential. The second and less positional form of power is 'command power' (or social control). Although the business sector exercises a privileged position in governmental decision-making, through command power or social control power, stemming from the institutional base, this is limited. Thus resources need to be mobilised to achieve domination over other interests, however the effort expended in achieving command power renders it a restricted form of power. 'Coalition power' derives from bargaining processes and is therefore often unstable.

Whilst it has been suggested that regime theory provides a framework for exploring governance which is sensitive to the complexity of urban politics, Harding (1996) notes that regime theory provides an agency focused account, albeit positional rather than individualist. Although Stone acknowledges some similarities between the social production model of power and pluralism he argues that regime theory is distinctive due to the concern with systemic power (power to). For example, Stone argues that pluralism downplays complex inter-relations between government and the economy; however some pluralists, including Dahl, accept manifest linkages between the public and private spheres (Judge, 1995). Thus it might be argued that the increasing interest in regime theory is in accordance with a general sympathy with the pluralist perspective. According to Judge this represents a growing emphasis on the political importance of sub-groups and a 'new pluralism of social movements' which may lead to developments in the community power debate (1995: 32). However, whilst there are clearly common concerns between pluralism and regime theory they are regarded as distinctive theoretical positions. Lauria (1997: 1) specifies the distinctive contribution of regime theory as being to ask 'how and under what conditions different types of governing coalition emerge, consolidate, and become hegemonic or

devolve and transform'. Lauria claims that this model has come to dominate local politics literature because it allows analysis to move beyond 'the stalled debates between elite hegemony and pluralist interest group politics, between economic determinism and political machination and between external or structural determinants and local or social construction' (1).

One of the main approaches through which theorists have attempted to develop the perspective is through the construction of various regime typologies. Different regime typologies reflect the different governing tasks undertaken by regimes in which particular resources need to match specific agendas (Stone in Stoker, 1995: 61). According to Ward these typologies are often built upon historical or spatial typologies or 'ideal types' (1996: 432). Lauria (1997: 3-4) highlights work by Fainstein and Fainstein and by Elkin which derive different sets of regime types based upon various historical epochs. Fainstein and Fainstein (1983) characterise different phases as directive, concessionary and conserving with regime progression depending upon political forces or pressures from social movements. Elkin describes different phases as being pluralist, federalist and entrepreneurial. However critiques identify the limited ability to address spatial and temporal variation within these periods (Lauria, 1997; Ward, 1996: 432).

Stone (1993; see Painter, 1997) develops a four-fold typology that highlights the way in which regimes are structured and the outcomes they help to produce developing along the lines of increasing difficulty of governance task. This includes maintenance or caretaker regimes seeking to preserve the status quo which require few resources and limited involvement by non-governmental actors - leading Painter to question to what extent maintenance regime could be classified as a regime (1997: 130). Development or corporate regimes require more resources due to their concern with more complex governance tasks. Third, middle class progressive regimes undertake more complex tasks by seeking to establish new social or environmental goals. The fourth regime type is described as lower class opportunity expansion regimes. These require mass-mobilisation, resources and co-ordination. Stoker and Mossberger (1994) develop a different typology based upon three main regime types. Organic regimes are likely in areas with strong social relations and may take the form of caretaker, exclusive or traditional regimes. Instrumental regimes evolve around property development and often specific development tasks. Finally, symbolic regimes are those which may be geared towards image building or accessing particular urban policy funds and are often a response to rapid economic restructuring. The typology is based upon a number of different characteristics including; aims, participant motivation, methods of agenda construction, and internal and external relations (Bassett, 1996: 548). Ward (1996: 434) is however critical of this typology arguing that it does not develop the relationship between regime form and wider contextual factors. DiGaetano and Klemanski

also develop a regime typology distinguishing between pro-growth and anti-growth agendas (Bassett, 1996: 549). However for Bassett this fails to address the underlying complexity of political and policy processes. This reflects a broader problem of idealism which permeates regime typologies and which may limit their utility (Bassett, 1996; Painter, 1997; Ward, 1996).

Whilst conceding that these typologies may help to contextualise urban politics Ward (1996: 432) they may also divert attention away from the underlying causes of regime formation. In particular the type of characteristics upon which typologies are constructed may not help in understanding processes of regime formation. Ward argues that whilst the US literature focuses mainly upon the processes of establishing and maintaining regimes:

> "It is the mechanisms underpinning the forming of regimes rather than the superficially similar concrete outcome which will provide urban regime analysis with theoretical power." (Ward, 1996: 429)

The lack of analysis of institutional motivation for engaging in inter-organisational partnerships in regime theory may stem from fundamental differences in governmental and institutional relations between the US and UK contexts. A related issue is that of importing a US developed theory to the different political and cultural context of the UK (Ward, 1996), where for example, business interest representation tends to be less organised and weaker (Harding, 1995). Additionally, administration is less centralised and local government less involved in service provision than in the UK. In the UK context business networks are more diffuse and local government is more firmly integrated into national policy frameworks and finances (Harding, 1996: 645). Similarly Ward (1996) highlights the critical role of UK central government urban policy and public officials in stimulating regime formation. British local government has less autonomy with central government playing a key role in shaping the parameters of local action. These facets may be over-looked due to regimes being studied as bottom-up phenomena, thus overall Ward (1996) suggests that regime theory has been based around observable phenomena and needs further theoretical development. In particular he advocates further exploration of the material processes that underpin regime formation, and the level at which these processes operate (1996: 434). This could potentially build upon Cox and Mair's concept of local dependence to explain the necessary conditions of regime formation (Harding, 1996; Ward, 1996). Given the complex inter-play between local and extra-local forces in helping shape local power structures and activities (Haughton and While, 1998: 6) a developing regime theory may help to close the gap between micro-level studies and broader contextual approaches such as regulation theory (Ward, 1996: 435-436). However:

> "...a dilemma facing all studies of community power is how to place the analysis within the context of wider processes of change." (Stoker, 1995: 66)

Many commentators suggest that regime theory must avoid both empiricism and localism (Ward, 1996; Jones, 1997; Lovering, 1997; Haughton and While 1998). An important aspect of regime analysis is the management of relations between local actors and higher levels of government and the wider political community. For DiGaetano regime analysis tends to neglect ways in which the external or non-local forces shape the processes and structures of local governance (1997: 865). The need to contextualise the analysis of regimes requires more integration between local and non-local sources of policy change, however this in turn raises methodological difficulties (Harding, 1996). Regimes lie within the complex architecture of governance akin to Jessop's concern with the governance of governance and the complex webs of relations which regime theorists seek to embrace may render patterns of causation difficult to trace (Stoker, 1995: 58). Overall Harding (1996) argues that regime theory requires methodological refinement and more specificity. There is a limited legacy of community power studies in the UK where the focus has overwhelmingly been on local government and local government decision-making and less on informal regimes, despite long traditions of partnership working. Regime theory has however become an influential model in the search for ways to theorise the new institutional landscape of governance. Whilst acknowledging that it may help illuminate aspects of decision-making, Cox warns that analysis requires a sensitive handling of power and that an over-emphasis upon networks as opposed to other organisational forms should be avoided (1997: 101).

The above sections have explored some of the main models of urban politics and some of the recent developments of these models. Whilst clearly pluralism has been a very important model for the analysis of third sector community politics other theoretical positions pay much more cursory attention to the third sector. For example growth machine theory seems to portray the community as passively receiving the benefits of urban development or in pursuing an anti-growth agenda acting as a barrier to development. In both these cases the community appear as peripheral to the ruling coalition and there is little indication of the detail of the relations between the different agencies. Further it has been argued that even where community has been an important part of the theory – such as pluralism – the concept has remained under-developed. This perhaps reflects a more general historical tendency in the literature and in practice to underplay this sector. In the contemporary context new governance practices place increased emphasis upon community and more recent models of urban politics are more explicitly concerned with community sector politics and informal politics more generally. The following sections explore the ways in which some models of urban politics seek to address more explicitly third sector politics. In particular it focuses on progressive regimes, policy networks and three-way partnership. It outlines the main foci of these models and identifies key claims made with regard to changing third sector relations, thus providing a framework through which to build a set of empirical questions.

61

3.5 Progressive Regimes

> "A significant gap in the conceptual framework of many regime analyses is the role of social movements or community mobilisation in urban politics." (Sites, 1997: 551)

Sites (1997) claims that despite the variable influence of community mobilisation upon regimes and regime politics this has largely been assumed rather than examined. Analysis of community politics predicated upon a regime approach has mainly come about through work on progressive regimes. Despite recognising the role of popular politics through representative democracy and public participation, regime theorists have focused overwhelming on the private and public sector roles. This stems from a US bias toward the analysis of downtown business and public coalitions. Stone argues, however, that regimes are not inherently a business coalition:

> "In defining an urban regime as the informal arrangements though which public bodies and private interest function together to make and carry out governing decisions, bear in mind that I do not specify that private interests are business interests. Indeed in practice, private interests are not confined to business figures. Labor-union officials, party functionaries, officers in non-profit organisations or foundations, and church leaders may also be involved."
> (quoted in Painter, 1997: 128)

In practice however business sector influence has been pervasive since regime success is evaluated partly in terms of economic outcomes and regimes appear to be dominated by economic, rather than community, development (Ward, 1996). Stone 1991 argues this may stem from the difficulties of co-ordinating community development:

> "For economic development, consensus between just a few peak organisations is required; co-ordination at the top level. For community development, however, grass roots mobilisation is also required. This involves substantial commitment and can lead to instability within the regime."
> (in Ward, 1996: 432)

Work on progressive regimes (DeLeon, 1992; Clavel, 1986; Clavel and Kraushaar, 1998 and Sites, 1997) explores some of the dynamics of community mobilisation but highlights the problems of transforming 'reactive' urban social movements into alternative, or progressive, policy regimes (Judge, 1995:26). De-Leon (1992) charts the rise of opposition and disruption to the established pro-growth policy regime in San Francisco from the late 1970s by an anti-growth urban social movement. The study reveals the processes through which groups mobilised to challenge the growth machine approach of city business and political leaders and the 'Manhattanisation of down town' (1992: 98).

In San Francisco the combination of a strong opposition alliance and national economic forces weakened the position of down town developers, providing the context within which it was possible to disrupt the pro-growth governing coalition (DeLeon, 1992). However, following Castells, the ability to disrupt an existing regime may not necessarily result in the

establishment of a new 'empowering' regime but may lead to the creation of a 'wild city' as different factions dig into their own turf (De-Leon, 1992: 7). In this context USMs are reduced to 'reactive utopias' unable to bring about fundamental changes, or even establish a common agenda between the different factions:

> "Success in building a new progressive urban regime depends in part on the capacity of progressive ideology to inspire a common vision, legitimate new power structures, give coherence and direction to policy, and embrace diverse and sometimes divergent constituency interests." (De-Leon, 1992: 32)

Without effective leadership to transform political fragments into action oriented networks, increasing divisions emerged within the opposition alliance leading to exhibiting 'enclave consciousness' and street-fighting NIMBYism (1992: 139). Further, tensions existed over the appropriate scale and meaning of citizenship with enclaves seeking to protect particular segments of the city rather than the city as a whole. DeLeon argues that city wide agendas were disrupted by conflict between environmentalists calling for regional citizenship and other coalition elements concerned with neighbourhood level organising. This reflected broader tensions stemming from different political goals, the failure to establish new alternative agendas and failure of leadership to unite the 'value-based cleavages' (1992: 32). Consequently, under conditions of hyper-pluralism, the 'power to impede has won out of power to create' (1992: 139). Despite complex patterns of political mobilisation, De-Leon asserts that:

> "New political alignments, coalitions, and ideologies are forming, signalling the deeper restructuring associated with regime transformation." (1992: 31)

However to coalesce different factions and develop programmes to meet individual and collective goals tensions between establishing sub-assemblies to implement the agenda and democratic concerns must be resolved. De-Leon concludes that governing capacity will only emerge through establishing new forms of community co-ordination based upon spatial boundaries of citizenship, an economic base that supports community and compatible structures of citizen participation. Despite DeLeon's optimistic view that a more enduring progressive regime is possible in San Francisco, partial and possibly temporary nature of the coalition raises broad theoretical concerns over the nature of political practice and durability of this type of political fusion. In particular the study highlights tensions around community identity, rights and representation and the role of sub-assemblies.

In their study of progressive regimes in Sheffield and Chicago, Clavel and Kraushaar (1998) note the traditional role of trade unions in the UK social movement base. They assert that following the collapse of the dominant paradigm in the 1980s new opportunities, as well as new conflicts, arose in local policy processes. In Sheffield the local Labour party with the support of a social movement base of support initiated new policies of participation and inclusion. Thus they identify social movements as providing the basis for a new set of ideas and practices. In the UK the trade unions, rather than community, formed the base of the

social movement seeking to take control of the local authority thereby renewing the political base and reconnecting the unions and the Labour Party (1998: 145). This provided a base for a new leadership and new strategies and initiatives linking social needs to economic development. The strong trade union base provided both a channel for ideas and activists moving into the sphere of local government policy-making. For Clavel and Kraushaar this experience of a new, if brief, direction for local politics and local economic policy is an important episode in urban politics which requires expression in theoretical development. At a general level the redirection of local policy can be explained as a response to a social movement form of support base, they ague this needs to be distilled further in order to explore 'what makes the 'progressive' variant happen, when it happens' (1998: 158). Thus they highlight a number of themes for further empirical exploration: the nature of social movements, the political responses to the movements which do arise, whether new administrative practices are developed to support movement involvement and how these different features are related to one another. Important themes to emerge from their analysis include; the changing identity of the city, the way grass-roots initiatives influence policy decisions, how the local authority mediates between business elites and the working class, new local government political and administrative skills and the often short-lived and fragile nature of complex alliances. Whilst there has been opposition to machine politics and there is potential to create new political practices, one of the main barriers has been the process of engaging new groups in political processes. Moreover in cases where groups have engaged they note the tendency for 'pitched battle' politics to arise (1998: 159). Factors influencing whether a transformative politics can become institutionalised include the responsiveness of city governments to social movement organisations and the broader economic context.

In summary progressive regime analysts raise a number of key concerns for evaluating community sector politics. In particular De-Leon stresses the importance of community development for developing progressive regimes, however community development processes require commitment which may be politically difficult. Additionally such community development activity can create instability in local political systems. De-Leon also identifies the difficulty of regime transformation. Reactive community mobilisation may lead to disruption of existing regimes and entrenchment of political divisions rather than provide an impetus for regime transformation and the development of new shared agendas. One theme raised by De-Leon is the importance of ideological processes and political leadership to help fuse different interests and potentially complex patterns of political mobilisation into a coherent agenda. Complex political divisions create the need for community co-ordination in order to establish governing capacity. However even where shared agendas are established there are questions over how to establish mechanisms for implementation and democratic concerns. Whilst Clavel and Kraushaar (1998) acknowledge the tendency for adversarial politics they also cite examples of changing policy directions and new governing coalitions. They conclude there is a need for empirical research to

explore the inter-relations between community mobilisation, political responses and governmental practices.

3.6 Policy Networks

In the contemporary UK context networks have been portrayed as the new driving force of local governance and community relations (see for example Gilchrist, 1995): a third way of co-ordinating complex social and economic relations alongside hierarchies and markets (Stoker and Young, 1993: 179). Amin and Thrift argue the re-discovery of networks has raised a new set of research questions including; 'how networks are held together, how the economic, cultural, political and technical are combined in networks and what constitutes a strong or successful network' (in Murdoch, 1995: 745). In the context of increasing emphasis upon local economic development and more complex urban management tasks:

> "...a range of authors ...have argued that the way forward for city authorities is through developing an institutionally based set of local networks and alliances in which a range of interests are represented and through which wider, global, economic forces can be better 'held down' at the local level." (Raco, 1998a: 975)

The policy network is an important conceptual tool for characterising state-society relationships since it is both 'encompassing' and 'discriminating'. It extends beyond formal political relations to encompass a broader set of actors and relationships whilst discriminating between different types of network and various 'policy communities' (Atkinson and Coleman, 1992: 156). The growing complexity of governance requires that urban managers develop new approaches and organisational structures to accomplish certain tasks, define legitimate interests, and shape political organisation. Thus, the operation and practice of policy networks may help explain variation in inter-governmental relations and government-interest group relations across different policy areas (John and Cole, 1993).

In the current context networks are being driven by the need for greater co-operation and coordination to connect new and complex patterns of institutional arrangements and overcome traditional institutional arrangements (John and Cole, 1993: 304). Therefore, policy networks provide 'a mechanism for assessing the various conflicting institutions' in the context of increasingly complex and fragmented policy processes (Smith, 1993: 7). Stoker and Young seek to define the principles of network operation which includes; a recognition of dependency; a pooling of resources, information exchange, development of trust, mutual orientation, shared agendas and long term commitment (1993: 183). Rhodes and Marsh claim that network analysis is useful for highlighting the informal basis of much bargaining and decision-making in a fragmented local politics and that network theory is:

> "...uniquely designed to understand a context of institutional fragmentation where actors must set up regular channels of communication in order to get things done." (John and Cole, 1993: 305)

However, it has been argued that it is difficult to incorporate the influence of macro political institutions and the power of political discourse within this framework, leading some to understand networks as a variant of pluralism (Atkinson and Coleman, 1992). In contrast Marsh and Rhodes (1992) argue the influence of network theory stems from weaknesses in pluralism and corporatism. They perceive the policy networks to operate at the meso level linking the role of specific interest groups to the broader functioning of power in society (although see Dowding, 1994). The notion of policy communities indicates the sub-systems or segments of policy-making, generally comprising a relatively stable and limited number of active participants. From this perspective negotiation between government agencies and pressure groups occurs within a relatively closed system and access by outsider groups is difficult:

> "Policy-making takes place within a variety of policy networks characterised by close relationships between particular interest and different sections of government." (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992: 9)

Marsh and Rhodes are keen to stress the macro-micro level of inter-relations (i.e. central-local government relations) rather than the micro concerns of the ethics and behaviour of individual actors. Thus whilst regime theorists, including Stoker, ally regimes to network forms of organisation, Bassett argues they are distinctive approaches:

> "If regime theory emphasizes the horizontal relations and nature of local linkages, then policy network theory emphasizes more the vertical linkages between locality and centre in different, unevenly professionalised policy domains" (1996: 552)

Network analysis usefully addresses the issue of fragmentation within governance and thus is particularly salient for approaching third sector politics. In particular the process of networking is viewed as a mechanism for coordination overcoming some of the negative impacts of fragmentation:

> "Given the intractability and complexity of some of the challenges facing city policy-makers we would argue that networking - developing effective responses in partnership with other interests and organisations – is the only viable way forward." (Stoker and Young, 1993: 188)

In contrast to Marsh and Rhodes, other network theorists stress the importance of inter-personal relations within policy communities. Policy processes are founded in personal linkages arising as a result of necessary co-operating and negotiating 'uncomfortable institutional arrangements' (John and Cole, 1993: 305). This concern with networking leads to a focus upon the mechanics of internal relationship building. However, the mechanics of network operation are notoriously difficult to investigate given the informal and often hidden style of relations. The somewhat fluid boundaries of networks, arising from the mix of formal and informal linkages, present challenges both to governance and research into governance.

This perspective stresses intense and co-operative relationships between key decision-makers whilst recognising that actors in different arenas experience varying sets of relationships. This has led to the development of network typologies. Marsh and Rhodes (1992) develop a typology, albeit somewhat crude, based upon the degree to which networks are open or closed, as a basis from which to draw conclusions about the way networks structure policy outcomes. 'Policy communities' involve few, highly integrated actors, membership is exclusive and stable and involves frequent interaction. The policy community is united by a core set of stable values and a balance of power although there may be a dominant group. 'Issue networks', by contrast, are much looser and larger. Interaction varies both in terms of frequency and quality with less continuity of relations. These relations are often consultative in nature, based upon an unequal balance of power (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992: 251). A common strand within governance literature is the notion of policy processes opening up:

> "If anything has characterised the policy process in recent years it is the entry
> of a proliferation of voluntary associations and public interest groups that were
> previously thought to be unorganised and virtually unorganisable." (Atkinson
> and Coleman, 1992: 160)

However such openness would infer that it is not possible to predict who participates in any particular event and whilst concepts focus attention on individual actors there is a tendency to 'map interactions' rather than uncover the structure and content of those relations (Atkinson and Coleman, 1992: 161). Critiques have thus questioned the value of such broad descriptions of relations offered by this continuum typology, highlighting the need to address not just the continuity in relations but the dynamic nature of networks which are subject to continuous re-negotiation and change (Atkinson and Coleman, 1992). Key questions therefore arise over the context of policy networks, how and why networks change, the role of inter-personal relations, the influence over policy outcomes and relationship to democracy. Further methodological questions are raised over how such changes can be measured.

Critiques of network theory highlight a number of conceptual ambiguities that exist, for example around policy community and policy network, and which hinder the translation of policy networks into an explanatory framework (John and Cole, 1993: 305). The difficulty of developing conceptual tools for analysing varied and fragmented governance has led to the use of 'elastic' concepts like policy networks and policy community (Atkinson and Coleman, 1992). For example, policy networks refer to the dependency relationships between organisations and individuals in frequent contact in specific policy areas. However, policy community focuses on shared beliefs, patterns of behaviour and norms of conduct. According to Atkinson and Coleman (1992: 158) policy community may be understood as a stable tight-knit form of network or more loosely as those who share a common policy focus. In other cases policy network refers to the linking processes that occur within a policy community (i.e. community as actors and network as the relationship between them). This

contributes to definitional imprecision and general lack of clarity, stemming in part from broader conceptual limitations in describing complex sets of relationships in such a way that it will help understand policy outcomes. This suggests a need for further conceptual development. Additionally, there has been little theoretical specification of how different modes of co-ordination may work in conjunction with one another.

Thus far, policy network theory may provide useful tools for helping describe relations but is less able to explain them (John and Cole, 1995; see also Dowding, 1994). This implies that more explicit attention needs to focus on the institutions engaged in network relations and the sustainability and dynamics of those relations. Central to this is the need to re-aggregate the state and develop concepts to explain how networks and communities affect macro level policy outcomes and how national political institutions condition policy networks and communities. Thus far Atkinson and Coleman claim the perspective has reverted to pluralist understanding of the state rather than take on board macro-political structures providing the context in which networks are formed (1992: 164). Further development is needed in order to help conceptualize patterns of change within networks to explain how policy networks change and help determine relationship between network change and policy change. These problems link to difficulties of defining policy networks and identifying network membership. Like regime theory, network theory is seen as being able to explain stability rather than change, and is less able to address questions of how and why policies change and who is able to effect this change - i.e. questions regarding the operation of power (Smith, 1993; John and Cole, 1993). Hence Dowding's criticism (in John and Cole, 1993: 306) that the degree of openness of a network does not explain the policy process rather, its penetrability is explained by other processes especially 'the structure of bargaining games'. Network theory is weak because it does not explain the way in which actors try to deploy their resources to affect outcomes or which actors become important. Finally, John and Cole argue that network theory does not capture the differentiated relations within the network which are made up of many networks, thus networks must be investigated in their full complexity embracing the different coalitions and bargaining processes and the context of these processes.

In attempting to explore political relations, John and Cole have suggested that developments may occur through a multi-theoretic approach combining network analysis with models of political power including pluralism, neo-pluralism/ neo-elites, local policy advocacy coalition, institutions, bureaucratic politics and localism. This approach suggests that networks will reflect broader power relations through identifying the structure of networks comprising local governance in a more complex organisational context. Outcomes will also however reflect the 'network effect' (John and Cole, 1993: 310) based upon the internal bargaining which takes place between powerful actors. Following Amin and Thrift (1995) networks are constructed for particular purposes, but are path (or strategy) and context dependent and

become sedimented over time, thus creating their own dynamic. Different structures may promote different patterns of interaction producing unexpected policy outcomes. Explanation thus rests upon interaction between power relations as expressed by policy-making models and that of networks themselves, although the former is dominant.

Whilst Murdoch and Abram (1998) outline potential limits to community in networks (see also Amin and Thrift, 1995 who suggest that networks may be a way of retaining and embedding traditional relations of power and dominance) others have suggested positive benefits for community. Gilchrist and Taylor (1997: 171) focus on networking as a method of organising. They claim that networking may open up 'circuits of power' by mobilising webs of networks in everyday life and thus helping re-connect circuits which have been eroded (a similar argument is made by Davoudi and Healey 1995 in their discussion of three-way partnership-see below). For Gilchrist and Taylor (1997: 173) networks provide channels for new flows of power, and may be justified on the basis of greater efficiency. The inter-connection of networks is also important. This is echoed in the work of Skelcher et al who claim networks are an opportunity for power sharing, building on trust, co-operation and mutual advantage and allowing linkages to be built between those who have been central to urban regeneration process and those who have been marginal (1996: 15).

Networks are claimed to provide a basis for regeneration processes that are less paternalistic and more sensitive to local needs. The looser linkages claimed to be characteristic of networks are seen as encouraging commonality as well as encompassing diversity (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997: 173). This implies more horizontal forms of power relations supporting more pluralist modes of governance (Skelcher et al, 1996) with networks enhancing local level delivery as a management tool and promoting engagement in local governance. Whilst networks are claimed to yield benefits including increased understanding between partners, more dispersed power and easier policy implementation, this depends on individuals within the networks having the capacity to manage the tensions that arise. Networking, encouraged by shared working experiences or geographical ties, is not formalised into rules or procedures, but relies upon individual motivation and skill. Skelcher et al highlight the importance of the individual and their values, describing networks as relations between individuals, even though they are often group representatives, claiming:

"It's personalities that drive networks." (1996: 16)

Network members mediate between the local community and public agencies translating policies to increase their acceptability to the local community. Whilst the fluidity of networks may be the foundation for these benefits, there is a danger of networks producing 'self-sustaining elites', arising through stable membership and key players which may in turn lead to reduced accountability. Whilst Skelcher et al suggest that strong leadership and ethical frameworks will prevent this from occurring, Gilchrist and Taylor argue the spread of power

69

depends on the extent to which organisations are linked to other constituencies. For them accountability hinges upon shared expectations, rationales, transparency and responsiveness, but can be compromised by increasing numbers of formal mechanisms (a claim which contrasts with that of Skelcher et al above).

Some theories of community and voluntary action stress the role of loose alliances which hold more formally organised coalitions to account as tasks become more complex (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997: 176). In their discussion of community participation in urban regeneration Atkinson and Cope (1997: 214) argue that community organisations may defend against incorporation into partnership structures through retaining strong ties to the background community. From this perspective informal networks provide the backdrop to more formal modes of organisation and structures. From this perspective the governance task depends upon having well developed and overlapping community networks, supported through community development processes. This highlights the importance of networking processes underpinning sustainable and responsive organisational capacity (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997: 165).

For Lowndes et al one of the potential benefits of networks and partnerships is the potential to counter-balance entrenched interests, thus allowing community groups a 'direct voice' (1997: 342). However as a form of governance networks maybe problematic due to their instability (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997: 173). Similarly:

> "The ebbs and flows of network activity also make them more problematic as systems for local governance." (Skelcher et al, 1996: 19)

Additionally, there is a tendency for networks to operate around particular activities or issues (for example housing or community development). Thus paradoxically, the ebbs and flows of activity combined with a lack of integration may create co-ordination problems. Moreover, Skelcher et al argue that:

> "Communities...remain marginal within urban regeneration networks because they lack direct- and therefore real power." (1996: 27)

Whilst Gilchrist and Taylor argue that networks can alter social relations and open up access to new circuits of power, the reality may be somewhat different:

> "...while access to policy networks may have improved, the influence of voluntary and community organisations remains that of the 'peripheral outsider' (Taylor, 1997: 98)

One problem, however is the engagement by local communities in partnerships whose agenda is set by central government (Lowndes et al, 1997; Murdoch and Abram, 1998). Barriers to successful networking include conflicts over representation, the immediate costs of network involvement (see Painter's work on regime theory 1997) and the difficulties of building vertical networks linking the local regional, national and European levels. The claim

that vertical networks maybe difficult to build can be contrasted with the perspective of Murdoch and Abram (1998) who stress the controlling aspect of vertical networks.

The literature on policy networks opens up a number of themes for analysis of contemporary urban politics. In particular it emphasises the increasing need for co-operation and co-ordination in policy process and building of new relations in the current fragmented institutional context. However, there is a tension between those stressing vertical linkages and those stressing horizontal linkages. Amin and Thrift's analysis (1995) raise questions for further empirical investigation concerning how networks are held together and their internal structure, and their role in collectivising practices.

In summary, Taylor and Hoggett argue that network feature of trust and reciprocity can be distilled into shared norms / values, rational self-interest, mutual dependence and repeated experience (1994: 127). They suggest that at various levels the concept of networks appears to reflect the way third sector organisations operate and the type of strategies they adopt. However these relations cannot be assumed. For example the flexibility implied by network modes of co-ordination may be overstated given the tendency of third sector organisations to become more formalised and hierarchical over time. Additionally networks can be particularist and sectional due to exclusionary tendencies. Divisions between groups can lead to the formation of new networks or divisions within pre-existing networks that can, in turn, lead to schism and instability and the break-down of trust resulting in oppression. Finally, networks do not tend to be open to public scrutiny nor are they publically accountable. Taylor and Hoggett conclude that whilst networks maybe 'inefficient, inequitable and even unethical' because of the reliance of networks upon trust, these problems are neither 'inevitable' nor are they defining features of networks (1994: 138)

Within the network model a range of claims are made concerning new co-operative relations that characterise community politics. In particular it is suggested that qualitatively shifts in relation expressed through networks enhance opportunities for community involvement in mainstream bargaining and decision-making. From this stems a concern with how network relations are structured and the dynamics of these relations. However the literature indicates that the nature of network relations also raises some methodological difficulties. In particular the hidden and informal nature of relations, compounded by their dynamism and instability can make them difficult to research and analyse.

71

3.7 Three-Way Partnership

"The new patterns of community involvement which have emerged over the last few years have gone beyond small-scale independent initiatives. The local community has been elevated to the apparent state of partner in the regeneration process." (Hastings, McArthur and McGregor, 1996: 5)

The final specification of contemporary urban political relations considered here is the three-way partnership model. Although it is difficult to disentangle three-way partnership from some of the network specifications above, Lowndes et al (1997) attempt to distinguish between networks, partnerships and networking processes. Their research concludes that networks and partnerships are two distinct forms of relationship whose specific features are indicated in the table below.

Table 1 – Features of Networks and Partnerships

	Network	**Partnership**
Focus	*Individual relationship*	*Organisational relationships*
Motivation	*Voluntaristic*	*Voluntaristic or imposed*
Boundary	*Indistinct*	*Clear*
Composition	*Fluid*	*Stable*
Membership	*Defined by self and/or others*	*Defined by formal agreement*
Formalisation	*Low*	*High*

(Taken from Lowndes et al, 1997: 336)

Networks arise out of relations based upon shared beliefs, values or concerns to which individuals sign up. The relations are more dynamic and less structured than in partnership relations where the membership arrangements are clearly defined. Despite these differences Lowndes et al note that networks and partnerships are:

"...not necessarily alternative ways of managing the urban regeneration process. They can and do co-exist." (1997: 337)

Indeed, networks may form the basis for partnership development. Both networks and partnerships are based upon 'processes of networking' characterised by 'a sense of trust, co-operation and mutual advantage' (Lowndes et al, 1997: 337). The formal arrangements of partnerships however may not necessarily produce meaningful relationships and procedural concerns may hinder networking.

Contemporary regeneration partnerships are justified on the basis of increasing sensitivity to local needs and overcoming some of the paternalistic tendencies characteristic of previous styles of local government. It is claimed that partnerships can increase the *effectivity* of policy implementation by drawing in additional resources including finance, skills, knowledge, political access and people. A further justification for three-way partnerships is the claimed

sustainability arising through community stewardship (Hastings and McArthur, 1995). Partnership is deemed to perform a *legitimising* function by providing a more plural model of urban regeneration in which all have a voice (see for example Atkinson and Cope, 1997). In the current context of governance it is claimed that 'processes of negotiation and compromise come to the fore in the development of policy strategy' (Hastings and McArthur, 1995: 176). Additionally, community involvement in three-way partnerships is claimed to allow a broadening of strategic agendas and has the potential to result in community development and resident empowerment (McArthur, 1995). Three-way partnership initiatives have been highlighted as opening up community networks as a way of managing local relations between agencies and potentially empowering the community sector (Skelcher et al, 1996). Thus whilst networks may not be a new feature of urban processes, it has been claimed that the current framework provides an opportunity to close the gap between inner and outer networks:

> "Opening up the management of the regeneration process at the local level offers the prospect that community, local business and voluntary sector representatives can be more fully engaged in the decision-making process."
> (Skelcher et al, 1996: 12)

One important strand of work on three-way partnership, reflecting on the implications for community politics is based upon empirical research undertaken in North Tyneside and the West End of Newcastle (Davoudi and Healey, 1995; Davoudi, 1995). For Davoudi (1995) City Challenge represented a 'major break' from previous urban policy. It sought to combine the incorporation of residents from disadvantaged areas into the mainstream with the development of policy processes concerned with empowering local residents. This initiative promoted co-ordinated area based strategies, based upon the new institutional mechanism of three-way partnership, bringing together the local authority, private sector and local community. Critically, the new institutional processes and structures were elevated in importance alongside other outcomes and was seen as a potential catalyst for new practices which could be reproduced in other areas of local authority activity and decision-making. The research cited by Davoudi suggests that despite potential benefits and possibilities of mutual transformation (Mackintosh, 1992):

> "...there is a slow struggle going on to re-define agendas and ways of working." (Davoudi, 1995: 341)

Davoudi concludes that although research conducted in the Newcastle's West End reveals the dynamics of a widening power base this has not necessarily produced increased collaboration and transparency nor a common sense of ownership (1995: 343). This implies that despite City Challenge's focus on re-building local relations and political empowerment it may only have had a limited impact upon neighbourhood governance processes and the range of participative opportunities (Davoudi and Healey, 1995). Davoudi and Healey conclude that:

73

"...the strategy of the local authority and the struggles by the participants in the partnerships have a significant influence on the content and style of the programme." (1995: 79)

In turn, the style of programmes affects the internal balance of power and the terms upon which various partners are incorporated into governance processes. This perspective suggests that outcomes of new institutional structures and processes are subject to local influence. In order to evaluate potential empowerment Davoudi and Healey adopt an institutional focus combining a concern with interest representation and the 'micropolitics of social interaction (1995: 85). In turn their framework for empirical research into neighbourhood governance seeks firstly to identify who is involved, how they become involved, their values and interests, their relationship to other actors and the strategies they pursue. Secondly, they focus on how local agendas develop and the rules, resources and ideas that guide this process and the type of discourses and style used. Through employing this framework they seek to draw conclusions about who is controlling the process and how sustainable the form of process might be.

Davoudi and Healey (1995) question whether new alliances may help co-ordinate existing fragments or simply add additional fragments to local governance and other commentators have highlighted various tensions surrounding three-way partnership which are likely to impact upon the evolution of third sector politics. Whilst the fragmented institutional context provides the rationale for partnerships it also creates a number of tensions. Initiatives like the SRBCF, whilst claiming to represent moves to greater integration and co-operation, are being delivered through competitive bidding which militates against the claimed collaborative relations (Atkinson and Coleman, 1997; Taylor, 1997). Further tensions arise from centralising tendencies toward Europe and localising pressures stressing local community involvement, dilemmas over information sharing, establishing trust and varying degrees of formality (Lowndes et al, 1997). Other tensions indicated in Mackintosh's (1992) analysis of partnership include; varying objectives, the need to extract gains from other partners and trying to assimilate people to particular patterns of behaviour. The need to extract gains from other partners links to claims by Davoudi that this can lead to the community seeking to transform community involvement into community control and the 'right to vote' into the 'right to veto'.

Stewart and Taylor argue that three-way regeneration partnerships pose 'new challenges for the articulation and representation of community interests' (1995: iv). This implies a renewed concern with how community is constructed and how this is translated into representative forms and partnership processes (McCulloch, 1997). For Hastings and McArthur (1995) the complexity of community networks underpinning partnerships creates considerable dilemmas around representation processes. Whilst the limited base of representation may be regarded as problematic, the community activism literature

recognises the differential role played by women, as one study conducted in the North East reflected:

> "As with many such groups, the origin was to be found with the actions of a few strong minded women." (Barke and Turnbull in McCulloch, 1997: 55)

Thus McCulloch warns that representative processes are likely to omit men and place additional burdens upon women. Further discriminatory practices may arise from the 'hand-picking' of representatives by public authorities (Mayo, 1997) and the exclusion of the most marginalised groups (Croft and Beresford, 1992). One dilemma regarding community representation is the difficulty of developing coordination structures to establish a collective community view (see Nevin and Shiner, 1995; Colenutt and Cutten, 1994). However, following Holmes, the success of umbrella organisations depends upon community traditions, local identity, energy and commitment (Hastings and McArthur, 1995: 60). For McArthur (1993) one of the problems of umbrella organisations is that they may often act for the benefit of public and private sector partners, providing a relatively easy mechanism for accessing community. Community representative structures may also face recurring problems where there is a high level of professional involvement, which may lead other partners to question the legitimacy of community. Whilst Stewart and Taylor argue that traditional relations are being mediated in new organisational settings, empowerment depends upon negotiating with other agencies and establishing new rules of engagement (1995: 62). Consequently they conclude:

> "There is therefore potential for a considerable shift of power in the new structures of area governance as communities are invited to become players in a bigger game with significant resources." (1995: 69)

However, they acknowledge the potential problems of *incorporating* residents into existing power structures thus rendering them 'mere spectators of the realignment of power' (1995: 71). Other commentators have stressed the depoliticisation of community under contemporary urban policy. Colenutt (1990) for example, argues that partnership politics have depoliticised urban development processes and questions who has benefited from development processes. Thus Colenutt fundamentally questions the basis of partnership organisation, suggesting that the process of community engagement is one of incorporation. Additionally, Campbell (1993) has argued that City Challenge has turned community activists from a problem into a resource. Given the context in which this new form of partnership has emerged and the conflict between central and local government, these new initiatives:

> "...may represent a more subtle form of central control over the 'urban regeneration game' in which central government sets the rules of the game that localities have to accept if they wish to at least have the possibility of access to scarce funds." (Atkinson and Coleman, 1997: 211)

The unequal treatment of community groups has led Duffy and Hutchinson (1997) to note that the result maybe a disempowerment of the community which may be followed by apathy and a:

"...reconsolidation of professionals to fill the decision-making gap." (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997:352)

Hart et al comment on an apparent relationship between the confinement of community to operational rather than strategic issues and the ascendancy of the professional role (1997: 199). They argue that professional power exceeds bureaucratic power due both to community apathy and the new administrative frameworks of local governance, which stress managerial accountability. Thus Atkinson and Cope (1997) indicate the need for structural and cultural change to facilitate community organisations as the site upon which negotiations over resource allocation and strategic decision-making are taken. In particular they argue there is a need to disrupt 'bureaucratic routines' (219) and professional cultures, despite the above suggestions that there has been a re-entrenchment of professional cultures. Thus has led to suggestions that there may be a 'new managerialism' emerging (Kearns, 1995; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 359). This concurs with other claims suggesting problems of maintaining and supporting networks, and the potential dangers of 'network fatigue' (Skelcher et al, 1996:54). Overall, models of three-way partnership seeking to characterise new relations and processes of governance highlight the formality of relations offering both new opportunities for the third sector in terms of resources but potential barriers to greater involvement.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has explored changing conceptions of urban politics in general and community politics in particular. The discussion has highlighted claims of broader partnerships and different sets of ideas about the character of new governance relations. The shift in urban policy has been accompanied by a set of literatures that explore the changing form and nature of urban politics. This chapter has used a number of models to extract themes and foci to help provide a framework within which to analyse changing third sector politics. Whilst the elasticity of concepts used within discussions of governance leads to a merging of different perspectives, some distinctive claims have been made with regard to the nature of community engagement in local governance processes. These key claims are summarised in the table below. The various models demonstrate different interpretations of political relations and offer potential characterisations of the third sector role.

Table 2 – Main Features of Community-Oriented Models of Urban Politics

Features	PROGRESSIVE REGIMES	COMMUNITY NETWORKS	THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP
Rationale	Establish alternative progressive regime via city-wide political alliance	Tool of co-operation / negotiate uncomfortable institutional relations	Central government driven Economic governance- new forms of integration / co-ordination
Community membership	Community mobilisation/ Reactive social movements	Defined by self or others Varied and voluntaristic participation Hidden and informal identities and interests	Defined by formal agreement/ board membership Voluntaristic or imposed/ selected/ stable Community as junior partner/ confers legitimacy
Leadership	Politicos transform fragments into action-oriented networks	Strong leadership to manage tensions & mediate between community and public agencies Personalities drive networks	Reconsolidation of professional role Private sector leadership Regional government influence
Relations	Enclaves, disruptive, political fragments/ value based cleavages	Dynamic/ fluid boundaries Informal close personal relations/ dependency Mutual trust/ advantage co-operation Negotiation/ bargaining /anti- incorporation	Round tables structures Formal rather than meaningful Sectoral distinction Politics of negotiation/ compromise
Agendas	Utopian Diverse/divergent political goals and values	Based on shared beliefs /values/norms	Area-based agendas developed within framework/ priorities/ time-scale set by central government Struggles to redefine agendas
Power	Power to impede or disrupt Political disorder	Power-sharing opens up new circuits of power but depends on linkages between organisations Danger embed existing power relations/ support self-sustaining elite Community influence variable	Community junior partner/variable influence Depoliticisation/ rubber stamping/ danger of incorporation v' s widening of power base/ strategic community role/ / control /veto counteracting entrenched interests

77

Features	PROGRESSIVE REGIME	COMMUNITY NETWORKS	THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP
Tensions	Individual v' s collective goals Democratic processes and structures v' s creation of sub-assemblies of agenda implementation Lack shared agendas/beliefs	Limited tensions	Arenas of conflict Nature/ role /process of community representation Organisational proliferation/ duplication of effort Clash cultures / norms/ working styles
Outcomes	Wild city/hyper-pluralism/street fighting NIMBYism Politics of turf/ enclave consciousness Reduced governing capacity Potential new practices and broader agendas	Open up governance systems Partnership representation Overcome paternalism via sensitivity to local needs	Open up decision-making Challenge governmental practices/ paternalism Synergy/ resources/ mutual transformation Sensitivity to local needs
Stability/ durability	Very unstable – problem of transforming into a powerful, stable city-wide regime	Instability Ebbs and flows of network activity	Community stewardship creates sustainability
Analytical focus	Nature of social movement, political response to social movement and possible new administrative practices and the inter-relations between these elements	How individual agendas and personal relations are transformed into policy networks	The role and interests of different actors and their inter-relations and the role and development of discourses and arenas

The review of the above models has shown some of the limitations in explaining new urban politics. Whilst theoretical developments are responding to these limitations many are at a relatively early stage. One problem encountered in summarising the claims and foci of particular models are the variations that characterise different versions of the model. The aim has therefore been to extract some of the key themes, however the resultant level of generality means that some elements of the models tend to collapse into each other. One reason for this is the conceptual elasticity that is a feature of much contemporary writing on urban politics (see for example Peck and Tickell, 1994). Critically however it also demonstrates the shortcomings of associated empirics and their reporting. Despite this, the above review and summary table above does demonstrate distinctive sets of concerns and claims about community politics and thus provides a tool for approaching the operation of community politics in local governance.

The various models make specific claims with regard to third sector involvement and drive a concern with particular themes and foci. As such they form a tool for grounding fine-grain empirical enquiry into new third sector politics and provide a framework through which to analyse research findings. However the models presented above tend to shift attention away from the empirical complexities which characterise contemporary urban politics (Stoker, 1991). Moreover additional complexities surround third sector politics, some of which have been highlighted in previous discussion. It has been claimed that there are issues around constructing community identity that feed into processes of community representation. The notion of community and community practice is surrounded by complexity and ambiguity (Cochrane, 1993: 73) compounded by new motivations for community, which are both top-down and bottom-up. Additionally, the outcomes of community engagement are subject to spatial and temporal variation. Cooke (1985: 214) has argued that wide variations in cultural practices raise questions regarding the relationship between structural constraints and individual action. Theoretical questions have been posed about linking theoretical models of local action to the broader context. A number of questions have also been raised about how empirical investigation of these phenomena may take place. Whilst these are explored in more detail in the methods section, a general theme is the challenge of investigating relations which are often informal and may be taking place 'behind the scenes'.

Thus, although attempts to capture 'new 'style urban politics are reflected in the models and provide a useful grounding point for empirical investigation, the models embrace assumption and simplification. Following from Valler et al (1998) whilst models of governance and models of community politics often build around broad trajectories of change such as complexification or fragmentation, these tend to unravel in the light of detailed empirical investigation. Additionally there are tendencies to characterise changing governance through the use of dualisms, so that for example community sector literature has a tendency

to view changes as empowering or disempowering. Although some work is more grounded in empirical work, for example Davoudi and Healey's (1995) analysis of City Challenge in the North-East, other insights do not necessarily help unravel the precise nature of processes and how local factors influence broader trajectories of change. Even where analysis is directed at specific institutional forms or sector – such as Lowndes et al (1997) on networks – the literature tends to deflect attention away from the ground. Thus models can tend to unravel in the light of detailed empirical investigation. Additionally, there is a lack of conceptual rigour surrounding the development of models – for example the concept of three-way partnership remains under-theorised. Any evaluation of the third sector role in contemporary urban politics, must therefore seek to extend beyond the models to explore the operation of different political actors. The research seeks to explore the mechanics of community politics in the new local governance. Attempts to assess these mechanics and crystallise broad themes are however difficult to do within complex institutional environments which are multiplied across fragmented local institutional arena.

In order to develop a more detailed exploration of the dynamics of these processes Valler et al develop an analytical framework based upon the concept of operation. This is concerned with the distilling broad changes into a more detailed specification of the operations and mechanics of governance. This allows the analysis to extend beyond the models presented above, whilst using them as a framework through which to help set up the fine grain empirics necessary for getting at operation. The concept of operation embraces a detailed concern with precisely who does what, when and how (i.e. the operation and mechanics of governance). They advocate a renewed commitment to empirical investigation to uncover the lineaments of change and the character of new forms. In part this requires detailed attention to the constitution of specific roles in the new arrangements and an evaluation of different activities different actors are engaged in and under what conditions. This allows further exploration of what specific roles and actions mean and whether and how these vary across different contexts. It has thus been argued that a concern with operation can help to address some of the complexity of new political relations that are not reflected in the models. It can therefore help uncover what precisely the changes mean whilst accommodating the spatial and temporal variation in the roles being constructed for particular groups of actors.

The literature has reflected how institutional forms have become broader and more flexible and how the boundaries between institutions has become less clear as more inter-connections have developed. Despite weaknesses inherent in the current turn to community it is still suggested that there is evidence of more pluralistic policy processes which is interpreted as signifying a possible redistribution of political power (Mayer, 1994,1994; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 359). However, the link between urban policy and democracy needs

further exploration. Stoker, reflecting on research into participation, suggests that more research:

> "...is desperately needed, particularly in terms of the role of these organisations and movements in the emerging system of local governance."
> (1997: 186)

Similarly in relation to the voluntary sector Taylor has argued that:

> "...surprisingly little is known about the different patterns of co-ordination in different localities and in different parts of the sector." (1997: 96)

PART THREE: METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4 Methods

4.1 Research Themes and Questions

This chapter explores how conceptual themes identified in the previous chapters have been operationalised through the empirical investigation. It details the methods employed in research and reflects on both research design and implementation and constraints imposed on the research process. The research seeks to specify and characterise the nature of emergent political forms in the new urban governance. It focuses specifically on changing sectoral roles and relations. A key claim within the literature is that new political roles and relations are emerging through new forms of urban governance, which has in particular elevated the community sector. The research therefore explores the specific patterns and processes of community engagement. This allows for a reflection on the theoretical claims about the changing nature of urban politics and community engagement within this. Additionally, broader reflections concerning the way in which new institutional relations are being constructed can be addressed through an exploration of community involvement (Raco, 1998: 3).

Despite the weaknesses associated with the current turn to community it is still suggested that there is evidence of more pluralistic policy processes, in turn regarded as signifying the possibility of a redistribution of political power (Mayer, 1994,1994; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997). However, claims of possible links between urban policy and democracy require further research (Stoker, 1997). Chapter 2 has set up the context for an exploration of the changing nature of community politics by outlining the restructuring of the state and local state. In particular it has reviewed the regulationist contribution, which locates these changes within the broader context of economic restructuring. Within this framework there is a concern with the breakdown of old modes of regulation and the potential establishment of new regulation through new norms, cultural practices, mechanisms and institutions. The thesis has built around key sets of regulationist claims regarded the changing local political terrain and the opening up of new community sector roles within this. Within the regulationist framework important claims have been made about the reconstruction of urban local politics. More recent contributions to the regulation perspective have stressed the need for concrete research to explore the actual processes of regulation which are unevenly developed and influenced by local social practices (Goodwin and Painter, 1997).

Significant gaps have been identified within the literature regarding community involvement in local politics. Stoker (1997: 186) has argued that more research needs to be conducted into the role of community organisations and movements in the changing context of local governance. Further, with specific regard to the voluntary sector Taylor has argued that there is a gap in the research exploring patterns of co-ordination both within different parts of the sector and between different localities (1997: 96). In order to assess claims of a more pluralistic phase of urban local politics and to evaluate theoretical claims regarding new patterns of political relations, the research seeks to specify the changing nature of third sector politics. Thus the research seeks to clarify the opportunities and constraints around broadening the base of community involvement in local policy processes within specific contexts.

The research seeks to explore in detail the constitution of the third sector role in local governance systems and processes. It seeks to explore the changing nature of community politics through exploring how things work and what causes things to work in particular ways. This builds around a concern with who does what, when and how. As previously highlighted these roles are spatially and temporally constituted. Through such an exploration it is possible to develop further insights in what particular roles mean. Building upon this basic concern for operation, the various models of urban politics discussed in Chapter 3, provide a number of themes around which to develop the research. It is hoped that this framework will provide direction to the research design, in addition providing a set of claims to be evaluated and also help identify gaps in the existing models drawing on the empirical findings. Whilst the models demonstrate a general appreciation of these issues, the empirical work seeks to use detailed case studies to get at the fine-grain of operation. The following themes extracted from the models help provide a framework for the research.

The models direct attention to the different sets of actors involved in local governance. In particular Davoudi and Healey (1995) indicate the need to specify who is involved and what interests they represent. The models tend to suggest three identifiable interest groupings namely; public, private and third sectors; however they tend not to reflect much on this categorisation. However attention is drawn to the different degrees of clarity that surround the membership of partnerships, regimes and networks. Previous discussion has however also highlighted the ambiguity surrounding conceptions of community and the third sector. Secondly, the models highlight the evolution of new collaborative forms of relation both within the third sector (networks) and between the different sectoral groupings. Each focuses on the development of internal and external relations, but place different emphasis upon horizontal or vertical relations. The different models suggest varying degrees of formality, stability and flexibility within collaborative relations.

A core concern for the models is with a politics of negotiation. Progressive regime theorists, recognising complex political divisions are particularly focussed on how negotiation between different actors takes place, how compromises are reached and under what conditions co-operation can be achieved and maintained. The three-way partnership model stresses the emergence of a politics of negotiation between partners, but argues the precise form of this varies according to internal relations and the form of inclusion by different partners. Within this model authors have also noted the need for assimilation between partners, although it is also claimed that new partnership relations can be understood as the transference of traditional relations to a new institutional setting. This clearly raises questions about what effect the new setting may have upon relations. Networks are understood as being characterised by consensual politics based upon their shared value base, shared agendas and voluntaristic membership. The progressive regime and three-way partnership models tend to assume more conflict and tension, whilst still emphasising the basis of relations in mutual dependency, trust and shared resources. The progressive regime model however also stresses the fragility of governance relations and the need for local government to mediate between the elites and the third sector. Hence the progressive regime literature emphasises the difficulty of asserting a new progressive agenda by the third sector. The three-way partnership literature emphasises the importance of a politics of negotiation. Davoudi and Healey (1995) highlight the importance and difficulty of establishing shared agendas, recognising complex political divisions. They also note the importance of discourse in helping to filter issues whilst progressive regime literature highlights the Importance of ideology for helping to fuse the coalition around particular goals and the importance of leadership for uniting 'value based cleavages'.

The different models also consider the issue of how the third sector is involved. Three-way partnership models and progressive regimes acknowledge the tensions that often surround this involvement. This has been expressed in partnership literature as a 'right to veto' and in regime literature as the power to impede. The three-way partnership literature also emphasises the potential dilemmas and complexity existing around community representation. Progressive regimes stress new forms of community co-ordination and the importance of spatial citizenship. The community role depends upon community identity and the traditional patterns of community roles and relations. It also drives a concern with representative forms and the role of sub-assemblies in implementing local agendas. Progressive regimes seek to explore how community involvement may result in new practice, new agendas and new ideas. They are concerned with specifying the nature of social movements, the political responses and new sets of administrative practices and the connections between these different things. Three-way partnership links between the type of involvement and the strategies being pursued. Networks relations within the third sector as well as between the third sector and others.

As previous discussions highlight there are a number of barriers to achieving more participative approaches involving broader set of interests and wider agendas. For example it is noted that network fatigue may result in the reconsolidation of professional power and the reinforcement of new managerialism. However it has also been claimed that progressive agendas may emerge alongside new administrative practices. Additionally the scope for potential community development and neighbourhood empowerment has been emphasised in partnership models. In each case this would infer different meanings of the third sector role. Following from this some key themes can be identified as a basis for an empirical investigation into third sector politics:

1. Who is the third sector?

- What are the traditional roles and patterns of local third sector organisation?
- What identities underpin third sector organising?

2. What is the nature of third sector involvement in local governance?

- Are new roles and patterns of organisation being constructed?
- Through what processes is this taking place?
- What mechanisms support third sector involvement?
- Are new forms of community co-ordination evolving and how do they operate?
- What aspects of governance processes are third sector organisations involved in?
- How are the third sector represented?

3. Are new relations emerging between the community sector and other agencies of local governance, in particular local government and the private sector?

- What is the character of new relations?
- What barriers or tensions exist in the development of new collaborative forms?

4. How can the third sector role be interpreted?

- Are new administrative and political practices emerging?
- Is there evidence of community development/ neighbourhood empowerment?
- Is there evidence of a new managerialism characterised by re-consolidated professional role?

Locality studies have highlighted the importance of interaction between local factors and broad processes of change in producing particular local outcomes. The research seeks to explore these questions through two intensive case studies of community politics in the NE. The two intensive case studies focus on the diverse nature of community involvement by exploring institutional mechanisms and relations. Intensive case studies are a vehicle through which to investigate the politics of community, exploring the character of local relations between actors in urban governance. As Lowe has argued with regard to social movements:

> "...a precise knowledge of the social histories and social structures of individual areas is a pre-requisite to understanding how and under what circumstances the mobilisation processes operates." (1986: 66)

Thus the empirical stage of research is designed to characterise the particular case study contexts in particular the nature of local social relations, cultures and politics and institutional forms and seeks to specify the nature of community politics emerging within this.

4.2 Researching Third Sector Politics in the New Local Governance

At a general level Hambleton and Thomas (1995) argue that disagreements over the objectives and mechanisms of urban policy provide a difficult context for research. Several authors have commented on the general difficulties thrown up by the new context of local governance for research (Davoudi and Healey, 1995b; Hambleton and Thomas, 1995; Imrie and Thomas, 1995). One of the problems stems from the diversity of agencies and their inter-relations, which are now central to local governance processes:

> "The problems inherent in assessing any policy initiative which involves a number of agencies and actors with competing perspectives are brought into sharp focus in partnerships." (Hastings and McArthur, 1995: 176)

Given this complexity, Hastings and McArthur advocate pluralistic evaluation which seeks to embrace the 'competing and subjective viewpoints of the key interest groups' (1995: 176). This approach to evaluation seeks to include the range of perceptions held by different partnership organisations, so that different narratives can be compared and contrasted. According to Davoudi and Healey (1995a) another difficulty of urban policy evaluation stems from the wide-ranging objectives of policy and the concern both with processes, i.e. the relations of governance, and the outcomes. They advocate a qualitative approach to policy evaluation incorporating a range of perspectives and ideally incorporating various time scales (1995a: 84). Whilst the research design attempts to some extent to embrace a pluralist approach to evaluation the limitations of time and resources present a real constraint on the extent to which this is possible. In particular given the limitations of the research process the ability to conduct longitudinal research was severely constrained.

Imrie and Thomas (1995) identify other factors within the changing institutional context, which may present new barriers to urban policy evaluation. In particular they focus on the increased sensitivity of agencies. The increasingly competitive and output driven nature of urban policy has contributed to a narrowing of legitimate research and the dominance of technocratic evaluation. According to Imrie and Thomas, the highly politicised nature of some governance agencies has resulted in suspicion towards other more academic evaluative approaches. The over-riding concern with consensus building within public policy and governance may help create resistance to more critical approaches and concerns with the politics of collaborative relations. Research focused specifically on community sector partnerships and networks raises a number of additional difficulties (Hastings and McArthur, 1995; Lowndes et al, 1997).

> "Networks and partnerships are by their very nature, difficult to research, given the multiple parties involved and the importance of informal relationships and contacts." (Lowndes et al, 1997: 333)

The hidden, informal and complex nature of community sector relations necessitates in-depth qualitative research. Additionally, despite the rhetoric of central government, preliminary stages of the research found that in practice many community and voluntary activities remained relatively hidden and peripheral to the mainstream policy processes. The highly political nature of contemporary relations was not perceived to be as much as a problem as was the case and nor was the time lag of activities of the ground following policy rhetoric and academic discourse. Many projects reviewed as part of the preliminary stage of investigation were still at a very early stage of development.

4.3 Preliminary Research

The preliminary stages of the research were designed to clarify research questions and identify possible case studies for the main empirical study. One of the problems encountered during this phase was identifying people who had an overview of community politics in their locality. Interviews were conducted with local authority officers, community workers and community activists, with each group providing a partial picture of local processes. This perhaps signified some of the complexity at the heart of third sector politics. For example, community activists were usually focused upon neighbourhood level issues and some local authority economic development officers displayed both a lack of knowledge and concern with community issues, although this may have changed since the preliminary research was undertaken. In some cases there was a distinct lack of tangible structures or processes in evidence, in one example the co-ordinating structure for community was described as a 'virtual organisation'.

In the preliminary stages the community professionals provided the best over-view of local community politics however a significant feature was the difficulty of penetrating the tier of community professionals in order to gain access to community members. In many instances the community representative was a paid professional. For example at a regional meeting about community involvement in SRB only three people were unpaid members of the community, suggesting some severe limitations on community representation. Davoudi and Healey (1995a: 82) highlight how community professionals are presented as being 'part of the problem, mediating on their own terms the relations between residents and government'. The community professionals were thus important gatekeepers and following from Imrie and Thomas (1995) were perhaps wary of researcher involvement due to the increasing politcisation of community activities. Some of the key themes to arise out of this stage of the research were the tensions surrounding who the community are and how they are represented and the role of co-ordinating mechanisms in developing community representation. There were also tensions surrounding the interplay between new modes of representation and traditional structures of representative democracy. Finally, as previously mentioned, as important as the evidence of community organisation and engagement in some areas, was the lack of it in others. These themes formed an important basis for case study selection.

4.4 Comparative Analysis and Case Study Selection

As a result of the preliminary work it was decided to focus the research on the North East region. One rationale for this was the identification of networks of NE professionals and the vastly differing experiences of community engagement within an area characterised by a relatively strong culture and political forms (see Laningan, 1996; Shaw, 1993). The case study approach is used to capture the complexities of locally developed community politics and forms of engagement. This allows exploration of the different influences exerting themselves over the mode of community organising, as broader processes interact with local conditions to yield distinctive outcomes. Through intensive case studies it was possible to explore the diverse nature of community engagement, and the different approaches adopted by local government and other agents and to identify different patterns of community and voluntary sector and roles. Through this approach the aim was to indicate different patterns of causality underlying the specific concrete experiences. The locality debate has helped to highlight the importance of local specificity for understanding processes of economic and social change. For Bagguley et al (1990: 183-5) the locality is the 'defined unit of political life'. Case study research can thus be understood as:

"...empirical enquiry which investigates a contemporary phenomenon within
its real life context" (Yin, 1994: 13)

The role of case study research is to illustrate theoretical issues and illuminate new processes. Case study research is valuable for investigating phenomena in their real life

context and is important where contextual conditions are important to the subject being studied. This approach provides a useful strategy for exploration, description and explanation and can help in the examination of complex social processes and in building and evaluating theory (Bryman, 1989: 173). Yin argues that a case study approach is particularly apt in situations when:

> "...a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of
> events over which the investigator has little or no control." (1994: 9)

Case study research provides a useful tool to explore the way in which the community role is being locally defined and by providing direct contact with local actors allows an opportunity to trace the complexities of local political culture. Through intensive case studies it is possible to identify significant and defining moments in the evolution of local third sector politics.

The use of study of two cases provides a basis for assessing what community engagement means in different places taking into account the different political and institutional forms of community governance. Intensive research allows sensitivity to the spatially differentiated nature of third sector politics and understanding of the local conditions that mediate broad processes of change and help to shape specific local outcomes in terms of political and institutional forms. The use of two case studies allowed for reflection upon the qualitatively different meanings of third sector politics in different places. The aim through the case studies was to drive the theoretical themes of co-ordination and fragmentation, by using contrasting expressions of community involvement. A key question posed by the research is why experiences are so diverse given the shared regional setting. The diverse experiences of the two case studies helps to engender an awareness of difference and in so doing can help clarify theoretical concerns.

Following Mackie and Marsh (1995) the application of comparative method can help draw out theoretical statements about the relationship between political phenomena. Additionally, it can assist in the process of conceptual development by exploring how robust or transferable particular concepts or models are. Thus for Pickvance the comparative method provides a basis for comparative analysis which:

> "...attempts to understand the two (or more) cases in terms of one or
> more models." (1986: 164)

Comparative analysis highlights diversity allowing new patterns and connections to be identified. It also drives a concern with local autonomy uncovering the different spatial scales at which causal processes operate. Additionally, comparative analysis allows assessment of theoretically derived models. It facilitates enquiry into the influences upon local political processes, by analysing a situation in which these influences are different, and allows an understanding of how these influences may have changed over time. And can assess whether relations in one case are apparent in another case. Finally, it lends

sensitivity to distinctive local meanings, which can contribute to theoretical debate. Although comparative analysis enables the researcher to explore diversity and difference it requires an understanding of the particular culture and can help explain local social relations (May, 1993: 157).

4.5 Research Techniques

The use of a number of different data sources provided some triangulation in the research process. The use of triangulation has been criticised for not providing a basis for comparison since different data sources confer different meanings (Devine, 1995). The use of different date sources may generate problems of validity, corroboration and interpretation of the different accounts and perceptions. However, triangulation may be useful for identifying consistencies and inconsistencies, both of which may be illuminating. The principal techniques used in the empirical investigation were semi-structured interviews, participant observation, secondary data analysis and documentary evidence. The aim was to develop a historically and geographically grounded account of emerging community politics following from Bagguley's claim:

> "There is a need to consider the different means by which the past exerts a force on the present, and the application of these means to different causal elements in the local scene." (1990: 12)

Intensive case studies can therefore help drive at causal relations by illustrating key theoretical perspectives and illuminating new processes through specific forms of empirical change. Through the research the aim was to develop an appreciation of the form and content of local social relations and the importance of historical processes in laying down local sediment. In addition it was hoped to explore the interplay between economic relations and development and the local social structures and political practices of the different localities. The research seeks to explore how specific features are structured and the history and spatial conditions which give rise to them:

> "Localities are the products of interaction between people, groups and institutions in particular places over time. And this interaction is influenced by legacies (even memories and representations) from the past." (Cochrane, 1993: 25)

In both of the case studies there is only partial documentary coverage detailing the evolution of the community and voluntary sector. However within this there are some very detailed accounts of particular examples for example through CDP materials (Benwell CDP, 1978; Hampton and Walker, 1980). Despite the limitations of this material it has helped to expose historical social and political patterns which continue to have influence over contemporary

processes and relations. The documentary approach and use of secondary data was employed in particular to develop a more in-depth understanding of historical processes and their impacts upon contemporary relations. In particular the importance of 'local sediment' which allows the researcher to uncover:

"...the different means by which the past exerts a force on the present, and the application of these means to different causal elements in the local scene." (Bagguley et al, 1990: 12)

Documentary analysis has been the main source of materials for understanding how places have developed historically and what this means for the form and organisation of local social relations, and thus the meanings attached to community and modes of community organising. However gaps within historical accounts concerning, for example, political relations or community development place limitations on this techniques. Also given the time and resource constraints on the research this type of documentation cannot be fully exploited.

Semi-structured interviews conducted with a wide range of local actors formed the main element of data collection providing:

"...a means of analysing the ways in which people consider events and relationships and the reasons they offer for doing so." (May, 1993: 109)

The interviews were structured around the notion of clear sectoral divisions suggested by much partnership and governance literature. In general this assumes that there are clear distinctions between the public, private and third sector (including the voluntary sector and community organisations). Given claims that there are distinctive, identifiable sets of interests engaged in urban policy some commentators have suggested the need for a pluralist approach to evaluation (Hambleton and Thomas, 1995: 12). This seeks to take account of the different perceptions held by various interest groups, who have different criteria of success and who may interpret outcomes differently (Hastings and McArthur, 1995, develop this concern with regard to community partnership).

The interviews sought to explore community sector accounts of internal and external relations, processes and mechanisms. Subsequently interviews were conducted with a range of other local actors and agencies to gain an external perspective on community politics and evolving governance relations. Thus interviews were conducted with representatives of the community and voluntary sector, local government and a range of other agencies concerned with local partnership arrangements (1). This included quasi-public and private sector organisations. In addition, some interviews were conducted with academics and consultants active in the region. A list of potential interviewees was compiled through interviews and meetings with key players using snowball sampling to identify other potential interviewees. Relying on a 'chain of informants' helped bring qualitative relations to the centre of the interview selection process (May, 1993). However, given time and resource constraints it was not possible to explore all potential channels of investigation. Gaining

initial access to the projects was a lengthy process of building trust and co-operation with key individuals, although once access had been established nearly all of those individuals approached were willing to participate in the study.

The interviews were conducted in a variety of settings. Often these were arranged in local community buildings such as the community associations in Walker in the East End of Newcastle, some interviewees requesting particular venues in order to demonstrate particular issues. Over the period of the study I sought to re-interview some of the participants as particular events unfolded or the saliency of specific themes became increasingly apparent. The interviews investigated individuals' attitudes and experiences of community activism and their reflections on the development of structures and mechanisms around community involvement in local regeneration processes. The relationships between different elements of the sector were explored both historically and in the context of contemporary local governance identifying defining moments in the history of community governance. The interviews were also concerned with the development of sectoral relations through partnership mechanisms, tracing specific sectoral roles and influence over strategy development.

From a critical realist perspective flexible, semi-structured interviews are a valuable means of researching social reality involving actors' own interpretations:

> "The way-in to study is an immersion in a particular area of society which allows the observer to get to know how to be able to act in it."
> (Sarre et al, 1993: 46)

Acquiring this level of understanding may however lead to problems in the relationship between researcher and participants (Devine, 1995). For example the increasing immersion of the researcher into a place may lead to expectations or requests for them to take on particular roles or perform certain functions. Such processes may lead to a difficult blurring of boundaries between the researcher and those being researched (see Foot-Whyte,1981).

Whilst qualitative research has traditionally been criticised for its lack of comparability (Devine, 1995), Sarre has argued (1984: 223) that the flexible and interactive dialogue established through semi-structured interviews avoids the positivist problem that the same question may have different significance for different respondents. Thus although such methods do not facilitate representativeness they can help draw out diversity. Intensive case studies also provide sensitivity to the spatially differentiated nature of community engagement in governance processes and the variation in meaning between different places. For example the contrasting expectations of the community sector in the two case study areas. The quality of material acquired was in-depth including factual information and personal perceptions, helping to develop an understanding of the evolution of community politics and emerging modes of governance. Direct contact with a wide-range of local actors

built up a complex picture of local political cultures that pervade relations, activities and processes within each locality. The interviews sought to capture detailed experiences including clarification of defining moments in the history of community governance and to provide insights into broader social and political processes. For example, a local TUC representative provided valuable insights into community politics through a discussion of local labour relations.

Causal connections are important in the selection of interviewees and selections develop on the basis of increasing understanding of the nature of local relations and networks (Pratt, 1995). Whilst the 'rolling approach' to interviews was adopted to a degree and was found to be of value in uncovering connections it was limited both by time and resource constraints. The use of semi-structured interviews was advantageous since following general themes engendered more rapport to develop with interviewees, some of whom had little previous experience of being involved in research. The development of participatory dialogue was useful in the discussion of particularly sensitive or emotive issues and contributed to the richness of the data, however it made the process of comparability more difficult. The semi-structured interviews provided the main source of empirical evidence, however this primary data was supplemented by the use of participant observation, where this was feasible.

Participant observation constituted the third element of the case study investigation, again providing both rich and varied data. Giddens has commented on the way in which social systems 'express and are expressed in the routines of daily social life' (Schwartzman, 1993:38). One of the principal advantages of this approach was that it provided access to the more informal and subtle aspects of organisational workings. In particular it drew out more concrete understandings of both internal and external relations. Following Silverman (1993), this approach helps to uncover private accounts differing radically, in some instances, from the more 'formal' accounts sometimes presented in the interviews. The interviews both informed and were informed by the process of participant observation, helping to illuminate the meanings behind particular activities, events or narratives (May, 1993). This element of the research was based around working in the community offices, attending various meetings, training sessions and social events (2). Each context presented different sets of dynamics and perspectives on relations. For example, meetings were a valuable tool in identifying organisational narratives around which the organisation justified particular attitudes and activities (Schwartzman, 1993).

The process of participant observation also posed a number of difficulties. This included, for example, the developing relationship between the researcher and the community professionals and activists, the handling of sensitive information and approach to data analysis. In addition, given the different conditions in each case, it was only possible to undertake participant observation in one of the case studies. In the Newcastle study there

was significantly less to be a participant in. This imbalance in the data collection was compounded by a less extensive literature directly concerning the community and voluntary sector. Whilst this differential represented a significant constraint upon the East End case study it also reflected the different nature of community and voluntary sector activity. Additionally, the quality of material obtained through participant observation warrants significant consideration in the analysis of South Tyneside. However there were some compensatory factors in the collection of data on the East End case study. This included a series of high profile events concerning the local partnership which gained considerable media coverage, previous knowledge gained of the East End through local employment and additional contextual materials provided by research conducted in the West End of the city (for example Davoudi and Healey, 1995a; 1995b). This imbalance however raises some issues around the process of comparative analysis between the two case studies. Overall, however undertaking participation observation provided an invaluable way of developing insights into the way in which community organisations operated and the role of internal relationships in influencing the form of community engagement. Whilst it was particularly valuable at this scale it was also valuable for exploring partnership practices, for example through attending partnership meetings it was possible to experience first hand how different actors in the process related to one another.

4.6 Reflections on the Research Process

The case study in Newcastle began as a study of the West End. I had been directed to the West End, in particular Benwell where I had been able to develop contacts. However the restructuring of partnership arrangements in the West End, and the previous experiences proved barriers to the development of this case study. As one former employee in the West End commented '...people are very busy writing their new job descriptions with the winding down of City Challenge and the SRB jobs coming on stream'. Another ex-worker commented that there was a great deal of sensitivity in the West End given the amount of money that had been injected into the area and the lack of tangible benefits. There was additionally something of an anti-researcher feeling following an untimely piece of journalism referring to Benwell as the 'neighbourhood from Hell'. Also the identity of specific projects had become an important political issue since an evaluation conducted by Strathclyde University highlighted the problems of organisational proliferation and duplication of activities. As a result of this study it was decided to amalgamate several projects in turn raising conflict between key personalities and professional leadership in the West End. Whilst clearly these issues were of central interest in developing an understanding of the operation of third sector politics and changing forms of governance, the barriers to access proved overwhelming. The problems encountered in the West End reflect some of the political issues surrounding contemporary urban policy evaluation as highlighted by

Hambleton and Thomas (1995) and illustrates the role of professionals in acting as gate-keepers.

In the case studies where access was agreed other agendas were discernible. In these cases the co-operation and commitment of participants was invaluable, however even when access was agreed in principle there were still practical barriers to be overcome before the research could commence creating significant delays. However it also reflected something of the nature of third sector politics. The case study in South Tyneside took six months to set up from my initial meeting with the co-ordinator of the project through to a joint initial planning of the research process. My introduction to the project came about through discussions with a NE consultant specialising in the community economy and who had conducted some work in South Tyneside. Once the third sector organisation had formally agreed to participate in the research project I was invited to a meeting of the management committee. The co-ordinator stated that if the project were to be useful then they would need to be open. Whilst the route to access was pro-longed, the degree of access when agreed was much greater than I had experienced in other parts of the data collection process. For example in Newcastle's West End where there were many disparate individuals who regarded researchers with some suspicion. Even despite the degree of access I was given, it became clear during the research process that some interviewees were giving a partial view of their feelings. This became apparent through the use of participant observation in the study. For example, on the day following an interview with one member who had given an up-beat account she phoned the office to say she felt like everything was falling apart. This re-emphasises the importance of fine-grain research and the value of triangulation (comparing different data sources). It has however raised concerns over how to handle information which seemed to organisation members less part of the official and formal data collection process (and not part of their own self-image perhaps) but was central in forming my impressions of the organisation and how it operated.

In addition I felt there were clear organisational motivations for allowing the research project to proceed. I felt as though I had been allowed access to the project because there was a need to re-affirm the progress that the group had made. Such expectations were confirmed through conversations between the co-ordinator and myself and members. This was reinforced through various meetings and events held whilst the research was being conducted. In an attempt to reduce the problem of different expectations the purpose, boundary and key themes of the research were submitted to gatekeepers prior to the research taking place. However this did not necessarily alleviate the pressure to report positively on the progress the organisation was making. As a researcher a number of issues became increasingly apparent with regard to the participation of third sector organisations in research projects. The first of these are the limited resources supporting the community and small voluntary groups, thus it can be difficult to manage the needs of the organisation and

those of the researcher with the former being given priority. Second, by allowing access community groups may expose vulnerabilities, which they may feel that other partners might exploit. This reinforces the politically sensitive nature of research in this field.

In the East End of Newcastle the scope for becoming involved in the day to day experiences of third sector organisations and their activities was much less. However, it was still possible through the use of a key informant to develop contacts in the East End and gain access to information regarding the role of third sector organisations. The research process was based much more upon analysis of secondary data in combination with semi-structured interviews. As with South Tyneside the aim was to gain a variety of insights both from third sector representatives and from a range of other local actors including private sector representatives and public sector representatives. The extreme tensions between different actors involved in the regeneration of the East End created a difficult but insightful research environment.

Qualitative research drives at the complexity of social phenomena, exploring the interactions between phenomena that result in specific concrete outcomes. Qualitative methods have therefore a particular although cautious concern with examining phenomena in their 'natural setting', seeking to identify causal relations through attention to the motivations and experiences of individuals (Devine, 1995). By exploring the different ways that community organising and involvement is understood helps to uncover the politics behind community and the politics being operationalised through community, leading to contemporary theoretical concerns with the construction of meaning. Qualitative research helps drive at both observable and non-observable phenomena and processes. Research tools have been used reflexively and adapted to the particular circumstances encountered on the ground and to help develop poignant themes in order to help clarify the contemporary nature of community politics.

PART FOUR: THE CASE STUDIES

Chapter 5: The Case Study Context: The Politics of North East Regionalism

5.1 Introduction

"From the viewpoint of the new makers of the region, the NE has become contaminated with collectivist values and attitudes which have no place in the new times of entrepreneurialism. The task which they have set themselves is nothing less that the social and cultural transformation of the region. The key question is whether the region's inherited industrial and working class traditions will allow this vision to unfold." (Amin, A. and Tomaney, J. quoted in Fasenfest, 1993: 89)

"I think the important thing about this region is the people. We're persistent, we're competent and we're committed to succeeding... at the end of the day that ...is the crucial issue." (Olivia Grant, Chief Executive of Tyneside TEC 1996)

The main element of the empirical research has been conducted in the North East, a region with a distinctive culture and identity as illustrated above. Whereas the first quote seems to suggest this may well act as a barrier to major transformation within the region, the second seems to suggest any attempts at transformation need to build around the 'character' of the area and it's people. This exemplifies the way in which local culture and regionalism has become intertwined and reflected in or reinforced through local regeneration strategies. This in part reflects the increasing politicisation of the NE regional culture (Lanigan, 1996).

Whilst NE regionalism is not new (Lanigan, 1996), it has become more high profile as increasing emphasis has been placed upon regional governance. However there are different interpretations both of what it is, how it is constructed and it's implications. For example Lanigan (1996) distinguishes between the notion of a distinctive NE culture being the cause of regionalism and the view that regional identities and institutions have been constructed in support of particular vested interests. Reflecting on the nature of regional politics provides a broad context within which to consider the nature of third sector politics within the NE. In particular it may help to illuminate particular relations and political forms that have helped to shape third sector politics. In particular literature on the NE seems to indicate a particular form of local social relations, which contributes to a unified local culture. If the local culture is as embedded and potent as the above quotes seem to suggest this has implications for community-based organising and potential constructions of community within competitive based urban policy. This is of particular concern in old industrial regions (OIR) where the traditional base of working class politics has been decimated (Hudson, 1989: 26). In such contexts Hudson asks whether an alternative working class politics can be

97

constructed outside of the workplace around reproduction issues and what contribution this type of politics could make to help shape changes in the OIRs.

The four key centres on Tyneside are Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside. Newcastle is the regional capital and a major administrative and retail centre. The dominance of Newcastle is recorded in Mess's study of Tyneside in 1928. He claims that Newcastle was 'a natural hegemony of the Tyne as far back as history has anything to say' and a city which exercised its powers 'selfishly' thereby souring relations with its neighbours (Hetherington and Robinson, 1988: 205). The Tyneside economy, one of the 'cradles of capitalism' (Hudson, 1989: 6) grew primarily from coal mining, shipbuilding and heavy engineering activities, which collectively employed about a third of the workforce by the 1920s (Robinson, 1988). Other industries grew up along the Tyne including glass, pottery and alkali works. One of the features of the region has been the notion of (male) work as a 'job for life' (Hudson,1989: 6). However the turbulent economic fortunes of the area have in part resulted from a dependence upon this narrow industrial base. Due to persistently high levels of unemployment the whole of Tyneside was selected for regional policy assistance in 1963 and since then has been subject to a number of experimental economic policy initiatives (Hudson, 1989; Robinson, 1988). However, overall, Hudson concludes that there was a failure by the nation state to integrate the OIR into mainstream 'Fordist' production and consumption (1989: 22-23).

Whilst there has been some economic diversification and notable achievements in attracting inward investment, to the extent that the North-East has been described as the 'inward investment capital of Europe' (BBC2: 1996), the region has acute economic problems. The limited success of replacing traditional manufacturing jobs has left the region with the highest 'jobless' figures for mainland Britain, a record it has held for some twenty-five years (BBC2: 1996). The combination of deindustrialisation and the restructuring of the welfare state pose acute social and political problems. For example, in their discussion of City Challenge experiences on Tyneside, Davoudi and Healey (1995: 83) note the problems experienced in areas of 'concentrated disadvantage' where there has been a loss of social, economic and state support. For some a continuing dependency on state support, reflects a particular form of local culture and politics, which inhibits the re-development of the region. Although modes of service provision are undergoing transformation nationally, within Tyneside there continues to be heavy dependence upon public health, housing, education and transport. Additionally local government and the civil service are major employers within the region. Hudson suggests that one of the reasons why it has been difficult to rejuvenate the NE and other OIRs maybe the 'highly dependent nature of the working class' and 'extensive proletarianisation' which inhibit new modes of economic and social organisation. In particular he argues there is a perception that culturally OIRs do not lend themselves to the development of a 'new enterprise culture' (1989: 23). It is suggested that a politics of local

dependency has been encouraged through the coal, iron and steel and shipbuilding industries (Sengenberger and Loveman in Hudson, 1989: 23). The argument that people are not entrepreneurially minded is reflected in one account where local labour is described as 'factory fodder' which 'expects someone else to provide the jobs' (quoted in Amin and Tomaney, 1993: 71). In contrast to the comments of the Chief Executive of Tyneside TEC (above) others note with regret the passivity manifested in Tynesiders seeming to 'accept their lot' (Hetherington and Robinson, 1988: 204).

The significance of working class politics is stressed by Lanigan (1996) who argues that working class hegemony over cultural representations separates the NE from other industrial regions of England. For Lanigan this has been politically important and has been used in the formulation of public policy. The continuing power of these cultural representations is such that Lanigan suggests they may be part of the reason for the continuing attachment to heavy industrial jobs, which continue to define 'real work' in the NE, as well as continuing support for the Labour party. The 'Labourist hegemony over political life' (Amin and Tomaney, 1993: 72) is also seen as a barrier to entrepreneurialism and new individualistic values.

Labour politics within the region have been characterised as a conservative machine politics. For example Hetherington and Robinson:

> "Tyneside - like the wider North East - is one of Labour's traditional
> bastions but has never been noted for its political radicalism." (1988:
> 204)

The strength of Labour in the region has led to complacency and an 'over-dependence on a union machine' (mainly the GMB) who tend to 'pull the strings' (1988: 204). For Hetherington and Robinson, Labour politics has been defined by an inertia and also a weakness at the grass roots level. This style of politics is in part explained by the extent to which the industrial base has been under state control, leading to descriptions of a 'state managed region' (Amin and Tomaney, 1993: 69).

Despite the collapse of many working class communities economically, and to some extent socially, the cultural frameworks have remained remarkably intact:

> "Tyneside has retained a strong and distinctive identity, perhaps less
> marked than in the past but still clearly evident." (Hetherington and
> Robinson, 1988: 189)

This is reflected in a pride loyalty to the area and well-preserved dialogue:

> "(A) way of life dying in the rest of the country, is here perfectly
> preserved; its own language, a local culture...a real warmth and a built-
> in sense of superiority based on a clamorous inferiority complex" (Austin
> Mitchell in Hetherington and Robinson, 1988: 190).

The physical isolation of the region is perhaps one cause of this strong identity. This has led to claims that within the region there continues to be a strong sense of community. The former leader of Newcastle City Council Jeremy Beecham commenting on the social stability of Tyneside argued there is:

> "...a greater sense of community and less alienation. In spite of all the difficulties, people have still a (council provided) level of provision which, even now, makes life tolerable- and in the East and West End of Newcastle (the poorest areas on every social indicator) there is a wealth of voluntary activity." (Hetherington and Robinson, 1988: 203)

However this sense of community also reflects Tyneside's 'parochial conservatism' which remains largely unchallenged, reflected perhaps in the limited ethnic diversity of the region (Hetherington and Robinson, 1988: 190). Moreover there are questions over what constitutes a regional culture given the markedly different socio-economic groupings within the region.

Whilst working class solidarity may contribute significantly to regional identity, this has evolved historically through other social strata, including local industrialists. For example Byrne claims that six decades of regional corporatism has produced a genuine regional culture and regionalist ideology (Lanigan, 1996: 19). Several commentators note the long history of tripartite alliances between capital, labour and the local state in 'defence of the local economy' (Shaw, 1993: 252). Shaw (1993) contends that corporatist structures have been integral to the NE from the 1930s, underpinning attempts at re-development. Thus the more recent requirements of central government in the 1990s for regeneration through inter-organisational alliances have in the NE inter-locked with existing alliances seeking alternative, socialist solutions to long-term economic decline. Thus a new set of agencies have been 'superimposed on an already complex patchwork of agencies' (1989: 253). Within this new scenario local authorities continue to be key players, as do the narrow tripartite alliances. Shaw claims that a pragmatic response by local government to new local governance structures has provided them with influence over their new partners. This is to the extent that whilst 'private sector involvement may prove useful...public sector involvement is vital' (1993: 254). Thus the local Labour movement- 'far from being a spent force is an integral and effective part of the local establishment along with the remnants of Tyneside's old 'ruling class' (Hetherington and Robinson, 1988: 208).

For Shaw the emergent institutional relations can be characterised as a revival of corporatist relations in the NE:

> "Recent urban regeneration strategies in the NE are very much an amalgam of the old and the new." (Shaw, 1993: 257)

This contrasts with the perspective of Amin and Tomaney (1993) who argue that the undermining of Labourism as a political force is reflected in the domination of central

government – private sector alliances. In the contemporary context this cultural identity is reproduced by the policy-makers or 'corporatist elite' (Lanigan, 1996:10-11) (see above). However understanding a regional culture that continues to be both materially and symbolically important provides a context within which to analyse the form and nature of third sector politics.

Chapter 6: A Study of Third Sector Politics in South Tyneside

6.1 The Case Study Context

The empirical work conducted in South Tyneside explores attempts to provide a new borough wide co-ordinating mechanism to develop local community and voluntary sector representation in local policy processes. South Tyneside Resource for Initiating Development of the Economy (STRIDE) was set up in 1994:

> "STRIDE is a co-ordinated voice of South Tyneside's voluntary and community groups to enable them to play their full part in improving the local economy." (STRIDE Mission Statement, Annual Report, 1995)

Hence STRIDE is both a focus and support mechanism through which, it is claimed, the community and voluntary sector are able to engage in local policy processes and in particular on South Tyneside Enterprise Partnership (STEP) the borough wide regeneration partnership.

South Tyneside was formerly a key industrial centre and STRIDE has developed in a local economy dominated by structural unemployment following the collapse of traditional industries. However, this is not the first time the borough has experienced acute economic hardship. Perhaps one of the most poignant images of the area and a key episode of collective action remains the Jarrow March. In October 1936, 200 men set out from Jarrow to march to London in protest at the dire local economic conditions. The closure of Palmer's Shipyard, which at it's peak had provided 10,000 jobs, left Jarrow with an 80% unemployment rate (Robinson, 1988). The subsequent failure to realise a much talked about steelworks scheme meant there were few economic prospects for the town which gained a new saying, 'St. Bede founded it, Sir Charles Mark Palmer built it and McGowen buggered it." As one STRIDE member recalls:

> "There was no work in the 1930's- it's not the first time we've been in this situation....Each time we end up in this situation we try to answer it differently. In the 1930's we took over a local hall and started up little businesses, people used the skills they had. They had to work. There was what we called a 'dole school' which the town held as a way for people to learn new skills.... Although people tried not much came out of it, Jarrow died although the people didn't give in.

Thus despite the economic collapse of the town, the evidence suggests that local people responded to mass unemployment by developing alternative local economic strategies. This type of 'bootstraps' activism (see Hall, 1986; Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993) developed through and around local Labour Party:

South Tyneside
Showing Unemployment rates by Ward
June 1996

	Over 25%
	20 - 25%
	15 - 20%
	10 - 15%
	Under 10%

| Latest |
| Last Month |

Beacon & Bents
18.3
18.8

Rekendyke
21.3
22.6

SOUTH SHIELDS

Horsley Hill
12.3
13.0

Westoe
8.6
9.4

Bede
16.5
17.1

Jarrow

Tyne Dock & Simonside
15.2
16.6

West Park
7.9
8.3

Harton
12.5
13.1

Monkton
10.1
10.2

All Saints
13.7
14.2

Cleadon Park
14.1
14.9

Hebburn Quay
10.0
10.7

Primrose
11.5
12.4

Whiteleas
11.8
13.1

Whitburn & Marsden
10.6
11.1

Biddick Hall
13.4
14.1

Hebburn South
11.0
12.5

Cleadon and East Boldon
4.0
4.1

Fellgate and Hedworth
10.2
10.6

Boldon Colliery
10.1
10.6

Walker

STMBC
Information Digest

"The town was down and out. The shops were closing one by one. But the old Labour rooms, nearly falling around our heads, were the centre of a vivid, intense communal life, which no social service organisation or welfare worker can ever arouse...or for that matter understand its passionate independence." (Wilkinson, 1939: 192)

According to Wilkinson (1939) members of the local Labour Party played a decisive role in bringing about the Jarrow March which has been portrayed as a symbol of the working class fighting for their livelihood. However, some re-call it somewhat differently:

"Jarrow march was a sham, there were many marches at the time, but Jarrow was the establishment march. It was tame. It was done through the local authority with the support of Tories and Labour and the Church. It had no teeth it was a shuffling of the broken unemployed, with no real demands. It was a sop, the march which was allowed to happen, and which has become part of the folk history as something it wasn't." (STRIDE worker)

Although Wilkinson (1939) argues the men were marching in good spirits and with high hopes, the organisers faced criticism both at the Labour Party Conference and from the TUC. However for Wilkinson the march had 'kudos' and legitimacy derived from the Mayor's decision that 'if there were to be a march it must be a town's march' (1939: 198). She asks therefore:

"With the blessing of bishop, priests, clergy, subscriptions from business men, the paternal interest of the Rotary Club and the unanimous vote of the Town Council, could anything have been more constitutional?" (Wilkinson, 1939: 240)

This picture of a town unified in it's cause with the backing of business and church has some resonance with Shaw's broader claims of a NE local corporatism (1993) and reflects something of the nature of local social relations. However within this, South Tyneside has it's own distinctive history and patterns of social relations, as does Jarrow and the other towns and villages of South Tyneside.

South Tyneside, located at the mouth of the River Tyne, is the smallest and most densely urbanised metropolitan borough, not just in Tyne and Wear, but in the country. To the north the borough is flanked by the Tyne and to the east by the North Sea. It has a population of some 157,000 within it's 6,327 ha (STEP, 1996). South Shields is the administrative and commercial centre, the other main centres being the shipbuilding towns of Jarrow and Hebburn, and the villages of Cleadon, Whitburn and the Boldons. Initial settlement patterns emerged as a result of farming and fishing activities in the 13th century and mining activities begun by the Romans in the 14th century. However it was in 1792 that large-scale mining began with the sinking of the shaft at Hebburn, with mining activity gradually extending further east across the borough. By 1895 the industrial base had developed with working pits in Jarrow, Hebburn and South Shields and lime extraction at Marsden and Whitburn. During the 1700's South Shields earned the name 'Smokey Shields' due to the growth of

chemical and salt working. The evolution of the industrial base was given extra impetus in 1859 with the opening of Tyne Dock. By the 19th century the heavy industries formed the economic base of the area dominated by shipbuilding, ship repairs and coal mining:

> "Jarrow was a very grand town. Hebburn had the Palmers yard and people came from all over to work in it, Scottish and Irish. They built Jarrow up, it had the chemical works and the riverfront was busy with timber yards. These places have changed so much, every type of ship was catered for on the Tyne and all the men worked in the pits or on the yards." (STRIDE member)

South Tyneside secured a place within the global economy through its ship building activities around which developed a series of related industries. During the first World War demand for ships expanded and a repair yard was built at Hebburn. Switch gear production began with the setting up of the Reyrolle factory in Hebburn in 1901. However, along with the rest of Tyneside, dependence upon a very specialised economy made it vulnerable to market fluctuations: the impacts of which were dramatic. For example, the depression of the 1930's led to the closure of the Palmer's yard which had at its peak had employed 10,000 men.

Despite some diversification of the economic base with for example the development of new trading estates in the 1950s supporting electronics, plastics and clothing manufacture including the firm Barbours, the area has remained largely dependent on a few core industries. However recent economic restructuring has decimated local industry and some 9000 jobs were lost between 1981 and 1991. The last colliery, Westoe, closed in 1993 with the loss of 1,200 jobs. Many of the shipyards have been closed including Swan Hunters South Tyneside yard with the loss of 2,500 jobs. In October 1995 the unemployment rate stood at 16% (STEP, 1996), however in May 1986, at the depth of recession it had stood at 23.5% (Clark, 1992: 116). Today, in common with many riverside locations, some land remains derelict whilst some is being restored for new industry and for 'luxury' waterside housing, cultural and leisure facilities.

The DoE (1994) index of local conditions indicates high levels of benefit dependency in the area, about half of South Tyneside's households being 'wholly or mainly dependent upon welfare benefits'. Additionally, almost a third of men and a quarter of women suffer from long term illness, health problems or disability. In 1994 an OFSTED report claimed:

> 'By all indices of socio-economic disadvantage South Tyneside is the most deprived borough of the five constituent boroughs of Tyne and Wear.'(1994: 1)

The minority ethnic population in the borough is small making up approximately 1.55% of the population. The long-established Yemeni community settled in the borough as a result of sea-trading activities, and South Shields was unusual in the North East for the significant number of black residents. Although the area experienced racial tensions in the 1930s,

relations have developed relatively harmoniously and the Asian population has become more established through the growth of the Bangladeshi community.

Within these general patterns of social, economic and political development each town has its own distinctive history which contributes to the overall pattern of social relations within South Tyneside. Industrialised Hebburn originally developed around coal mining, although the last remaining pits closed in 1931 and the town has mainly grown to accommodate shipyard workers and as the company town of Reyrolles, still the main employer in the town. Reyrolles established the Hebburn works in 1901 manufacturing electrical switchgear, welding equipment and precision electrical instruments. At its peak, after the Second World War when the national grid was being established, Reyrolles had a work force of 12,000 and covered a 65ha site. In contrast to many Tyneside industries it employed a large proportion of female workers. Hebburn's first ship-building yard 'Leslies' was established in the 1853, managing to survive the 1930s it expanded with the onset of war and increased demand for ships and munitions. Local shipbuilding gained a world-wide reputation for output and quality despite strike periods caused by disputes over wages and job demarcation. In the period up until WW1 the town managed to develop a strong industrial base, particularly around engineering, with Reyrolles, Whites Marine engineering and other smaller firms. After WW II industry shrank again until the 1950s when business remained stable until the 1970s. 'Leslie's and others had merged to form 'Hawthorn Leslie and Palmers Yards' and by the 1970s these yards had been absorbed via nationalisation into part of Swan Hunters. In the 1980s British Shipbuilders (BS) were privatised and Swan Hunters re-emerged from a management buy-out but BS had suffered and the Hawthorn Leslie yard closed and Palmers was mothballed (Healey, 1992). Vickers engineering, also operating in Hebburn was closed in the early 1980s. In 1968 Reyolles merged with Parsons due to falling demand and by early 1990s had become part of the Rolls Royce Industrial Power Group, industrial activity deteriorating rapidly in the town. Although Reyrolles had held it's own providing 'good steady work over many generations' today it is much diminished with a labour force of only 1,500. With the decline of Reyrolles has gone the centre and purpose of Hebburn, despite the town having a more diverse economic base than neighbouring Jarrow. The local technical college has played an important role in serving the needs of local industry through specialised training.

Whilst Jarrow is a company town like Hebburn it has quite a different in character. The town grew up around the innovative industrial processes introduced by Charles Palmer. He sought to bring together then different parts of the production process onto one site. Railway tracks were built to transport in the raw materials of iron ore and coal to produce the steel and the engines for shipbuilding. The importance of Palmer on Jarrow's development and identity is difficult to over-estimate with the town sometimes being referred to as 'Palmerstown' (Wilkinson, 1939). Between 1870 and the 1st World War

Jarrow was a 'boom' town with immigrant labour from Scotland and Ireland as well as other parts of the North East. The yard had a brief reprieve when the Second World War created new orders and it continued to make ships throughout the 1950s and 60s until demand fell again. Jarrow has collapsed economically although this is somewhat contrary to outward appearances. The town has a modern retail development and political leverage has enabled the town to maintain it's housing stock.

South Shields, the administrative and commercial centre of the Borough, is geographically isolated on a peninsular in the N.E. of the borough. At one time the town had four working pits, the largest marine college in the country, an internationally important centre for marine engineering (now amalgamated into South Tyneside college) and an identity borne of a close association with the merchant navy. Although there remains only the residue of shipbuilding, riverside industry is still important. The principal firms are the Tyne dock engineering repair yard, and McNaultys, recently sold to a Norwegian firm, Ackers, whose aim is to create 500 jobs in off-shore technologies. The potential for developing a larger off-shore industry is being explored by the Northern Offshore Federation with research and development being focused on developing new technologies to reach small oil deposits. Employment on the oilrigs is still perceived by some to be a route out of the town. New industrial development sites are being created through the restoring the site of the former Monkton coke works and Westoe Colliery. In total, about £1/2 billion of government money is being fed, via English Partnerships, into the redevelopment of Monkton for industrial development and open space linking up to the A19 corridor and Westoe for residential, leisure and industrial development. In general, new investment in this part of the Borough is hindered both by a lack of suitable development land and poor transport links. In July 1982 one of the most renowned shipyards - Readheads - was closed. The Falklands had given a new but brief impetus to the shipyards. In 1984 there was a management buy-out which created Tyne Ship Repairs Ltd. This took over the Brigham and Cowans yard and Middledocks in South Shields but in 1986 production was transferred to the Wallsend site. By the early 1990s only the small Tyne Dock engineering Yard remained.

The Boldons and Whitburn are located to the SE of the borough. East Boldon is a 'classic Durham pit village' (STRIDE member) which merges into the old fishing village of Whitburn. Although some fishing still goes on this is largely in the black economy, supplemented by some legitimate fishing. Despite the closure of the colliery the mining identity has remained strong although this is now changing as new housing developments alter the social structure. Transport links with the rest of the Borough are poor and so 'going to town' usually means a trip to Sunderland rather than to South Shields.

The political structures of South Tyneside are reflected in attempts to establish local coalition building processes and the development of community representative structures. Industrial

development and associated labour patterns along with local government re-organisation in 1974 have contributed significantly to the form of local politics. The origins and form of development of the local Labour Party lie within the history of the individual towns described above. The 1974 re-organisation led to new patterns of political allegiance, which continue to underpin local policy processes. The re-organisation led to the formation of South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council (STMBC) and brought together the old County Durham towns of Jarrow, Hebburn, Boldon and Whitburn with South Shields.

Up until 1974 South Tyneside was part of County Durham and up until the 19th century land ownership was mostly in the hands of the Prior and Bishop of Durham. This pattern of ownership may have contributed to the containment of South Shields as a small ribbon development. The development of modern political institutions in the town began initially in 1832 following the decision of the Boundary Commission that South Shields should have it's own MP. There then followed 100 years of liberal representation. The development of Labour politics in the town has been closely associated with the Trades Council set up in 1872, it became the first such permanent body in the North East. It still exists and has:

> '...continued to be in the vanguard of many progressive causes. Indeed, it was the existence of this formal working class organisation that largely determined the course of Labour politics in the final decade of the 19th century.' (Clark, 1992: 7)

For many years this body, representing working men, was a barrier to the development of independent Labour representation in the town. Liberals accommodated increasing demands from working men for representation on elected public bodies by giving seats to miners leaders. In so doing, Clark argues, the Liberals displayed an aptitude for absorbing representatives of labour into its ranks without conceding 'real power'. However by 1892 this alliance was under challenge from increasing Trade Union interest in alternative representation of labour through an independent Labour party. But although there was a lot of interest in and around the TU, the congress itself formally debated and rejected the notion of an independent labour party. Despite this an embryonic South Shields branch of the National Labour Party was formed supported by the mood of the local people. They were spurred on by the isolated and bitter 1892 strike of Durham miners -which closed every pit in the county. This gave added impetus to the growth of the party locally, despite continued rejection by the TUC until it's amalgamation with the party during the First World War. However, it was not until 1919 that the Labour group was established and began to consolidate its activities.

Even in this early period women were pivotal to the running of the party locally, with the first women's section established in 1918, building on a culture of collectivism in the neighbourhoods (Clark, 1992).

"Women occupied a significant role in the Labour Party through-out the NE of England and South Tyneside was no exception. In a region dominated by heavy industry, the men were active in the their unions and it was often the women who in essence ran the local parties." (Clark, 1992: 36)

In contrast to other parts of the country, women in the NE traditionally were not engaged in paid work outside the home (although there are notable exceptions such as Reyrolles). However, they were often central to the running of the local Labour Party, attending the Women's Section meetings. Clark contrasts this with other areas of the country where women might have joined the WI or Townswomen's Guilds. This activism is reflected in a description of a deputation prior to the Jarrow march:

"Some of the marchers were real 'mothers in Israel', those indomitable middle-aged women who are the backbone of all the local Labour Parties." (Wilkinson, 1939: 195)

Political relations were also influenced by the immigration of Irish labour into the region to undertake unskilled labouring jobs in the shipyards (Wilkinson, 1939: 102). A majority of these workers were Catholics and settled particularly although not exclusively in Jarrow and Hebburn and 'constituted a separate group in Jarrow's social, political and religious life' (Wilkinson, 1939: 102). Despite this separate identity, MacDermott (1976) argues that the Irish established themselves as integral part of population and EP Thompson remarks on the ease with which they were absorbed into the working class communities (1980: 480). However, one interviewee suggested that local political divisions relate to divisions of labour within the town: the Catholic community capturing political power through the unions and the Labour party, whilst Protestants retained economic power and affiliated with the Conservative Party. Whilst other interviewees did not share this view, the sign above the Conservative Club in Hebburn still reads, 'The Hebburn Protestant Conservative Club' suggesting that these divisions have influenced the formation of local politics. Although the report by the Commission on Urban Priority Areas argues that the Anglican church has alienated itself from the urban working class (1985: 28), it is contended that religion has played an important role in shaping traditional local social relations in South Tyneside. This is partly perhaps because the Catholic Church has had more success in 'transcending the boundaries of class' (1985: 31) and because the influence of the church may arise through providing a base of political action:

"...there ...existed a secularist element in the working class, which had an influence out of proportion to its numbers because so many secularists were active in politics or trade unions." (1985: 28)

One of the key local political issues has been housing; both because of the dire housing conditions and overcrowding (see Mess, 1928) and due to male vote rights being based upon property ownership. The Labour Party was split between those seeking to increase the number of houses available to rent and the more 'radical' elements who advocated home ownership. The housing problems were made more acute by The General Strike in 1926

when company owned housing was put up for sale, despite vigorous opposition. New housing such as that constructed at Cleadon Park was too expensive to remedy the slum problem. In South Shields by 1919 tensions between the various affiliated bodies had led to a deeply divided Labour Party. In particular the more radical mining elements were representing only a small part of the vote in South Shields and were increasingly marginalised by the other Trade Unions. Labour failed to attract the middle-class vote and a Tory-Liberal pact dominated the council, although by the 1930s the strength of the Labour Party had grown through the financial support of the Durham Miners Association.

Housing and unemployment have continued to dominate the political agenda in the town. The formal links between TUC and Labour party were severed in 1970, prior to a new period of contentious changes in the organisation and administration of local government. In 1972 the Housing Finance Act forced local authorities to raise rents leading to a split between those who felt that the borough should adhere to the law and those who were reluctant to implement the Act. The other more fundamental changes were delivered through the 1972 Local Government Act; since 1850 South Shields had been a County Borough- performing all the functions of local government. The new Act undermined the principal of unitary local government and proposed instead a two-tier system of government splitting districts and counties. South Shields was amalgamated with Boldon, Hebburn and Jarrow into a new District Council. There was, according to Clark, near unanimity in opposition to the proposal.

Prior to 1974 Hebburn was mainly 'run by the A.E.U' which made considerable investment in the council to fund a programme of housing improvements for their workers, many of whom worked in the shipyards. Hebburn was also able to secure funding from central government to invest in high rise development:

> "At the time of amalgamation Hebburn, Jarrow and Boldon were Labour controlled councils. Conservatives and Progressives dominated South Shields with only a few Labour members. Labour needed to stay together and so a new alliance emerged which was the ruling Labour group. All the new senior posts went to officers from Jarrow or Hebburn- the base of the ruling group." (TUC member)

South Shields experienced a different pattern of development to that in Hebburn and Jarrow. In addition to the different economic origins of the towns, South Shields encouraged a more diverse housing tenure through the private rented sector. However, following the amalgamation of the Borough, South Shields experienced a shift towards Labour. This created a new Labour faction in the Borough opposed to the relatively high levels of public investment in Hebburn and it's housing stock. Over time the growing strength of South Shields members led to a dilution of the old political base reflected in the break-up of the monopoly of the Council Chairs. This caused resentment amongst Hebburn and Jarrow councillors who earned the name 'the mid-Tyne mafia' in the local media. These processes were integral to the establishment of the current structure of the local Labour party. Clark

acknowledges that since re-organisation there have been tensions within the Labour group caused by different views between different sections of the party:

"Throughout its existence, one of the perennial problems has been the differing views between sections of the Party. In spite of the establishment of a formal Labour Group on the Council with clear standing orders, difficulties continue to occur sporadically."(Clark, 1992: 108)

Some interviewees have stated this more forcibly:

"The Labour party here is highly factious, it's split into three teams. The main ones are the A and B teams but there's also a C team made up of the worst elements of both. The A team is concentrated in Jarrow and Hebburn and is the political power base controlling the local authority." (Local activist)

The A team have held power for the past eight years, causing tensions as the needs of Jarrow and Hebburn have been prioritised above other parts of the borough including South Shields where over 55% of the borough's population live:

"The A team will strive very hard to retain their power, in one ward recently there was an election for a new seat. At the meeting about a hundred new members turned out, but left as soon as that part of the meeting was over. The A team hit on members of the B team to oust them." (Local activist)

The dominance of a deeply divided machine Labour politics in the borough has had profound implications for the growth of third sector activities and strategy development at the South Tyneside wide level. Local residents who were interviewed still referred to the 'new boundaries', demonstrating the continuing importance of old identities. As one STRIDE member stated, "There is still jealousy between areas based on old divisions and discriminations." Some interviewees suggested that the recent decision to focus the SRB 3 bid on South Shields, rather then more politically dominant areas, reflected a changing attitude amongst the councillors, and potentially the emergence of new political patterns. However, this perhaps overlooks the importance of regional and national government in influencing SRB applications. Additionally, may interviewees felt that the A team would continue to maintain their power base and dominance in borough politics. Thus the mode of local politics, based upon divisions driven by traditional allegiances and distinct histories, provides the setting in which to consider attempts to set up new mechanisms of governance.

The divisions between the towns and retention of strong local cultures and identities, exacerbated by political divisions are barriers to the development of South Tyneside wide strategies. Yet, such identities may be pivotal for the development of new mechanisms and governing strategies. Thus central questions are raised about how central government impetus for new forms of local governance is interacting with the local political cultures which militate against borough-wide co-ordination. Despite this evidence of political divisions and tensions, both interviewees and policy documents characterise local social relations as being based upon a continuing sense of community and social cohesion. Some have contrasted this continuing social cohesion within the Borough, with the situation in North Tyneside, and

the events on the Meadowell estate. The narrow industrial base has provided a collective work experience for the people of South Tyneside, and this has been compounded by the dominance of Catholic workers in the manual trades. These collectivised economic and social experiences have been fundamental in the development of local political representation:

> "Less tangible than the rise of the radical political tradition in the city, but possibly even more important, was the development in many industrial communities of a sense of common working class identity, of separation from, and some degree of antagonism towards, other sections of society." (Commission on Urban Priority Areas, 1985: 29)

This sense of cohesion through traditional forms local dependence has been compounded in company towns like Jarrow and Hebburn. Mess (1928) has noted the contrast between the 'well-to-do' areas of the NE and the 'one class towns' like Jarrow and Hebburn, contrasts, which according to Hetherington and Robinson, 'remain sixty years later' (1988: 196). The narrow economic base has fundamentally contributed to the form of local social relations, which are made more distinctive by the relative physical isolation, not just of Jarrow and Hebburn, but of the borough as a whole. Traditional forms of local dependence persist in Jarrow and Hebburn in particular because:

> "In relatively isolated single industry communities, interaction is commonly channelled through some few interaction sites, or locales" (Giddens in Cox and Mair, 1988: 312).

This strengthens the development of shared meanings and provides a basis upon which people become defined 'as locals'. Thus:

> "It is only by being in the *particular* place that they can exercise their (traditionally defined) roles. That place acquires a strong and positive salience. This is the root of the *traditional* form of local dependence... In these terms one can understand the strong local identity often imputed to mining towns and other one-industry towns or to urban ethnic enclaves." (Cox and Mair, 1988: 312)

Whilst traditional local dependence, is upheld by a sense of communion, it is undermined by the state and the market or commodifcation processes. This is pertinent to most of South Tyneside and in particular to communities like Jarrow and Hebburn where there has been little in the way of new industry. There is therefore an important relation between traditional local dependence and economic and state restructuring which is reflected through emerging relations of governance and third sector politics. However in parts of South Tyneside the traditional forms of local dependence derive from the particular forms of industrial development and a politicised working class.

Claims of social cohesion are taken up by STEP (1996) who argue that it provides a basis for action. Although such a claim may be difficult to sustain, it does reflect the continuing importance of traditional forms of local social relations (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Traditional forms of local dependence may help evoke a sense of cohesion that is useful for

111

implementing community-based policies based upon ideas of co-operation, reciprocity and obligation. However such policies must also either confront or avoid the politicised nature of community relations. Evidence suggests that this local sediment is a barrier to developing new community networks. One problem for STRIDE is difficulty of incorporating pre-existing community identities into attempts to construct a new borough-wide identity. Thus one worker claims that rather than address these pre-existing networks STRIDE has 'skirted around' them, particularly in areas such as Hebburn where they have been hard to penetrate. Such networks may also be sustained by the homogeneity of the local population. In summary, highly localised political relations within South Tyneside provide a foundation for community organising, however they also mitigate against the establishment of new sets of collaborative relations at a borough wide level. Establishing a new politics of community requires the construction of a new community identity and meaning. It may be argued that STRIDE, as part of the new institutional structures of economic governance, has been set up precisely to perform this function.

6.2 The Third Sector in South Tyneside

Before exploring in more depth the operation of STRIDE as a mechanism for co-ordination and representation of the community and voluntary sector, the following explores the condition of the local community sector and local constructions of community. Local political formations have fundamentally effected patterns of community and voluntary activity, and the construction of community interests in the borough. In 1992 one consultant described South Tyneside as 'one of the most unreconstructed metropolitan authorities'. It had 'clung onto the womb to tomb' approach and therefore an independent community sector was not encouraged. One STMBC officer summed up this approach:

> "The only community organisation is the borough council because we are the only elected ones."

Such attitudes have fundamentally impacted upon attempts to develop new institutional relations and processes. The notion of 'the local authority as community' needs to be contextualised within a deeply divided political context that reinforces divisions between different parts of the borough reproducing traditional ties and identities. Thus the character and pattern of community and voluntary sector development reflects the policy environment that has dominated South Tyneside. One particular trait, stemming from deep-rooted paternalism, is a resilience to change or policy innovation. One community worker asserted that this has inhibited community sector development and that until very recently the borough remained largely untouched by community development practices evolving nationally and across the NE. However, an independent consultant has argued that within this general pattern lie different approaches to community stemming from different factions of the Labour group:

"The A team were very anti-community, and the B team which included some respected politicians had more interest. It is hard to estimate the influence of these divisions. There was strong support for the ideology of the public sector and the state."

Up until 1991 two main forms of community and voluntary activity were evident within the borough. One voluntary sector employee characterised this as a 'two-tier' system comprised of small neighbourhood groups with no paid staff or regular sources of funding and the 'professionalised voluntary sector'. The first of these were geographically fragmented, privatised activities such as that taking place through church networks. These were separate from and did not challenge with the paternalistic style of government:

"There has always been community involvement going on, but it has been very private and has taken place in people's own worlds, people were very private about what they did. My father (a local Tory Councillor in the 1950s) would say community involvement was a way of life." (STRIDE member)

This reflects a view of voluntary activity detached from the public policy arena; based upon unpaid, traditional forms of social relations (Cox and Mair,1991). Often these activities have been quite 'disparate' with few networks developing across geographic or sectoral boundaries. Hence, any network development has principally been confined to shared activity bases, such as childcare, on a highly localised basis.

The second main type of third sector activity taking place within the borough is that affiliated to, and largely controlled by, the local authority. This activity has occurred via two principal mechanisms, firstly, through the Community Education Department and secondly, through a limited number of key voluntary agencies. The Community Education department has primarily relied upon an extensive network of Community Associations (CAs) to deliver community development. The network of CAs operating across the borough was established as part of local government re-organisation in 1974. Prior to the establishment of S.T.M.B.C, South Shields Borough Council mainly pursued a local authority-based community development through a youth programme combining statutory service provision. County Durham's Youth and Community service placed more emphasis upon delivering community development through voluntary projects funded by the local authority. In the two years prior to local government re-organisation senior officers started planning how to unify the two distinct approaches:

"In the 1960s I was a councillor with Durham County Council. They had quite a progressive approach toward community welfare with the idea of village style community centres - other local authorities seemed to go down the route of youth centres. One year before local government re-organisation in 1974 and the establishment of STMBC, Durham County Council had put in place the basic building blocks of the community association." (Community association chair)

As part of the new local corporate apparatus, the community education service was to have a three-fold remit to provide youth work, adult education and community development. The

aim was a fully integrated youth and community service run by the local authority but combined with local level management committees and membership. The service would therefore benefit from having local accountability but would also have 'financial stability' to pay for buildings and workers. The structures to support this were intensively developed in the years immediately following re-organisation:

> "The principal methodology applied to the delivery of community development is the community association. I stress it is a method, albeit the principal method and I am fully aware of it's limitations." (CED officer)

Community associations are managed through committees of local community representatives who are elected at the AGM and are responsible for producing an annual development plan. Currently, the thirty-two CAs established across the Borough form a critical element in the community infrastructure of South Tyneside, providing leisure and educational services to local people. In 1992/3 net expenditure on the CED service was £2,229,217 (OFSTED, 1994: 12). Interviewees, both voluntary and paid, involved with running the service emphasised its importance and effectiveness. It has been described by one member, whose local CA has 4,500 members, as an important 'part of the fabric of South Tyneside' and by one officer as producing 'immense social benefit.' This view was affirmed by the findings of the OFSTED inspection:

> "The service is highly responsive to the needs of the communities it serves. It has successfully achieved its policy objectives, building on the borough's evident sense of community and according local people control of resources and programmes within community associations." (1994: 2)

However the OFSTED report expressed some concern that community development needed to be more responsive to the changing local context, extending beyond recreational needs and addressing broader social issues including unemployment and racism. A former worker argued that existing structures ignore the economic realities of the borough and one activist claimed that the failure of the service extended to making unemployed people feel 'unwelcome', in at least some of the centres:

> "Jarrow has one of the highest unemployment rates but when you come in here there's no-one in the place, why is that?" (Local activist)

Some interviewees expressed concern at the high level of dependence which most of the CAs have on the local authority. Although there is some variation, for example East Boldon is more independent due to support from miner's money, the CAs are to a greater or lesser extent tied into the local authority. Explicit links to the authority exist through the management committees embracing representation by councillors and volunteers. A consultant who had work extensively in the area commented:

> "The money which went to the CA went with a lot of strings."

Whilst there is a perception that CAs are therefore very much a local authority-centred expression of community, this is challenged by one CED officer:

"There are three nominees from STMBC, but as there are about twenty people on each management committee, the local authority has a voice but not the controlling voice. They can operate quite independently; they must respond to the principals set by the department but there is room for local manoeuvre. (CED officer)

There have however been tensions in the relationship between some of the CAs and STMBC, due to a perception that there is a lack of local autonomy. This tension came to the fore in the early 1980s when:

"The local authority wanted to change the constitution of the CAs, but the original constitution required them to have the approval of the management committee prior to any changes. This meant that they had to consult with about twenty management committees before they could do anything. Since then they have been wary of introducing anymore changes - it was too painful." (CED Officer)

Despite these tensions, the CAs remain a primary mechanism through which the Community Education Department retain their identity as deliverers of community development, albeit a quite limited form. Through the CAs the local authority has developed a particular form of relationship with the local communities. This is considered by some to be a barrier toward alternative forms of community interests. A key aspect of community sector politics in South Tyneside has thus been the ongoing paternalism of the authority who have seen themselves 'as the community':

"The authority saw themselves as the pinnacle of socialist virtue. Community groups had a role to play; running bingo, raffles and bars but, it was a limited role - the community shouldn't raise it's voice in the public arena. The CA had a limited but useful function. Their function was not political and their role was circumscribed by the local authority." (Consultant)

One CA chair also endorsed this view, emphasising that the use of centres by the community is different to them 'running their own affairs'. This raises important questions about the whole community development approach and what it seeks to achieve. An officer from CED defended the CA service, after reinforcing the point that it is only one of their methodologies - albeit the dominant one:

"The criticisms are that they are very recreationally based and in some measure that is true. But they are of immense social benefit. I'm mindful of this...they shouldn't settle into being purely recreational. Although community development is delivered mainly via the CAs it is augmented by other projects. We have a two-fold operation as a provider of the services and as a strategic enabler."

An additional form of community and voluntary activity closely allied with the local authority is the co-ordinating agency, South Tyneside Voluntary Project (STVP) and the Training and Enterprise Network (TEN). STVP is the council funded body which co-ordinates voluntary activity across the borough. STVP was set up in 1980 to provide co-ordination for a 'very

115

fragmented' voluntary sector and help to identify gaps in service provision. It is effectively the local arm of the Citizens Voluntary Service, a national organisation with a responsibility to provide basic services, advice, and development work and co-ordination functions. As a service provider to the voluntary sector they work closely with social services, education and planning departments, where 'everyone knows everybody else'. This emphasises the close relationship between a body representing the voluntary sector with government structures operating at the local level. This suggests close-knit policy communities existing around community and voluntary activity but based mainly upon governmental relations and largely excluding the community and voluntary sector. Although the STVP are seen as being closely allied with the local authority on whom they depend for their core funding, evidence suggests that in the initial years this relationship was problematic.

> "In the early years there was lots of hostility towards the STVP both from the local authority and from other voluntary organisations, for example the local unions wouldn't co-operate. Some councillors didn't understand and said, 'why do you need to be paid when you're a voluntary organisation?' The councillors are ex-pit men and bus drivers and weren't familiar with voluntary activity- some saw it as something which puts people out of work. They didn't understand that the voluntary sector supplement other activities not replace them." (Voluntary sector employee)

A representative of STVP asserted that the relationship with the local authority had improved over time despite some residual barriers. This was exemplified by changing attitudes within the local authority from the situation in the 1980s when:

> "Their idea of consultation was, 'come to a meeting at the town hall and we'll tell you what we're going to do!" One of the reasons for this changing attitude was seen as the increasing legitimisation of the voluntary sector, brought about for example through the introduction of community care and the 'forcing' of the voluntary sector onto statutory bodies. Another reason is financial; the voluntary sector are both a vehicle through which to draw money into the borough and, to a certain extent are seen locally as a cheap provider of services."

This highlights the importance of central government in pushing for greater co-operation locally between voluntary and statutory agencies. Whilst the STVP perceive that they have been responsible for helping to change the character of the local community sector this view is not shared amongst other members of the third sector. There is a great deal of suspicion about STVP due to its relationship with the local authority and many opposed its move to become the co-ordinating organisation for third sector interests in the borough because of this. One community worker also commented that the organisation was not 'politically astute' enough to take on board the role of co-ordinating agency. Additionally, and in contrast to some other CVS organisations it has not developed a regeneration remit. Whilst it was originally intended to develop this part of STVP through an offshoot organisation, the Training and Enterprise Network (TEN), they are now separate entities. TEN was set up in 1994 to provide a training and enterprise focus for the third sector but so far has played quite a limited role, mainly running a series of drop-in centres across the borough. This also

suggests a process of fragmentation occurring through bodies set up specifically set up to undertake co-ordinating functions.

The pattern of community and voluntary development described above, and in particular the level of dependency upon the local authority, has created a number of problems. Community and voluntary projects have been used in local power struggles in a way that has militated against the development of a cohesive sector and which has jeopardised the survival of individual projects. An example of this was under the Urban Programme where:

> "The local authority had very strong control over the budgets, and the community sector had to fall in line, their face had to fit. About three years ago my project lost its funding, okay they were winding the urban programme down, but it was the only project to lose its funding. I was seen as going to the wrong side (in terms of political allegiances) and I had a visit from one of the councillors, who tried to tell me who I could have as Chair of the project. South Tyneside likes to have control and it likes to control the community sector." (Community project co-ordinator)

Subsequently local constructions of community, deriving from the particular history of local government in South Tyneside, the pattern of local social relations and the interaction of these local conditions with broader forces of restructuring, have come under scrutiny through attempts to construct new local relations. Central government localism in the form of the Task Force has been pivotal in this process. One key aspect of their work has been to construct new representative structures for the community and private sector that have some degree of autonomy from the local authority. The following section explores the policy context into which the Task Force was introduced.

6.3 Local Economic Policy

This section explores the development of policy structures around local economic development, highlighting major changes within strategies and institutional structures. The role of community development in the locality and in constructions of community is reviewed. Finally, an exploration is undertaken of how these two sets of policy processes have increasingly converged around contemporary regeneration agendas. The failure of the City Challenge bid was a key moment for local economic policy in South Tyneside. Although this event was not in itself a simple catalyst of change, it raised some important questions about local policy approaches. Before embarking upon a discussion of the events and outcomes of this period, it is necessary to first explore the character of the existing policy environment and the specific characteristics of the locality, which inform institutional settings and policy processes.

117

Council officers interviewed about the evolution of economic strategies in the borough identified several phases of policy development. One of the key themes to emerge from this was the weakening of their capacity to enact local authority economic development policy. The Urban Programme, a central government economic development initiative, introduced in 1968 provided an important impetus to local strategies. The Urban Programme targeted 57 areas across the country with particularly high levels of need, including South Tyneside. Whilst this initiative placed an emphasis on partnership working, South Tyneside was characterised by a lack of collaborative relations, particularly with the private sector:

> "By the late 1970s there was a perception between the private sector and the local authority of 'them and us'. The private sector didn't see the local authority as having anything to do with itself and the local authority didn't see the business sector as having anything to do with them. They were connected only at points of conflict, the refusal of planning applications, waste disposal and health and safety, things like that. There was a feeling of two separate entities with no points of cross-referencing or crossbreeding. As a local authority officer I was at the front end of changing the existing culture. Although there was no formal strategy, by the late 1970s the local authority had shifted it's position, it had set up the Economic Development Committee and had begun to realise that it needed to give some credibility to the private sector." (Former local authority officer)

This change in culture was encouraged by national research and legislation in the 1970s which stressed the need for economic and environmental regeneration to take place alongside social regeneration. The 1977 White Paper 'Policy for the Inner Cities' (HMSO) called upon local authorities to encourage private sector investment as a stimulant to regeneration (Blackman, 1995: 43) and emphasised the role of voluntary organisations. During this period South Tyneside received grants in the region of £4.5 million per year until 1992/93 when the programme stopped, forming the core of the local economic development budget. The grants funded a large number of projects including the development of factory sites, co-operative development and marketing and tourism and environmental projects. Although informal partnerships did develop to some extent this was mainly around specific economic development projects. The institutional fabric to support partnership-based local economic policy was described by one local authority officer as 'at best weak'.

With the introduction of partnership based regeneration funding South Tyneside had a limited base of public or private resources to draw upon. This in part reflected a general undermining of local government autonomy and capacity and private sector institutions. Peck describes how private sector institutions were, ironically, undermined through Thatcherism, which tended to view formal business associations as epitomising the weaknesses of British industry (Peck, 1995: 24). This tendency was compounded in South Tyneside where, according to local authority officers, mechanisms set up to support private sector involvement were largely ineffective. The principal mechanism was the South

Tyneside Industrial Strategy Committee set up 1984 and later renamed the South Tyneside Economic Development Strategy Committee. Its remit was to develop stronger relations between organisations and implement proposals contained in the economic strategy to drive forward the borough's economic agenda. During the 1990s it set up a series of Task Groups around, for example, information exchange, training, and urban and environmental renewal. Although chaired by a private sector representative and with key industrialists present, senior representatives of the public sector tended to dominate the committee.

By 1992, the institutions, which might have supported private sector representation and co-ordination mechanisms, were no longer in operation. Meanwhile in the authority's Local Economic Development section morale crumbled as the team was reduced from thirteen staff to five, and outside consultants were employed to develop local economic strategy. In 1991 the South Tyneside Economic Regeneration Group was established with an emphasis on private sector involvement. In seeking access to City Challenge it has been claimed by local authority officers that this committee actively sought to represent the views of the business community and overcome the 'apathy' of the private sector:

> "The private sector have not had much interest in getting involved, but then they have divergent interests. Only a handful of firms in the borough have an active interest, when we set up the working party to progress the strategy and tried to involve the Chamber of Commerce there was limited private sector interest." (Local authority officer)

However, this perspective ignores both the domineering stance of the local authority, which may have inhibited involvement and the undermining of private sector groupings under Thatcherism. For example, the Chamber of Commerce is a core institution for private sector involvement but by 1990/91, the South Tyneside branch had effectively collapsed with the departure of it's Chair:

> "With that the private sector no longer had a networking opportunity, there were no places to meet. The rotary club existed but that wasn't for women." (Private sector representative)

The domination of the local authority in local policy processes continued into the second round City Challenge submission in 1993, and is cited as one of the key reasons for the bid's failure. Although the Strategy Committee did have private sector representatives and 'some community representatives' were co-opted into the process, these individuals were not supported by broader representative structures. It became clear that these would be needed to produce a partnership-based bid and there was a feeling that the group was 'stagnant' and 'impotent' in the new policy context:

> "The Economic Development Strategy Committee was running out of steam. That particular mechanism had run it's course, and the committee was wound up. We were left with the question of how we could do things better and there was a lull for about a year." (Local authority officer)

Central government led agencies and funding schemes diverted new packages of funding away from local authority control. Local government no longer had the capacity to develop or implement local economic policy. Whilst Newcastle enjoyed the benefits of quayside re-development, South Tyneside became the 'poor relation.' The local authority felt that it was effectively by-passed through initiatives like City Grant, where grant aid for factory development went straight to the private sector. In addition the transfer of powers to Europe has impacted upon local government autonomy. In recent years the industrial decline of the NE as a region has attracted Objective 2 funding from European Structural Funds. The new Objective 2 programme established between 1994-1996 required organisations who would potentially receive grant aid to come together at the local level to develop Local Action Plans setting out local priorities for the use of Objective II resources. South Tyneside's Local Action Plans have been produced within the framework of the overall Regeneration Strategy for the borough, developed in parallel with the SRB bid. This has been achieved using a core group of local agencies including STMBC, the TEC, TWDC, South Tyneside College and, through STEP, the community sector. The local action plans should accord with the priorities set out in the Single Programming Document, which is the Regional Plan. This is produced by TAWSEN, a collaborative body consisting of the five Tyne and Wear partnerships and Northumberland. Regional co-ordination is aimed at increasing the impact of money spent, reducing duplication and overlap and providing an impetus for collaborative ventures. Hence, European funding systems have directly contributed to the establishment of new institutional relations within the borough. This has combined with an impetus created through the failure of the City Challenge bid.

Despite the dominance of the local authority, it has been argued that it has failed to produce a clear policy agenda for local economic development. The reasons for this have been ascribed to a variety of factors. Internally, there has been little collective working between the officers and the councillors. One interviewee referred to a situation of ongoing conflict:

> "There is a war, within the Labour party and between the councillors and the officers - what do you get done when there's a war on?" (Local activist)

Some interviewees commented on the authority's staff recruitment practices as being 'nepotistic' whilst others emphasised the failure to attract experienced staff from outside the borough, linked to a sustained under-resourcing of the council. The outcome of these factors was seen by some officers and activists as being a lack of capability to develop pro-active strategies both around economy and community. This has been combined with unwillingness on the part of the authority to consult with other sectors and bring them into the policy process. Other actors have been critical of local authority practices and consider that these have contributed to the failure of the City Challenge bid. One local politician described the bid as a 'shopping list' and another interviewee claimed the bid failed because it was weak, rather than for political reasons:

"The failure of City Challenge was a major blow to the area, the perceptions
are that the bid failed on the basis of political decisions, but the bid was not
up to scratch it was all over the place. The problem was that South Tyneside
hadn't got its act together."(Civil servant)

In general officers of STMBC attributed failure both to a weak bid and to the anti-South
Tyneside sentiments of central government. Although City Challenge was supposed to
encourage partnerships between the public, private and community sectors, South Tyneside
produced 'a local authority bid'. In the aftermath it became clear that the GONE did not
consider the bid to have been the product of partnership. For example, the community input
came through South Tyneside Voluntary Project (STVP), an organisation with strong links to
the local authority and partly funded by it. Historically the local authority had not consulted
with local people and City Challenge did not mark a change in established practice.
However, the failed bid caused internal rifts within the authority culminating in the departure
of the Chief Executive. Despite the criticisms of local policy processes detailed above, the
failure of the City Challenge bid is still seen by some, including one senior councillor, as
reflecting South Tyneside's unpopularity with central government. Another interviewee who
had been closely involved with the City Challenge board in the NE confirmed that South
Tyneside blamed everybody but themselves for an essentially 'poor' bid, and that:

"South Tyneside's big downfall was that as well as not liking the community
sector they didn't like the private sector either. Even North Tyneside, which
had been the socialist republic of the north, had managed to get some
private sector involvement."

None the less, the same interviewee also confirmed that South Tyneside MBC had not been
popular amongst some civil servants.

Empirical data describing a dissatisfaction with local economic strategies and the reduction
of many issues to a state of ongoing political conflict does accord with some existing
characterisations of policy processes in the NE and South Tyneside. However, the findings
contrast with the notion of a strong degree of integration between local capital and public
officials in local decision-making (CDP, 1977; Shaw, 1988). In contrast, South Tyneside's
traditional policy frameworks, characterised by machine labourism, had little involvement
from the private sector. Healey (1992: 148) also infers a strong and pro-active policy
environment in her analysis of Hebburn; describing an authority which developed a strong
team of dedicated officers for environmental improvements and local economic development
when it became an Urban Programme Authority in 1978. This contrasts with the situation
described by one community activist who claimed that under the Urban Programme
community projects were financed without any effective monitoring.

A key event in the evolution of economic policy and third sector politics in South Tyneside
was the arrival of the Task Force. In 1986 central government introduced Task Forces as a

vehicle for strategic action in urban areas with persistent problems. Run by secondees from public and private sectors and with a life span of two to five years their aim was to promote economic regeneration within small geographical areas (Blackman, 1995). The Task Force arrived in South Tyneside in November 1991 with five staff, two secondees and a couple of consultants. One interviewee directly involved in the development of the Task Force initiative, commented that by this stage the Task Force was already 'past it's sell by date', the lessons of the initiative having been absorbed into City Challenge. This has resonance with Stewart's observation that 'successive states of urban policy are not totally discrete; each successive stage incorporates elements of earlier policy cultures' (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 348). However, the arrival of the Task Force marked a new phase in the changing institutional landscape of South Tyneside.

It is argued that this example of central government localism had profound impacts upon local policy processes and in particular upon the construction of community sector interests. It is claimed that one of the reasons the Task Force was set up in South Tyneside was the failure of local institutions, principally local government, to secure regeneration grants to address the acute levels of social and economic need within the borough. The aim of the Task Force was to 'energise' the riverside wards, through for example, providing funds to local groups. Another aim was to increase private sector involvement in public policy. The predominant view held by some within the Task Force was that STMBC 'hadn't got its act together':

> "The question for the regional office was, are South Tyneside doing as good a job as they might be?"(Task Force officer)

From the outset this inevitably created tensions:

> "When the Task Force arrived the local authority hated them - their attitude was 'just give us the money'. In a way the Task Force was sent in to beat them up and to create a new dynamic."(Consultant)

This view was confirmed by a local councillor who referred to the Task Force as 'unwanted' and 'a waste of time':

> "The local MP wasn't happy about the Task Force's arrival which was seen as interference- which didn't help. It's taken a long time to persuade people that it could be a good thing. There was a great deal of suspicion. Some in the local authority weren't particularly enthusiastic, they saw the Task Force as interfering with the local authority ball game." (Government officer)

Despite this resistance, the Task Force has been pivotal in developing private and community sector representation on STEP. However in order to achieve this one officer commented upon the somewhat 'confrontational' approach they adopted. The 'independent status' of the Task Force gave them the freedom to develop their own strategy to a degree, leaving the Regional Office with some misgivings. One local authority officer reflected:

"The Task Force have done a lot of their own thing. I'm not sure if they were instructed not to speak to the local authority, or if they thought it would be stronger if they worked around the local authority."

Although other evidence does not support this wholly isolationist view of the Task Force, relations with the local authority were strained due to the independent approach which the Task Force adopted in it's attempt to fulfil central government demand for three-way partnerships:

"Ministers love private sector-led partnership, private sector steerage is important, Tories want the private sector involved and if they bring money to the process, even better. So the structures have been set up very deliberately with Task Force support, we've created structures which will have life for as long as central government want to see it survive." (Civil servant)

This highlights the very deliberate attempt to create new institutional structures through which to channel central government grants. The comment also reveals the dependence of such institutional relations upon central government. From the outset the Task Force has sought to develop an 'independent' structure to support multi-agency partnership, yet this central government localism creates a strong dependency upon factors outside the locality. According to Peck (1995: 17) any autonomy is inherently constrained by the way that business interests are 'being mobilised, given their form and presented with their function by the state'. The operation of arms length government mechanisms raises fundamental questions about local autonomy within the new governance arrangements. The Task Force has sought to impose a new model for developing and implementing regeneration strategies in accordance with central government policy raising fundamental questions about how the relationship between central and local government is being negotiated. Central government localism through the vehicle of the Task Force has been a key force of change in the local policy arena:

"The Task Force has always been concerned with what's going to happen at the exit- the succession strategy has been in mind from the start. A number of ways were possible via a number of different organisations. What could be the best succession body? The notion of STEP sprung to mind. It would be a body through which to continue the activities which had been pump primed by the Task Force." (Government officer)

The following sections highlight how these processes of 'pump priming' have been subject to local negotiation. The process of creating an overarching structure to facilitate business leadership and provide a mechanism for community sector representation has not been without conflict.

6.4 The Challenge to Traditional Structures and Relationships

This section examines the processes leading up to the development of new institutional structures and relations. The establishment of new representative organisations within the

private and community sectors has formed the basis for developing a broader institutional mechanism. The Task Force has been identified as one of the key agents bringing together members of the community and private sector leading to the development of STRIDE and STEP. In addition the TEC, supposedly driven by private sector involvement, has also played an important role. Tyneside TEC began work in South Tyneside in the early 1990s, and claims one of their officers rejected trickle-down approaches in favour of a more 'holistic perspective'. However the process of establishing new forms of community involvement has been hindered by a strong degree of parochialism and a local authority view that the sector has only a marginal contribution to make. Although historical processes and the character of local social relations have helped elevate the status of the local authority, recent restructuring has undermined this.

The TEC and the Task Force both set about establishing relations with local third sector organisations but through different channels. The TEC began developing relations with the sector through the STVP, whilst recognising that the fragmented nature of sector meant there was no single point of contact with local groups. The Task Force began work with a number of community groups but developed a particularly strong relationship with the Low Simonside Unemployment Project in Jarrow. Additionally, and in collaboration with the local authority, it commissioned a consultant to conduct an audit of the community and voluntary sector. The aim was to 'map out' the community and identify action needed to strengthen the sector. In commissioning the report, the Task Force had recognised the need for a third sector umbrella organisation other than the STVP; sharing some sympathy with the view that the STVP was local authority dominated. The outcome of this process was the production of a report called 'Strengthening the Community and Voluntary Sector' (Stares and Demarco, 1993). The consultant's report, commissioned by the Task Force, but under terms of reference jointly agreed by the local authority, was presented to the Task Force, STMBC and the STVP in September 1993. It sought to investigate how to "...strengthen, develop and build capacity into the voluntary sector" in the Task Force area. The study found that community capacity in the form of people, structures and resources was, for a variety of reasons, lacking. It was argued that:

> "...the potential of the community sector in the borough is fatally limited by a higher than normal degree of parochialism, insularity and conservatism among it's key leaders (the unpaid local activists)." (Stares and Demarco, 1993: ii)

Whilst acknowledging these problems, the consultants argued that a lack of confidence and understanding about the possibilities of community involvement presented barriers to third sector development. At the level of structures the study found that the voluntary sector was neither 'truly' independent nor accountable to local constituents. It was concluded that the sector had largely failed to secure external sources of funding, remaining heavily reliant upon limited local authority grants. This was seen as problematic due to the limited grant

availability and because of the politicised nature of support. Underpinning local authority resource allocation has been the view that:

> "...the role of the voluntary sector is to provide a vehicle for voluntary involvement and that by and large it is neither necessary or desirable for community groups to have permanent staff. The corollary is that if an activity is valid and requires paid staff then they should be employed by the local authority." (Strengthening the Community & Voluntary Sector)

This perspective would seem crucial in understanding local policy processes. The analysis developed within this document links the under-development of the community and voluntary sector with the pattern of local social relations and local sediment, reflected in the specific construction of local political interests. The report concluded that existing community and voluntary initiatives did not provide a basis for building institutional capacity. Thus although the community associations and church networks could contribute more to community development and regeneration processes, a new model of community action was required.

The report recommended introducing a new organisation or framework representing local needs and priorities. The new structure founded upon 'strong democratic credentials' and relying upon 'a pragmatic mix of local activists/ volunteers supported by a small number of high quality paid staff' would be a conduit to attract new funding sources. Supported by a broad based community constituency, functional independence, organisational effectiveness it would have a borough-wide remit to increase the effectiveness of existing community and voluntary structures. Whilst interviewees have made little direct reference to this report some of its recommendations are reflected in the way STRIDE has been set up. A document regarded as having more impact was the report produced by members of the community themselves, 'The Missing Partner' (1993).

The Missing Partner report was produced in response to the consultancy report by Federation in South Tyneside (FIST), a 'self-selecting committee of community activists'. The working party had nine members, most of who were representatives from the Federation of Community Associations. Their remit was to investigate and report on the feasibility of establishing a single community organisation capable of representing the community sector in order to support involvement in local regeneration processes. This contentious episode draws out some of the pre-existing tensions within local relationships that STRIDE has had to confront. Individuals within the working party were concerned with the level of control being exerted by the local authority over the community and voluntary sector. As one community activist explained:

> "I have always had a different view of community to the one held by STMBC. They put money into capital works and paying staff, but they made the voluntary people minor. I don't agree with that. Anyway a few years ago I became part of a group of voluntary people in South Tyneside who received a grant that was to be used to investigate the needs of the community in South Tyneside. I was the Chair of this organisation and we visited projects in

London and Edinburgh setting some ideas going. The local authority felt under challenge by this and felt as though they were under attack. I then came under personal attack- they tried to move me. Anyway we got an outside consultant in and we published a report called the 'Missing Partner' it caused an uproar. The vision was not anti-council, as some saw it but it was more for the voluntary people. The voluntary people were to be the community and things were to be done for themselves. Officers saw it as a challenge to their empire." (STRIDE member and CA chair).

The Missing Partner (1993) was a pivotal document incorporating some fundamental criticisms of the local authority approach to community. It is claimed by community representatives that the local authority disliked claims that third sector activity within the borough was effectively 'hi-jacked' by the local authority. The existence of the document reflected a growing degree of dissatisfaction amongst some community activists and marked an important episode in the attempt to establish an alternative representative structure for the third sector. Although some evidence suggests that during this period the local authority attitude had begun to change, interviewees commenting on the Missing Partner felt that the local authority tried to ignore the report's existence. Representatives of STMBC interviewed largely failed to mention 'The Missing Partner' report although some referred to the consultant's report. It is perhaps surprising that local authority representatives ignore an episode regarded by community activists as pivotal in local community politics.

The FIST report notes the difficulty of separating community and voluntary interests in the borough, and highlights that 'the two sectors are not entirely separate' (1993: 2). However according to the report it was seen as important to distinguish between the community and voluntary sectors. The voluntary sector is distinguished on the basis of its contract funded service delivery and it seems this may have had some important ramifications for distinguishing between the work of STRIDE and the STVP. Although the group agreed that their central aim was to set up a single community organisation there was 'basic disagreement' between those who saw its function as being support for 'practical economic projects' and those who prioritised the building of a broad-based coalition within the sector. These tensions remain central to the construction of a single co-ordinating organisation for community representation.

The contentious nature of the report and complexity of relations was reflected in the reaction of the local authority. A number of community activists felt 'punished' for their part in the episode, and as one activist remarked, 'a lot of old scores were settled'. Additionally, although community members produced 'The Missing Partner', the Task Force faced criticism for its role. The local authority complained to the Regional Office and threatened to withdraw their 'limited' support for the Task Force. A Task Force officer commented that it was suggested that they 'cool it'. The Task Force was therefore seen to be at the centre of

these contentious processes, perhaps in contrast to the more 'hands off' approach of the TEC.

The above discussion has highlighted the sense of frustration felt by third sector representatives over their lack of autonomy and the dominance of the local authority. This has perhaps resulted in a situation where the creation of an 'independent community sector' is considered to be an aim in itself. Community members repeatedly referred to the need for 'independence' from the local authority, reflecting in part a desire to move away from the paternalistic structures that have dominated South Tyneside. However this has also been combined with the idea (amongst certain sections of the community sector) that the local authority should be enabling the development of the community and voluntary sector (see Leach et al, 1994).

The above findings suggest that in the period before STRIDE was set up some fundamental questions had been raised about the local authority attitude and approach toward the community sector. These centred on the control that the local authority was exerting through the community associations and the STVP. These tensions were brought to the fore through two reports instigated by the Task Force. Thus, central government policy operating through the Task Force provided a fundamental impetus to the creation of a community umbrella organisation. The barriers to achieving this were perceived to be under-development of the community sector, reflected in a lack of referral agencies, and the domination of the local authority by a political agenda bred out of the divisions within the Labour Party. One expression of these entrenched processes was through the activities of the Community Education Department (CED). In general the hierarchy and departmentalism characteristic of STMBC obstructed new ways of working, however one innovative project has emerged; the Low Simonside Employment Initiative. This grass roots project had some teeth because it was managed by STMBC's Policy Co-ordinator, second in line to the Chief Executive. The co-ordinator of this initiative was able to forge an alliance with the Task Force, who were sympathetic to the problems of developing innovative approaches to community development. One Task Force Officer claimed they were unable to spend their community budget because 'there were no projects' to deliver the money to. The co-ordinator of Low Simonside became an important route of access for the Task Force to members of the community. Hence, an important alliance formed which became pivotal to the subsequent attempts to construct an independent community umbrella organisation.

6.5 STEP: The Emergence of a New Institutional Structure

> "STEP is now seen as a central mechanism for regeneration through the key partners." (STRIDE officer)

The community umbrella was to be the community arm of a broader regeneration partnership 'led' by the private sector. STEP was set up initially to pull together the private sector and create a mechanism for it to exert influence over local regeneration. Cox and Mair (1988: 309) refer to the significant role that may be played by the local chamber of commerce in strategy building. However, this political form is a contingent expression reflecting the particular historical political economy of the US. In the British context, private sector representation is weaker and in South Tyneside the chamber of commerce had reached a state of inertia. The Task Force strategy was to 'set in motion' private sector representation by deliberately developing an alternative institutional structure with the same remit as the chamber. Thus, following Peck (1995) the Task Force were part of a state-sponsored construction of private sector representation and co-ordination function.

> "In a sense we re-invented the wheel, the Chamber had died and so we created a new organisation." (Private sector representative)

A development worker was employed to try to bring together the different elements of the private sector, organising a conference twelve months later to consolidate this. Following from this, about twelve private sector representatives formed a new coalition 'South Tyneside Means Business' (STMB). This was seen as a vehicle through which to coalesce private sector interests and from which to draw private sector representation onto STEP. However, a general reluctance to get involved, particularly by the larger firms, meant STMB was predominantly composed of a few, small firms. One government officer suggested this reluctance resulted from disillusionment driven both by the poor state of the local economy and by the paternalistic character of the local authority. The TEC grant funded STMB, but found that although they had 'good ideas' there were no delivery mechanisms through which to take these forward. The TEC and STMBC initiated separate discussions about the creation of a private sector forum. In 1993 a meeting was organised to bring these two elements together:

> "There were two levels of operation, there was the STMB who were predominantly made up of smaller firms and who were organising events for business in an attempt to cohere the sector and make an input into STEP. Those who were more heavily involved with the Chamber of Commerce earned more clout than STMB. So it was decided to roll the groups together. The Chamber had got it's act together and re-created itself and was back in South Tyneside working at the grass roots level. So STMB ceased and we became involved with the Chamber of Commerce. This felt like a positive move at the time but personally now I don't think that it has been. We've lost some of the smaller companies, they were often the dynamic ones who wanted to be doing things." (Private sector representative)

This clearly shows the distinctive strands of private sector interests, expressed here as the difference between the smaller firms and the larger 'key' firms in the borough. This may link to feelings of commitment or loyalty to the locality by smaller firms, but begs complex questions about what a local firm is and the nature of different ties to locality.

In the lead up to the merger of STMB with the Chamber two key figures from the local business world, the Chair of Rohm and Haas (chemical manufacturers) and the Chair of Reyrolles (electrical switch-gear) had been brought on board. It is claimed that these personalities 'have been key'; helping to generate 'enthusiasm and commitment' amongst some of the business sector. In general, the view of the Task Force was that getting the private sector involved 'had gone well given the long history of inactivity' and that the merger of the Chamber and STMB in 1995 was a positive outcome. However, the above quote indicates that others have felt that bringing big private sector firms into the process has led to the marginalistion of smaller firms active in the earlier stages of coalition building.

Although reluctant to be involved, 'bigger' firms have been able to wield more influence within the coalition, at the expense of involvement by some of the smaller firms. This situation resulted in part through the actions of central government seeking this profile of private sector involvement. One interviewee suggested that government agencies cultivated relationships with representatives of the key large firms in the area, of whom at least one was already part of broader regeneration networks in the NE. This individual was chairing a City Challenge board on Tyneside and had long-standing working relationships with key officers from the Government Office North East (GONE). They were able to wield considerable influence in the formative stages of STEP, and claimed that they were an important influence in the process of gaining acceptance amongst some of the other partners for community representation on STEP.

STEP was set up specifically as a multi agency co-ordinating mechanism through which to succeed the Economic Development Strategy Committee and bid into the SRB. It is the overall co-ordinating body incorporating six private sector representatives, two local authority representatives (one officer and one councillor) one representative from the TEC and, two community representatives. The aim of this body is to draw together public, private and community agencies and interests in order to formulate local regeneration strategy. The STEP mechanism emerged out of tentative meetings with various strands of the business sector, the local authority, the TEC and the Task Force. The business sector met informally in February 1994 to consider what role they could play in the development of local regeneration strategies. Minutes from this meeting show that the business sector were 'enthusiastic but unclear' as to what their contribution could be. This has resonance with questions over the meaning of private sector leadership by Peck and Tickell who claim that:

> "Contrary to popular perceptions, business leaders seem neither to be in control nor exercising their own agenda." (1995: 63)

In contrast with previous patterns of behaviour, public sector representatives stated their wish 'to respond to the ideas put forward by the private sector rather than impose ideas about how STEP should operate.' Whilst 'led' by the private sector, STEP would also 'incorporate representatives from the main agencies concerned with regeneration and the community/voluntary sector', because:

> "As far as the community sector are concerned - ministers are not interested in partnership without community involvement." (Government officer)

In South Tyneside these top-down pressures were compounded by grassroots pressure for new, more inclusive policy structures (Eisenschitz, 1997) and increasing disaffection with local government approaches. The new three-way partnership mechanism would therefore play a 'key role' in co-ordinating economic regeneration within the borough and in bid preparation. The first meeting of STEP was held at Reyrolle in February 1994. At this meeting the declared objectives were to work with the public sector and establish positive working relationships with partnership organisations. Different agencies were to have slightly different responsibilities: the TEC would be the lead partners for developing people and supporting business, while the local authority would lead infrastructure, physical and environmental issues, health, crime and community development. STEP's priority was to develop a comprehensive multi-agency regeneration strategy for South Tyneside that would place a high priority on unemployment, the key economic issue in the borough. An issue of contention was the type and nature of community sector involvement, however, one of the key business personalities felt that he was able to persuade other partners that community involvement was important:

> We were asked to set up a Business Forum, but I said that we need a partnership that includes community and suggested the City Challenge idea. At the time the local authority felt that it was the elected representative of the community, but I said we need them around the table. Everyone looked at (GONE representative) to see if she would fund it. She said, whatever the private sector can handle, then that's what we'll go with. The mix of 6,2,2,1 was the cosmetic flavour for government grants. The STEP motivation for the local authority was SRB, for the private and community sector it is more than the SRB, but it could also satisfy this. (Private sector representative)

Attention turned to other City Challenge partnerships in the region, and in particular the Chair claimed that Newcastle's West End partnership was influential. This reflected regional level relations between the Chair of STEP, the West End Partnership and key players at Tyneside TEC. However the unequal board make-up of STEP did not resemble the West End partnership where each sector had seven seats on the board. By March 1994 the community sector had two interim community representatives attending the STEP board meetings. Crucially, however, there is evidence that the members of the partnership had very different ideas about what community involvement was to mean in practice.

Figure 1: The STEP Board Composition

The STEP Board Composition

- TEC (1)
- Private Sector (6)
- South Tyneside Enterprise Partnership (STEP) Board
- STMBC (2)
- Community Sector (2)
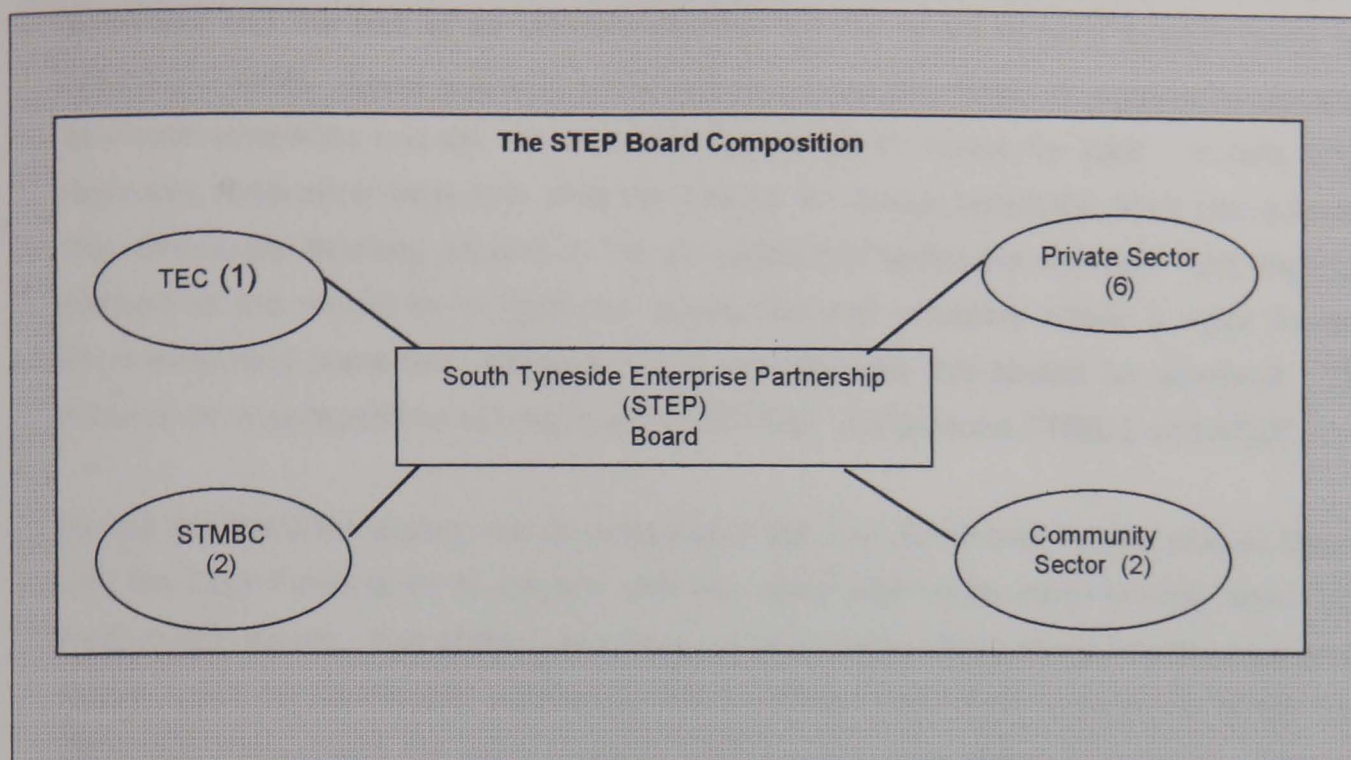
6.6 The Emergence of STRIDE

From the outset, the extent and nature of community involvement has been an issue of intense struggle within STEP. Even within the parts of the community sector seeking to contest the notion of local authority 'as community', there have been divisions and tensions over the form and mechanism of community engagement. It is therefore necessary to explore both the processes occurring within the community sector, and in particular the emergence of a community forum, and the relationship between these processes and the role and aspirations of other agencies involved in the establishment of STRIDE. Describing the process of setting up STRIDE, and identifying sources of support and resistance to its development, provides useful insights into the nature of local relationships.

As previously discussed, the Task Force has been central in helping create new institutional structures by promoting the establishment of a community organisation. In keeping with the findings of the two reports discussed above, the Task Force concluded that new structures would be needed to support more collaborative working practices. In this they were at variance with the local authority and STVP who felt that STVP should be the co-ordinating mechanism:

> "There was a gap in service provision, and there was a need for wider representation and for democratic processes- this hadn't happened in South Tyneside before. STVP should have been there but wasn't." (STRIDE member)

The need for an umbrella organisation was also being acknowledged by members of the community and voluntary sector, both within and outside the self-selecting group that made

up FIST. Interviewees have identified the absence of the community voice in local policy processes and the lack of an effective platform for the sector to bring forward ideas and potential projects. Local authority controlled structures had failed to respond to changing economic conditions and did not allow the community to 'speak for itself'. In turn, whilst there was some uncertainty over what the agenda for change should be, there was a feeling that community interests needed to be re-constructed within the borough. An important element of this would be to give the community and voluntary sector a voice in local decision-making processes, although it was unclear how this should be achieved. This remains an ongoing source of tension within STRIDE and between STRIDE and STEP.

During this formative period, the co-ordinator of the Low Simonside Project worked closely with the Task Force to try to engage with the community sector more broadly about local regeneration issues. The alliance was bred out of a shared vision about how the community sector could be developed, combining the localised grass-roots experience of the Low Simonside Project with the more strategic borough-wide view of the Task Force. The Low Simonside project was beginning to demonstrate 'what might be possible'; in particular through one to one work, developing plans for a community business around childcare, and promoting 'local management'. In so doing:

> "...it was challenging the way that the local community association worked."
> (STRIDE member)

In particular it highlighted the failure of the CAs to develop creative responses to unemployment and the retention of a narrow, leisure based focus. Therefore, although many interviewees perceived there to be an identifiable 'local authority approach' toward the community sector, in practice there was a second more innovative strand of practice being implemented through the Chief Executives Department. One community worker argued that this in combination with the Task Force created a climate within which STRIDE could develop. Initially the Task Force worked on an ad-hoc basis with community members through the Low Simonside Initiative, but soon sought to establish a separate organisation in order to consolidate community interests. The co-ordinator of the Low Simonside project, supported financially by the Task Force, was to 'hold the hand of the group'. Concurrently changes within the local authority were leading to a partial acceptance of the need to work more closely with the community to access the SRB. Hence, in the early stages of setting up an organisation, a meeting was held at the town hall with various community groups indicating a shift towards more collaborative working practices. However according to one community representative it became apparent during the meeting that their involvement seemed to be premised upon the possibility of marginal benefits to the community sector, with the local authority appearing to re-assert themselves at the centre of policy processes.

GONE and Tyneside TEC were also providing an impetus toward greater community involvement. The former along with the Task Force focussed on the Low Simonside

Initiative, whilst the TEC began to work with the STVP. A 'decisive moment' came when the private sector Chair of STEP met with the community and voluntary sector. It is worth reflecting on this preliminary meeting and the subsequent meeting, not only because they are key events in the formation of STRIDE but, also because they provide insight into the character of local relationships (Schwartzman, 1993). The preliminary meeting held with community and voluntary sector agencies in April 1994 led to an interim working group being set up. The co-ordinator of the Low Simonside Project, despite being in local authority employment, chaired the meeting at the invitation of the STEP chair, suggesting perhaps some support from the business sector for the community to organise independently of the STVP and, by implication, the local authority:

> "The STVP would have been the obvious organisation to draw in but they had been under-resourced for many years and they couldn't develop a vision. Also they didn't have the political astuteness necessary. Although I was still a local authority employee, and technically therefore not supposed to, I decided to chair the working group. I felt that if I didn't it would be a mistake as the reigns would be handed to the STVP. That could have resulted in a take-over by the Community Education Department and the whole thing could have collapsed." (Community worker)

This indicates an awareness by the community professional attached to STRIDE of the need to engage in political bargaining and agenda setting, and perception that pre-existing structures, tied as they were to the local authority, might not be able to engage in this bargaining process effectively. The working group established included some of the most 'powerful people' from the community and voluntary sector, although not all shared the vision of an 'independent' community umbrella organisation.

In May 1994 a further meeting was held, organised by STVP, was supposed to involve around 200 community and voluntary organisations, although it has been suggested that not all groups were aware of the meeting. The meeting held at Jarrow Community Association served to formalise the group into the 'Community Forum'. One participant described it as an 'open and democratic' meeting through which a steering group was elected. It was not however without problems. The Chair of STEP came to open the meeting but left before the meeting became 'mayhem':

> "The first democratic meeting was held at Jarrow CA. I was on the committee that was sitting at the top (I had been one of the two people elected in the interim onto the Step board). As I looked around I saw that the whole of the Youth and Community department were in the audience. The group had already decided that it didn't think that paid employees were part of their contribution, we wanted to be the voice of the people. So, initially there was a lot of aggro from the youth and community workers because we didn't want them there as local authority workers. We wanted to keep it as the voice of the voluntary sector. But they didn't grasp it. We were a thorn in their side, I suppose they saw us a threat to their work and jobs, although that wasn't what we were about but they didn't listen. In South Tyneside - before the community forum - people had tried to get the community centres to come out of local authority control, so the community forum didn't really sit

well with the local authority workers at that time. Neither did the fact that we wanted to retain community and voluntary control." (STRIDE member)

This meeting reflects growing tensions over the challenge to traditional local authority dominated constructions of community. The above quotation highlights the role of paid community workers resisting attempts by community members to represent themselves through their own organisation. This is reflected in the behaviour of members of the Community Education Department who, 'tried to intervene', but were prevented from doing so by the Chair of the meeting:

"I made deliberate attempts to exclude the Community Education Department, in order to get the organisation off the ground. I switched off the microphone every time they tried to speak. I could see it all going down the pan. The organisation needed to be independent of the local authority."

These comments exemplify the struggle that ensued when community and voluntary sector representatives challenged existing roles and relationships by attempting to establish a structure independently of the local authority. This meeting formalised the community forum, and a steering group met in June 1994 to drive forward the agenda of the new organisation. Discussion documents reveal a concern to extend the membership base and develop effective representation on the STEP board, whilst safeguarding the forum's independence. The interim community representatives on the STEP board felt dissatisfied with the level and nature of their involvement, in particular they felt 'squeezed out' of the first round of SRB and were treated as consultees rather than partners:

"... the business sector and the local authority have the STEP board sewn up." (Community representative)

However, realising that the other partners couldn't move forward without the third sector contribution, they sought to develop 'strategies of inclusion' in the subsequent SRB processes. Initially this focussed on the need for a formal constitution that would strengthen the community sector's representation on STEP. During the early stages the group worked closely with an advisor (the community worker who had chaired the meeting launching the forum) to draft a constitution which embraced the notion of independence. In her capacity as advisor, the community worker was pivotal in establishing the framework within which the forum, now re-named STRIDE, would operate. One element of this was her explicit aim to establish a set of 'guiding principals', or framework of values:

"I deliberately tried to set up values, this was part of breaking the mould (of the way things had been done in South Tyneside) at least in the early days. I think that this has been important - having a clear statement of values."

It is claimed that the value base of STRIDE and it's spirit of operation have formed have been an integral part of policy development and indicates the organisational approach to bargaining processes both within and outside the regeneration partnership. Both workers and members of STRIDE felt that this was the embodiment of establishing a professional

approach. The broad themes of the equity agenda are: the representation of the community and voluntary sector in matters concerning economic and social regeneration in an inclusive and democratic manner; to work as equal partners, to develop constructive relations internally and externally and to value the contribution of all participants. The statement of values was an important stand against traditional local politics and signified an intention to influence the operation of policy processes. An additional aim was to counter some of the problems perceived to face the community sector in their relationships with public, private and, perhaps, other voluntary and community agencies. Further a key concern was to protect the 'independence' of the community contribution within STEP. Given the stated commitment to independence, the Chair/advisor, who was still employed by the local authority, resigned her position whilst continuing to work in a voluntary capacity as advisor to the group. With the closure of the Simonside Employment Initiative this role was formalised with financial support from the Task Force.

During the following 8-9 months ad-hoc meetings were held to try to consolidate the membership and a direction for STRIDE. Documents reveal a vision of the community forum which has not be realised; a drop-in centre crèche facilities, a coffee bar, limited workspace and training and resource space. Whilst many community and voluntary activists supported STRIDE in principal, many did not commit themselves to becoming involved through attending meetings. Also in producing the draft programme for developing STRIDE some difficult questions had been raised which were to be addressed through a seminar. The main themes concerned how to define representation and independence and how to develop relations within the community sector and between the community and other agencies. Specific questions were raised around, 'who are the community sector and how can they develop a supportive network?' This followed from potential competition over Task Force funding between the working party and the STVP. It was felt that not only that 'there must not be conflict' but that it was important to establish one co-ordinated voice from the community and voluntary sector. This marked the beginning of a sometimes awkward but important exchange between the formative community co-ordinating mechanism and the STVP about roles and relationships. More generally this highlights inherent difficulties of collaborative strategies and tensions which surround community and voluntary sector representation through a single voice. At this stage the co-ordinator of STVP sought to clarify the role of STVP with the community forum advisor and it became clear that both organisations wished to retain their separate identities.

Table 3: Key Events in the Development of STRIDE

May 1994	Meeting Community/Voluntary Sector
	Election of Community Forum Steering Group
June 1994	First Steering Group Meeting
	Discussion of Aims
July 1994	Community Forum Action Plan
Sept 1994	Away Day- discuss role and aims
Oct 1994	TWDC & TEC agree two year funding package securing premises, staff and training budget £45,000 pa.+ cost of advisor 3 days per week TEC £20,000 training budget Additional monies from STMBC and Europe
Nov 1994	Adopt Constitution- unincorporated voluntary body
Jan 1995	ERDF Community Appraisal money- to assess existing third sector agencies and type of service provision. To provide baseline data for European bids Adopt Mission Statement and Aims
April 1995	Strategy Day- Where Are We Now? Set objectives for 1995-7- how to develop role of comm and vol organs in LED and building the network –included developing support for community businesses and training provision
August 1995	First AGM

Dominant themes during this early stage of development were the need to consolidate organisational aims and the membership base. In seeking to create a network of community and voluntary organisations the idea of the area forums was proposed. In order to influence and take part in decisions effecting the local economy STRIDE members are represented on a variety of bodies in the borough, concerned directly and indirectly with regeneration. A further strand of STRIDE's work is to develop relationships with the decision-makers and key organisations concerned with economic regeneration in borough, in particular STMBC and STVP.

During the period of study, STRIDE's organisational form was evolving rapidly. Members were specifically concerned with organisational development and in particular how roles and relations were being established. This indicates both the dynamic nature of the organisation and the long-term nature of developing new institutional structures. Within STRIDE the organisational form has been underpinned by it's democratic ethos. Yet, this has been treated with some suspicion:

> "More than anything we wanted real, non-political democracy. People find that hard to understand- democracy without politics. That's especially difficult for political people. I'm very committed politically but I can keep that separate." (STRIDE member)

Hence the community sector faced resistance both in setting up a new organisation and the character of that organisation. In this process they have been reliant upon the support of a number of actors. In particular, many interviewees identified the key roles played by the Task Force and the advisor, the former providing the financial support and the latter 'the vision'. STRIDE's first annual report identifies the importance of her professional support, providing the community and voluntary sector 'a champion'. This indicates the importance

of a professional community worker taking a lead role in the construction of community interests within South Tyneside. The Task Force, in seeking to establish a community representative organisation, were dependent upon this link into the community and the support from this professional. Hence new forms of urban policy appear to have elevated the status of the community worker based at the grass-roots level. The following comment, made by a member of STRIDE, infers that it also helped create new sets of practices:

> "She helped us to develop as individuals and to get the act together. People had no experience of being asked for our ideas or what we thought should happen."

This links to comments by one local activist who felt that consultation had very little part to play within the local political system. Although the local authority did not have a history of consultation and active participation, councillors have claimed themselves to be the community. In the setting up of STRIDE paid 'community professionals' have played a pivotal role, confirming the importance of community development work through networking (Gilchrist, 1998) and the importance of strong leadership within networks (Skelcher, et al 1996). More specifically Rhodes (Skelcher et al, 1996) notes the importance of new urban managers who bring particular skills to the policy process including mediation and game playing. However, in general, the role of community professionals is an under-developed theme of recent literature on community engagement in local governance. However, local authority community development workers have questioned the legitimacy of the professionals who have been so influential in the development of STRIDE. Paradoxically therefore whilst new modes of local governance may be interpreted as the devolution of urban management and increasingly open systems of governance (Stoker, 1991; Stoker and Young, 1993) this may be in the overall context of policy processes becoming less transparent. For example, one STRIDE member who decided at the outset of their involvement that in order to evaluate STRIDE properly, he would need to be actively involved in it's running for 12 months; made possible only through being retired.

The resistance to new forms of community interest and the barriers put up to community involvement in local regeneration was in part overcome through the vehicle of the Task Force supported by resources and GONE. Whilst the Task Force did meet with resistance, largely from the local authority, it was able to gain support from the private and third sectors enabling it to bring about changes to norms, mechanisms and institutions of governance. This process was not just driven by external forces and central government localism, but required the support of elements of the private and community sector. Other factors were therefore the willingness of the private sector to be involved and the mobilisation of parts of the community sector in contesting the approach of the local authority. In the case of the community sector the presence and support of the Task Force allowed pre-existing dissatisfactions to surface. In addition and paradoxically perhaps, it was also partly the

actions of the local authority, and their role in setting up the Low Simonside Initiative that enabled the Task Force's vision to be realised in South Tyneside.

6.7 Community Co-ordinating: New Patterns of Decentralisation and Hierarchy

"STRIDE was necessary because no-one was in a position to take on an umbrella role for community involvement in regeneration. They have this as their total focus and can make the network work. South Tyneside needs the core co-ordinating function." (STRIDE officer)

By adopting a borough-wide remit and multiple objectives, STRIDE has developed a 'comprehensive' and complex approach to stimulating and supporting community involvement in local regeneration. The three core, intertwined aims are firstly, to strengthen community and voluntary organisations and their role in developing the local economy; secondly to create a network of community and voluntary organisations and, thirdly to influence and take part in decisions regarding the local economy. The latter relates specifically but not exclusively to its role as the community arm of STEP. To fulfil these aims mechanisms are being sought to bring the community into regeneration processes, extend the community development network, stimulate talking and debate, develop community enterprise, through an 'independent community organisation' controlled and managed by its membership. This framework creates a number of complexities and tensions for STRIDE, internally and in its relations with other partnership agencies. This section explores how community relations have developed through the mechanism of STRIDE. In so doing it highlights some of the tensions which surround processes of 'networking' and 'capacity-building' which are central themes of community governance literature. Skelcher et al (1996) argues that City Challenge and the SRB have opened up networks which in turn are a tool for power sharing. The above quotation indicates the belief that new mechanisms were needed to support a community co-ordination. This contrasts with research characterising network relations as developing informally and naturally with little reflection on the process (Lowndes et al, 1997: 334). The concern with network building stems from the promotion of STRIDE as the co-ordinating mechanism for the third sector in South Tyneside to present a unified community voice in local policy processes. This echoes claims by Gilchrist that network development provides the foundation for collective organisation and for representing a multiplicity of interests (Gilchrist, 1998: 108).

In developing new sets of network relations, it has been argued that STRIDE has faced not just a lack of understanding by external agents, but internal difficulties in developing a sense of organisational identity and aims. There is evidence that this overarching co-ordinating function has been perceived as a threat by some organisations and individuals. This has been compounded, at least in the initial stages, by uncertainty about the role of STRIDE. For example, STRIDE has been criticised for not being a service provider, although members of the

138

organisation perceive it as an enabler, since it is only a service provider in the sense of providing a support service to local community and voluntary groups:

> "In this sense it can be regarded as a servicer- as a servicer it has to walk a fine line - and the line between organisations does become blurred." (STRIDE employee)

Following Keating (1991:6) who defines governing capacity as '...the ability to formulate policies and to mobilise powers and resources behind their implementation', the lack of control over service provision raises concerns over the sense in which STRIDE has capacity. This is turn reflects the broader problems fragmented community government, according to Leach et al 'reduces the capacity to resolve issues faced by local communities' (1996: 19).

The confusion surrounding the emergent structure and approach of STRIDE arises not just from its complexity, but is indicative of broader questions about changing patterns of local governance. It demonstrates some of the difficulties which surround the movement away from traditional conceptions of service provision toward new institutional forms and concepts of 'enabling' or 'facilitating'. It has been stressed that STRIDE is filling a gap by giving 'local people clout' and 'engendering people's interests'. Following from this, a key focus for STRIDE is identifying what these interests are. Within the current framework STRIDE undertakes a variety of activities; research, strategy development, inter-agency working in addition to representing the third sector on a variety of organisations concerned with economic and social regeneration. A core concern was the need for the community sector to change it's scale of thinking. The Chair stressed that for so long the community and voluntary sector has had to think in terms of crumbs, but that it must now 'think big'. Whilst the changing style and scale of third sector operation forms an important facet within changing patterns of local governance some commentators have interpreted this as a stage in the privatisation of welfare (Knight, 1997; Eisenschitz, 1997).

From the outset, a core aim of STRIDE has been to build 'capacity' through network building (see DoE, 1995:130). For STRIDE to meet its claim to South Tyneside's community and voluntary sector on the STEP board necessarily involves effective co-ordination systems, accommodating both the geographical distances between different parts of the borough and the distinctive local identities within it. With this in mind, the chair of STRIDE suggested area forums as a tool through which to develop the network and produce a 'co-ordinated voice'. *Network building* is seen as a way of supporting community sector development and underpins the aim of achieving a co-ordinated voice previously lacking from the institutional framework in South Tyneside. STRIDE aims to *build the capacity* of the local community and voluntary sector through the two related functions of representation and regeneration. Internal relationship building lies at the core of STRIDE; due to it's claim to be the representative voice for the community/voluntary sector in South Tyneside. STRIDE as a communication mechanism can help to build new sets of relationships. This is not necessarily based around broader

involvement in STRIDE, for example, it may act as a platform for unifying member and non-member groups in each area to help set local priorities:

> "We can't wait for the local authority anymore and grumble when they get it wrong, the area forums are a sounding board and they need to deliver. Even if people are just sounding off- and there is already a service provider, STRIDE are in a position through the area forums to be a communication channel." (STRIDE member)

As discussed, the area forums have been set up in accordance with old administrative boundaries, which are still important politically as well as in terms of identity. There is a tension, therefore, between the forums which exploit this identity and the role of STRIDE as the South Tyneside-wide co-ordinating body. STRIDE tends to reinforce one identity whilst simultaneously trying to get people to think on a broader scale. Thus for STRIDE an important operational question concerned the mechanisms through which to develop network capacity. Dual aims to build community capacity and support local network-building processes have contributed to the organisational structure. The following explores the structures and processes through which it is trying to deliver these functions and considers the extent to which they have facilitated and supported STRIDE's aims and objectives.

The diagram below illustrates the internal organisation of relations. The area forums are the *decentralised* mechanism through which member organisations meet and elect representatives onto the management committee. Members of the management committee sit on the various sub-committees, and it's officers on the executive committee. The different elements are co-ordinated by the core of paid staff, which includes administrative staff and project-funded staff. From the outset STRIDE has been developed through community members working alongside community professionals, this approach was consolidated by the appointment of a full-time director in May 1995. The core of paid staff is located in STRIDE's Westoe offices. Recent funding has meant the employment of five staff adding to the existing team of the director and the two administrators. There is now an area forum development worker, a research worker, a funding officer, a youth and regeneration worker and a community enterprise worker through which to build community capacity:

> "We are starting to build the core of Stride and new workers will be coming on line, but this building needs to be directed. Only the Chair could say this, but I feel as though things have been slipping away from me in the past couple of months. Things have happened which I've only found out about afterwards. We've spent a lot of time on the BLISS project and we need to move towards creating a limited company. At the moment it's my name on the bottom of everything. We have got to create a safe context for the committee. We have done a lot but now it's time to settle down and be sure of where we are going and where we want to be- this is very difficult, and it's all about how we meet needs." (Chair)
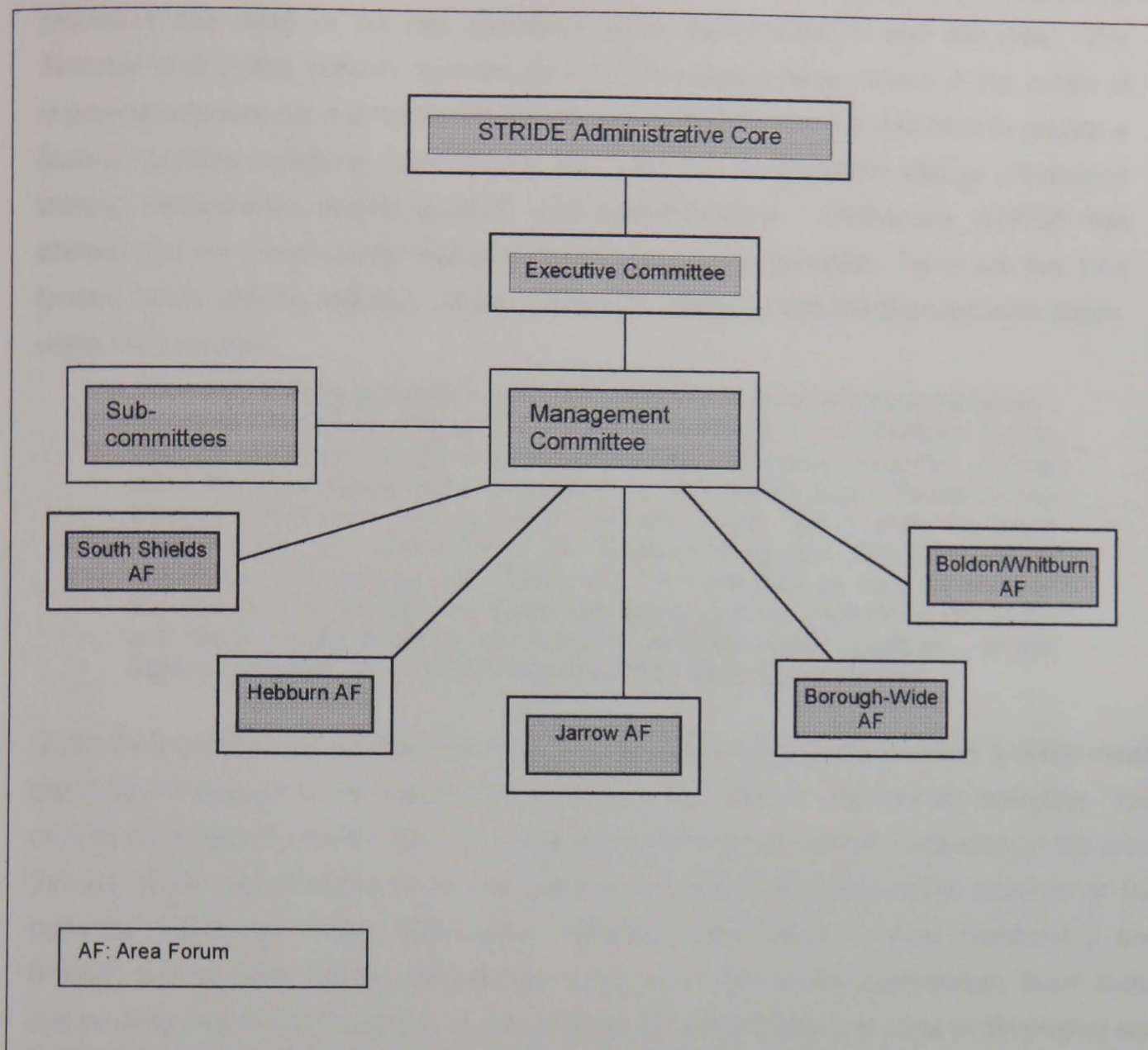
Figure 2: The Organisational Structure of STRIDE

The main vehicle for internal development is through the area forums which are 'the framework for community involvement' (STRIDE Annual Report 1995) and, therefore, central to both the process of representation and project development. Initially some caution was expressed about adopting such an approach:

> "I had some reservations - it was a lot of work to get the area forums off the ground and to service them. There was a danger I felt, of putting too many resources into the structure- there was a lack of development workers. But, I also saw it as strength so I went along with it, although I had always envisaged it being supported by area forum development workers. The inspiration came from the Chair- I can't think of another organisation which is area based in this way but it was organic, it just happened. There are pros and cons with whatever strategy you use." (STRIDE advisor).

As a framework for involvement the forums encompass a degree of complexity stemming from their multiple functions. Initially the forum concept was devised to enable STRIDE to

act as a representative voice of South Tyneside's community and voluntary sector on STEP. The forums are the primary co-ordinating mechanism and underpin network-building processes and bring to the fore questions about decentralisation and hierarchy. For Skelcher et al (1996) network relations provide the bridge between those at the centre of regeneration processes and traditionally marginalised groups. Each forum aims to provide a basis for building community networks and for community development, through information sharing, collaboration, project planning and implementation. Additionally, STRIDE has claimed that the forums could help to improve local service provision. There are five area forums; South Shields, Hebburn, Jarrow, Boldon to Whitburn and the Borough-wide forum, which meet monthly.

> "The area forums generally cover what were the original geographical areas... The only forum that crosses boundaries is the Boldon and Whitburn Forum they are scattered communities, so they've been embraced together.... Ever since the re-formation of the boundaries in 1974, when South Tyneside was created, communities tend to stay in their own areas. We all know the South Shields thing, the Jarrow thing, the Hebburn thing and that they are all identifiable communities, and rightly so. So it wouldn't be right for an area forum to be representative of those community groups; it would be silly to try and bring people together who weren't naturally drawn together. It just wouldn't be effective. (STRIDE Member, 1995 local radio interview)

Given the importance of the local identities, it is not surprising that the research findings reveal significant differences in the character of the area forums and the way they are operating. This uneven development reflects both the composition of the groups and the character of the area. Various factors have influenced decentralisation processes: the local social relations of the particular locale, pre-existing community networks, links between forum membership and STRIDE management, the tension between local control and central co-ordination, forum focus and evolving representative forms. A core problem for most forums has been in developing and consolidating their membership base:

> "I'm not happy with the way Jarrow area forum is developing. We need to expand. The question is how to get people on board. People think that meetings are boring- it's difficult to get the balance - people will just flit in and out until they see how important it is. We need pivotal people who things happen around. But we are beginning to reach different people- non-traditional groups. In Jarrow a lot of people don't think that what they say is important. It is sad because they could even just network for themselves." (Jarrow member)

This emphasises a belief in the importance of key individuals in driving the network. Although it was suggested that membership will grow as the identity of STRIDE becomes more established and increasingly visible, it was suggested that non-member groups were waiting until STRIDE was more established before joining. Also tensions were identified between the identity of STRIDE and the individual member groups. Whilst one activist claimed that the identity of individual groups 'promotes a sense of ownership and pride which people need', there is a concern that this may be undermined through joining STRIDE. Indeed for many of the individual representatives their role is characterised by the tensions that this creates.

Hebburn AF has experienced difficulties in establishing a strong local membership, despite the strong sense of local identity. There is also a more general despondency about the Hebburn's role within STRIDE:

> "If the community sector was the tail in this thing, then we're the tail end. The problem is that we lack support, it's like we rattle around in a can. Every meeting is fresh faces and then you don't see them again. How do we take it further? We have to get people along, we invite people and then don't get the support." (Forum member)

An extract from one of the forum meetings, where neither the chair nor the vice-chair had turned up to the meeting, highlights some of the problems being experienced:

"Has the Chair resigned?"

"No, he sends his apologies again."

"We need to decide where we are going, the last meeting was cancelled due to poor attendance. I was hoping our director would be here."

"She got an invite yesterday from the co-op society to speak at their function this evening."

"Yesterday? Well I'm not very happy about that."

"We need to discuss ideas, the SRB next year is going to be spent in Hebburn and the forum should have a say."

"Where are we on the agenda?"

"Sorry I've jumped around a bit. Can you feed back on the management committee and STEP?"

"Oh, I wasn't expecting that."

Overall the meeting seemed to lack any structure or sense of direction, reflecting the need for more support. Discussion was helped when a visitor from another forum clarified the agenda and a dialogue was prompted by the possibility of SRB Round 4 being in Hebburn, although this had not formally been agreed by STEP. Expectations were high and the local authority officer responsible for external funding present at the meeting committed himself to coming to future meetings of the area forum to discuss proposals for the SRB bid. A further meeting discussing SRB 4, confirmed the importance of the area forum as a mechanism through which STEP could have a dialogue with local people, providing a basis for the informal exchanges of ideas as well as promoting understanding of the procedures involved in the bid processes. In the case where a senior officer of the local authority was present this provided an opportunity for debate but also showed how 'expertise' was in the hands of the local authority. Whilst the meeting was in progress the senior officer's car was vandalised in the car park outside the community centre. The cultural divide between community members and local authority officers was perhaps illustrated by the general sense of amusement that his 'flash car' had been damaged.

Members and community workers perceived that there are a number of barriers to Hebburn expanding the base of community and voluntary action. In part this was due to the fragmented nature of Hebburn, a recurring theme of forum meetings. Hebburn has three very insular housing estates characterised by a largely transient population, many of whom have been re-housed from homeless waiting lists with few, if any, ties to the locality. Another dimension to Hebburn is the strong faith based network, in particular the strong catholic community based upon immigrant Irish labour. The Catholic Club in the town is an important meeting point for some of the nine Catholic councillors who represent the town. These strong and politicised social networks produce divisions within the community that present a barrier to STRIDE establishing a single representative forum. One member indicated that setting up STRIDE was difficult here because local people were 'very suspicious'.

The Boldon to Whitburn forum has also experienced difficulties in establishing a stable membership:

> "In the Boldon to Whitburn area there has been a lack of response to the area forums - we have tried holding alternate meetings in Boldon but we've given up on that and we are holding all the meetings in Whitburn. They are very different areas and perhaps they can't be catered for together." (Forum member)

The bimonthly forum meetings centre on a small but active membership. Their dependence upon STRIDE's core staff was exemplified at a meeting when tensions arose over the division of responsibility between forum members and STRIDE workers. The meeting did not begin until STRIDE staff were present. Discussion amongst members prior to the meeting revealed their sense of isolation within the organisation, and distance from the management committee mirroring their physical separation from the South Tyneside towns. This sense of isolation is compounded by difficulties over establishing a forum identity and sense of ownership, stemming partly from the wide geographical coverage of the forum. One member commented:

> "Whitburn is only a small area but the community association has around 2000 members- is there room for an area forum? But then the churches and youth group work outside the community associations. I would feel tempted to separate - perhaps we are flogging a dead horse. The Whitburn vicar was invited and there seems more potential to build things up on that side. If it was just Whitburn we might go out of our way to promote it more- it needs ownership and identity. STRIDE's job is to promote and so far we haven't done this. Now we have an officer in post to develop the forum- we can find new members and develop contacts."

The tactic of moving the forum to different venues to try to boost membership has perhaps weakened the identity and created some confusion. Consequently, it has been agreed to use a single venue. The group also expressed concern that they did not feel as though they fully understood STRIDE's structure and how relationships worked between different levels of the organisation. A further concern was the amount of 'jargon' used that wasn't understood. Although this was expressed as a language difficulty, it also concerns the complexities of the

organisation and it's activities. Hence, there was seen to be a need to have members who have an overview of the organisation and the processes in which it is involved.

The borough-wide forum is intended to serve those who operate across the borough, consequently it tends to have relatively more members who are paid officers of organisations. Still there was an element of reliance on STRIDE staff to provide the continuity between meetings:

> "There is a problem about people not coming every time especially when they are key figures because you don't get the continuity. Also people from STRIDE core are very important for pushing the meetings along; the area forum aren't ready yet to take up the reigns themselves." (Area forum member)

The South Shields area forum has developed from an initial meeting with five groups to having forty groups on the mailing list. Members of this forum felt that it was functioning 'quite well' and was operating 'very much in the hands of volunteers' who had strong links to groups in the local area and strong ties with the local community association:

> "I've been heavily involved in setting up South Shields Area Forum, I set about from the outset approaching activists. People were interested they had a strong belief in the community and voluntary sector and wanted to see things get done."(Area forum member)

South Shield's forum benefits from being located in the administrative centre of the borough, where many of the voluntary organisations active within the borough are located, providing South Shields with a strong community and voluntary sector identity. Although the borough-wide forum caters for agencies operating at this scale, many organisations attend both, so giving the forum a relatively high proportion of paid voluntary sector staff to unpaid community representatives. Although the forum is felt to be functioning well, there is also recognition that potential members might be discouraged by the South Shield's focus:

> "70% of the population of South Tyneside live in the old Borough Council of South Shields - it's too big and there's a perception of distance. We needed one area forum in South Shields to get it going - but you might end up with two, perhaps a north and a south." (Area forum member)

The focus of SRB 3 on South Shields Town Centre has accentuated the sense in which South Shields is at the hub of local activities, contributing to the forum's sense of identity. Jarrow also benefits from having a strong sense of identity:

> "People leave Jarrow but they come back, there is a strong sense of pride and identity and the sense of community remains intact and very strong. It's a small place." (Forum member)

Although Jarrow is very fragmented with a lot of social problems, it retains a strong tradition of public housing and a very strong resistance to Right to Buy. This could be a reflection of continued support for Labourist traditions, which one STRIDE member has argued makes for stronger grass roots. It may however suggest a resistance to new forms of governance:

"The tradition has been that the local authority dominates and people depend on the local authority. People have never been consulted or asked. Jarrow is an old town there are lots of older people in it. It's difficult for them to understand how current changes are affecting them. Also life was hard for them, why should they be concerned? I think why not try to make it better, it's the future I'm concerned about." (Forum member)

Jarrow has been the focus of initiatives led by the local authority to address the social and economic problems of the town. The Chair of the area forum was initially drawn into a broader set of community politics through the 'Jobs for Jarrow' initiative aimed at countering the high unemployment rate. Despite the area's dependence on the local authority it has been suggested that there were strong community networks in operation before STRIDE and that these have been important in developing the forum.

"Before STRIDE there was lots of needs based activity in Jarrow. I was involved through the church networks. But the activities were not structured. Jarrow is a small place - when people needed something they would go to someone that they know- this is still the basis of the Jarrow Area Forum. A few of us have all used our contacts to push STRIDE off the ground and to get the community voice heard." (Forum chair)

However, others less convinced and even where is local identity and support still difficult process:

"I don't think that Jarrow Area forum has served a useful function so far. It's a lovely idea, but at the moment no one gets much out of it. Unless this changes people will drop off. There has never been a big attendance at the meetings - it's the same few people every time- the only consistent attendance has been by the officers." (Forum member)

Forums seemed to operate best where there was most overlap between the forum membership and the executive committee suggesting that decentralisation requires substantial support. Along with Jarrow, South Shields is one of the more established forums in the borough and benefits from having members who are very active within STRIDE as a whole and hold positions on the executive committee:

"We have gone through the experimental stage and we are now functioning well." (South Shields forum member)

Since close links to the administrative core of STRIDE are important in helping operationalise the forums, this highlights the potentially exclusionary nature of network mechanisms:

"Individuals in STRIDE have had a long experience of being unpaid workers. That's the way it works and it can be difficult for outsiders to understand. They can feel intimidated - there's an intricate network and if you haven't worked in it, it can be intimidating. For anyone new it's breathtaking - it takes such a long time to understand." (Forum member)

Jarrow, like South Shields has people involved with core of STRIDE and on the executive committee which influences the complexion of the forum. During the study the Chair of STRIDE was Chair of Jarrow Area forum, playing a pivotal role in supporting networking processes and connecting local activities of the member groups to the broader concept of regeneration. A core

aspect of this central-local relation between STRIDE core and the area forums is the tension between retaining central co-ordination whilst encouraging local control/autonomy. One example of this tension has been the frustration by local activists at the lack of local knowledge which STRIDE staff had of the area. For example, some resented the encouragement of specific individuals to attend forum meetings and highlighted the problem of evaluating which individuals and projects would deliver community benefit:

> "They are after money for a project which they are going to run privately - they've already had any amount of money. And they're not doing it for the community it's for themselves. I think it's wrong." (Forum member)

Overall, whilst STRIDE has been able to develop some key projects, which will have significant local impact, some members felt there was still a gap between this and what happens within some area forums:

> "The area forums have very little to do with the fancy title 'the regeneration of South Tyneside' really people get together and discuss local concerns. Once people are discussing local issues you can begin to introduce the idea of regeneration - but in layman's terms. Regeneration is a different starting point from where most people are at. We can use the area forums to increase people's awareness and to improve local services and facilities. They might discuss things they wouldn't have done because they would have seen it as being too expensive. (STRIDE member)

Whilst members were confident that their activism gave them a good understanding of local needs, substantiated through a programme of community appraisal and need identification, some forums have found the process of translating ideas into projects very difficult. This again links to the notion of community and voluntary sector changing it's focus as it takes a more central role in emergent systems of local governance. But as this quote suggests, for many groups and projects this could mean adjusting their aspirations, as well as building capacity to take on new roles and responsibilities. However the more immediate problem is retaining people's interest and motivation 'on the periphery' whilst waiting for regeneration processes to become 'concrete'. Where project identification and development has occurred this has been mainly integrated within SRB processes. One of the projects to be included in the bid has come out of the work of the South Shield's forum - the BLISS project, the central bureau for locating information and support services. The BLISS project, developed over the past three years is concerned with delivering a central, accessible 'one stop shop' to support carers and anyone with any type of disability. For some forum members the multi-million pound project represents the success of STRIDE.

A core group has been responsible for pushing the idea forward, conducting a feasibility study and putting together a bid for funding. The project, had reached the stage of needing people with 'specialised skills to develop it further.' BLISS and the SRB were important foci of the forum meetings, with attendance by the local authority's regeneration manager. This represents the development of new forms of relationship building, with the local authority using community

structures to disseminate information and engage in dialogue with local people. There was nevertheless a feeling amongst some members that although BLISS would be a flagship project for STRIDE it had become such a central focus of STRIDE that it had been to the detriment of project development in other forums.

For both the Hebburn and Jarrow forums a lack of unifying project or focus seems to be a key problem:

> "Hebburn area forum doesn't have a focus as yet. It does need a focus and the easiest way would be through the SRB....It is quite difficult to promote the area forum in Hebburn and that's partly because there's no projects." (Forum member)

In the case of Jarrow however various ideas are being developed through forum discussion including a shop mobility scheme and a recycling project. One of the barriers to developing the projects has been the lack of volunteers. Additional discussions have taken place around the idea of a community transport scheme due to poor bus services to the out-lying estates like Low Simonside and for a food co-op to address the lack of shopping facilities. Particularly vulnerable groups were felt to be the young and the old. Finally, there have been discussions over how the heritage development Bede's World, an important local tourist attraction, could be more integrated with the local community. So far, however, the perception is that the major success of the forum is providing a new channel of communication for local people and local initiatives:

> "Jarrow area forum is a forum for talking about what's going on. Network building is happening very effectively locally, that's because we talk. At the meetings we tell each other what we are up to and write up any events in our diaries. So basically we are getting together to talk about what we're doing. People want to share." (Forum member)

A notable issue was that some groups, such as youth, although perceived as having acute needs are not speaking for themselves within STRIDE. A recently employed youth worker is seeking to make links with youth interests in the borough and develop their involvement in STRIDE. Whilst many of the forums take youth as a central concern of their area, there was little evidence of connections being made between these discussions and the successful SRB2 bid Youth in Partnership. This begs the question of how to integrate with developing or pre-existing projects and prevent unnecessary overlap; exemplified in forums where members had overlapping remits. The appointment of a Youth and Regeneration worker signifies an attempt by STRIDE to link up different projects, prevent duplication and create awareness of different agency and project boundaries. In Boldon to Whitburn the forum has been largely single issue based with all three of the most active forum members involved through different youth projects. Although this has provided a common focus, there is evidence of tensions between them and a concern is 'how the different groups work together.' Hence forum members must negotiate a way to act collectively and find an identity as well as develop the forum through increasing attendance. Whilst linking with existing structures and projects may be an important way to

148

build a regeneration agenda, for example, it has been suggested they work through the very active community association in Bolden, such an approach was also viewed as problematic:

> "Whitbum has a lot of disaffected young people who don't want anything to do with a community association." (Forum member)

6.8 Reflections on the Operation of STRIDE

In conducting research into the way that STRIDE operates and seeks to achieve new co-ordinating functions some key themes were raised concerning community identity and representation, the role of professionals and professionalism within the organisation and the value framework within which they have sought to operate. The following section reviews some of the main concerns and tensions that surround these issues.

> "The area forums are a difficult way of working but are a good way to get people involved. There could potentially be antagonisms between the areas but this type of structure works in South Tyneside because it is small enough and because there are distinct communities." (STRIDE worker)

One of the distinguishing features of community and voluntary sector organising in South Tyneside has been the attempt to unify different sets of identities. The parochial nature of South Tyneside means that new institutional structures need to embrace local identities, but established identities can act as barriers to establishing new structures. This is especially so where institutional goals overlap with those of established organisations, such as in the case of the Boldon to Whitbum forum. The individual forums are brought together through quarterly events, a mechanism for supporting forum co-ordination and network building across the borough:

> "By bringing all the groups together they can help build a local knowledge base about what people are doing and how to start developing projects and sharing resources."

Through this type of event STRIDE has sought a 'levelling effect' between different communities through a realisation of shared problems. This has, for one member, been 'the hidden success of STRIDE'. Such events help create a South Tyneside perspective which is an important justification for STRIDE's existence:

> "To have credence STRIDE needs a South Tyneside wide remit, but people tend not to think in these terms, they tend to think more in terms of the towns." (STRIDE member)

The area forums are seen to play an important role in breaking down barriers between the different areas; addressing the 'parochial nature of South Tyneside towns', whilst simultaneously, being a way to retain local identities. These local identities underpin the area forums, and, although there are common patterns in forum development there are also some distinct differences. This reflects the character of particular areas and the social relations

149

operating at this level. Overall, although members supported the idea of area forums, there was uncertainty about their development in practice, even recognising that they may still be at an 'experimental stage':

> "I agree with the area forum structure, but it's hard to make them work."(STRIDE member)

An associated issue concerns the effectiveness of STRIDE whose democratic accountability is dependent upon the links between the *different tiers of representation*. At each level, therefore, the role of representatives is pivotal but often tension-ridden. At the grassroots level representatives have to balance their own organisational needs with those of STRIDE and retain their own group identity whilst being part of the broader collective. The tier of relations between the area forums and the management committee can also be problematic. Discussions over the relationship between the individual forums and STRIDE as a whole have led to new guidelines. Each area forum elects three representatives to sit on the Stride Management Committee, although currently Boldon to Whitburn only has two representatives:

> "I'm getting frustrated with STRIDE, the management committee needs to be more business like, the executive committee should meet beforehand to get some clearer thinking and prepare the agenda. Meetings can over-run and nothing will have been agreed, we need more purpose to the meetings and we need to build up trust and relationships to make it better." (STRIDE member)

This mirrors the tension at forum level between the necessity of spending time on process and the importance of reaching decisions and producing concrete outcomes. This is an inherently difficult balance in any organisation but, clearly, where this involves a commitment to democratic principles and the use of voluntary labour, getting that balance may be more difficult. The suggestion that processes should be more 'business like' perhaps reflects the difficulty of implementing the core aims. One member commented upon the potential for developing local systems of representation. In particular it was suggested that the forums could provide a mechanism for bringing together representative and participatory democracy at the local level by working with the Area Advisory Committees. The five Area Advisory Committees, covering South Shields Jarrow, Hebburn and Boldon, are devolved governing structures set up to counter geographical dispersion in the borough:

> "Each area forum should tap into the advisory committees and work hand in hand with them because they are the political base. It's made up of all the elected representatives - the committee is cross party and it makes recommendations to the local authority...I would like to see a dialogue between the politicians and the community and voluntary sector. It would help the political structure and people on the ground- through sharing ideas and working together. It's a pipe dream but it's a vision about the way things should go." (STRIDE member)

Although this would counter the processes of fragmentation within local governance a significant barrier would be the resistance to collaboration, stemming from the dominant political traditions.

The effectiveness of the representative structure also depends upon access to and use of *information*; following from this several issues arise. Marked differences were noted in the quality of information being circulated through the area forums; highlighting the important nature of linkages between STRIDE's administrative core and the grassroots. In particular this is sustained through the forums elected representatives hence, STRIDE has engaged in a programme of training for representatives. Whilst this fundamentally underpins any notion of devolved power within the organisation, it does not solve all the problems of information exchange and usage. Not only is STRIDE a complex organisation, but, the processes in which it is engaged are themselves complex. On one hand this places a large burden on the voluntary labour of which STRIDE is mainly comprised. Many members commented on the demands made upon their time, often unappreciated by other partners:

> "Lots of voluntary hours go into STRIDE because you believe in it. Sometimes it's a full working week. We treat it as a job, whether that's right or not." (STRIDE member)

Furthermore, as already suggested the information itself maybe complex, for example where it relates to details of government or European policy. This implies a need for forums to be integrated into local policy networks to receive support and guidance from those with expertise. Such processes clearly lie within the realm of inter-organisational relations, and, shows that these processes need to permeate to the decentralised level at which the forums operate. As indicated this is beginning to happen particularly around SRB processes. Some forums have struggled to find their role reflected in the lack of direction and continuity between meetings. This emphasises the importance of informed officers and effective representation.

A further aspect of the community representative role has been the emphasis upon *professionalism*. An ethos of professional conduct amongst volunteers, for example, through the development of codes of conduct and equal opportunity practices, permeates much of the organisational rhetoric. This is reflected in a desire to develop a 'professional community sector' and for other agencies to recognise the professionalism within the sector, by individuals, paid or unpaid. Whilst this ethos does appear strong within the organisation, it remains a difficult task. The whole notion of professionalism is infused with power relations and the key is how these are exerted within the organisation. Currently STRIDE is heavily dependent upon a small team of paid professionals supporting the volunteers. An added difficulty arises because of dependence upon voluntary labour, where volunteers are the employees of the community professional. This in itself can be a source of tensions, and re-emphasises the central role of education and training of volunteers.

Evidence from STRIDE supports claims that personalities and their values are the driving force of networks, albeit within the broader context of institutional relations (Skelcher et al, 1996: 16). Whilst individuals create the dynamic, such forces may be potent and difficult to handle. STRIDE has sought to address this problem through training and education. However this has

resulted in some volunteers working full-time unpaid. Whatever the individual motivations for this level of involvement it raises questions about the degree of responsibility being given to volunteers and their accountability. The extent of volunteering raises the issue of whether capacity building is merely extending the boundaries of unpaid work. Additionally, placing value on being 'professional' may be helping to formalise the community and voluntary sector although there may be questions about whether this a desirable end. Whilst it is currently perceived as such, this may reflect a desire to raise the profile of the community and voluntary sector which has long been undervalued. An additional problem may arise form the management of voluntary labour. This links to the importance of the role which individuals adopt within the organisation, although committed they may also create problems should they become powerful within the organisation. One committed STRIDE member had applied for several paid posts within the organisation, which it was felt had led to a 'difficult situation' when they were unsuccessful. Subsequently this individual undertook to report on the work of particular paid staff members when there were any disagreements. One member of staff commented that they felt 'intimidated' and 'angry' by this behaviour which was compounded by organisational attempts to underplay the problem. Whilst STRIDE has concerned itself with trust building within the organisation some members felt that this process needed to go further; the importance of presenting a united front to other partners may create pressures to underplay difficulties rather than address them.

The study has identified the importance of the shared value base of STRIDE which seeks to promote grassroots democracy. Given the tensions of local political relations attempts have been made to promote STRIDE as a non-political organisation:

> "We're non-political and very democratic. It's subtly different to other organisations, the management committee is the working committee and so decisions are made here. Also the AGM just accepts those elected by the membership." (STRIDE member)

Whilst STRIDE members regard this as an organisational response, Campbell has highlighted how, under the neo-liberal agenda, "...self-help is feminised, practical, local and, above all, apolitical" (Eisenschitz, 1997: 160). Within STRIDE there is considerable focus on process, perceived by some to have been to the detriment of achieving material changes in the local environment. Others have felt that the limited membership base inhibits any sense of democracy. Additionally, there is much less clarity over how these values are translated into practice and outcomes. The role of the professional worker is clearly very important in promoting these values internally, although even individuals who support the principal find the inevitable delays this creates very frustrating. This notion of working slowly to a democratic agenda contrasts somewhat with other perceptions of the organisation as being very fluid and dynamic and non-bureaucratic:

> "STRIDE is different to some other organisations, in that it is a risk-taker and not bureaucratic. It takes chances and it is therefore more dynamic. Some other individuals and organisations are more wary, they might for example,

wait until all the funds are in place before making any progress with the project. But the problem with that is that you can miss the boat." (STRIDE officer)

Thus the suggestion is that capacity building, based upon bidding for funds, may mean that individuals will lose the organisation at some points. Whilst acknowledging that areas forums are at a formative stage of development, one concern is that the base of support could fall away unless it is consolidated through visible, concrete benefits. As one member remarked:

"The area forums have started at the wrong end, we need to be more relevant to communities now, not in two years time. They are still at an experimental stage but they are not coming through as quickly as they should or need to."

This resonates with criticisms made about STRIDE being a 'talking shop'. However, one of STRIDE's roles is seen as encouraging the process of discussion and debate, one member even suggesting that the experimental stage had not been exploited enough, and that too much attention had been focused on the 'grand plan' rather than open discussions within each forum area. Observing individual forums in progress and interviewing forum members confirmed the inherent difficulties of this approach. Some members felt that their forums were still struggling to clarify their role and establish themselves as a stable element within STRIDE. During the period in which the study was conducted an Area Forum development officer, who had previously worked for STRIDE was appointed. Given comments made by forum members the need for this support is clear:

"STRIDE was set up to represent the community/voluntary sector on South Tyneside and needs the base of the area forums, therefore the area forums are close to essential for STRIDE, but STRIDE won't exist unless they improve the area forums." (STRIDE member).

Therefore, despite the 'difficulties of this way of working', the forums are a mechanism for community involvement, and, as one member asserted, essential to STRIDE's credibility as the community/voluntary sector representative on South Tyneside's regeneration partnership. Moreover the expectation is that ultimately that control will increasingly be exerted at forum level:

"In the long term the aim is to enable people to sustain their own economic and social support with minimum professional intervention provided on an 'as and when needed' basis. For this reason activity and resources will gradually be transferred from the central co-ordinating point to the area forums during the next three years. A core co-ordinating facility will continue." (Annual Report 1995)

Fulfilling this vision implies more strength at the local level, the growth of membership, knowledge and much stronger internal relationships. Developing a sense of local ownership of the forums is likely to depend upon establishing solid links and information exchange between the forums and the core. Although the organisation is still at an early stage of development, evidence suggests that devolving more power to the forum level is very ambitious. Currently the area groupings are very reliant upon the professional core. Shifting the locus of decision-making power to the forums implies both stronger forums and effective communication between

the forums and management committee, which would act as a ratifying body. Moreover, realising this vision would raise questions about how more devolved structures would fit into the broader local policy networks.

Building networks means addressing pre-existing networks, which in some areas of South Tyneside are very strong. These networks cannot be ignored because they are part of the fabric and identity of the areas with kinship and religious ties forming part of the 'social glue'. The process of network-building undertaken by STRIDE has attempted to exploit traditional identities but with varying degrees of success. Moreover there is tension between developing these identities whilst simultaneously seeking to promote a borough-wide identity as the basis for regeneration strategies and the three-way partnership mechanism. Fragmentation theories of local governance may have assumed that old patterns and relationship have broken down (Stoker and Young, 1993; Healey and Davoudi, 1996) but evidence shows these old relations are resilient and new institutional patterns are developing alongside traditional patterns of social relations. There are many points at which this process creates tensions. Building up local knowledge and developing trust between different actors has been a key activity of STRIDE and the above discussion has highlighted some inherent difficulties within this process. Moreover there is the more fraught question of how 'social capital' may be transferred into 'political capital' (Healey, 1996) in local policy processes.

6.9 Reflections on the Operation of STEP: Relations, Processes and Practices

> "At the end of the day we all win, it doesn't matter what your motivation is." (STEP Chair)

This section explores the role of different sectors within the new partnership arrangement, the interrelations between the sectors and emergent policy processes and practices. Whilst one interviewee claimed that STEP's success is reflected in the production of the South Tyneside regeneration strategy other evidence suggests a more complex picture. The tensions inherent within this attempt at tripartite have led to claims that the functioning of the mechanism is the main success. Whilst some interviewees regard STEP as a local authority initiative, STMBC have been critical of the processes through which STEP was set up, specifically with regard to the way in which private and community sector representation has been drawn in. Whilst one local authority officer commented that the board might have been set up differently if it had been up to the local authority, anticipated problems, such as block voting, have not arisen:

> "Local governance is changing; there is an acceptance and willingness to work in partnership but this has come about as someone who's got to rather than who wants to." (Local councillor)

154

One councillor commented that ' we don't mind going through the hoop' of central government's decision to have business leadership, 'as long as we get the cash'. Another councillor commented that the local authority 'reluctantly accepted' STEP and hoped that business leadership might help counter historical antagonisms between central government and South Tyneside and thus assist funding bids:

> "The local authority realised that having a majority on STEP would be counter-productive. The councillors are not really enthusiastic about STEP or STRIDE but it is something they have to put up with."

The belief amongst local authority and business sector representatives is that the image of private sector leadership has helped in securing government grants for the borough:

> "We've managed to develop a private-sector led partnership which ministers love. No one thinks the chair is running the shop- he's committed and he's a good chair. The private sector 'steerage' is very important. The private sector leadership was very deliberate- that's what the Tories want and if they bring money to the process well even better. The ministers can see the private sector involvement." (TEC officer)

Minutes from STEP board meetings show that the community sector were uneasy with the set up, both in terms of the board make-up and the lack of protocol:

> "We all bought a line about the board being like this because the GONE said it should be. By the time we found out this wasn't true it was too late to do anything about it." (STRIDE member)

The structure of the STEP board continues to be a contentious issue amongst the community sector. Community representatives expressed concern that the unequal and informal arrangements could jeopardise the quantity and quality of their input. However, other actors seemed dismissive of such concerns, and have argued that this diverts attention from the key issues:

> "Partnership is not a numbers game, getting an equal status is important. STRIDE is considered equally but the status quo keeps the partnership together. It's the quality of the input which matters, if STRIDE didn't get their say then it would need changing." (TEC officer)

The Chair was more critical arguing that the group had failed to make progress because they had spent 'too much time contemplating their own navel' and needed to realise the potential of the situation rather than divert attention in 'internal issues'. Whilst Davoudi (1995:33) emphasises the importance of process within three-way partnership to achieve resident empowerment, others warn that community networks may become overly focussed on procedures (Skelcher et al, 1996: 9). In October 1996, a STRIDE led review of STEP's progress reiterated long-standing frustrations within the partnership arrangements. Whilst one government officer described it as 'navel gazing', many of the partners viewed it as a useful exercise for expressing their concerns, although no changes were made to the partnership structure. Recognition that the community voice has been heard within STEP has led to an acceptance of the status quo, but, this is premised upon a belief within STRIDE

that an incoming Labour government would ensure that such changes would occur without having to pursue the localised struggle.

Whilst the private sector steerage has undoubtedly been packaged well, this image tends to obscure the lack of clarity over what private sector leadership means in practice:

"In South Tyneside and in partnership generally, the TEC have been advocating private sector leadership. These are the only ones who can help raise jobs and income, and also have influence. The private sector chair has influence over key decision-makers in the borough. But the private sector has had less input, it's new to this and still not sure what it role it has." (TEC Officer)

Thus critically private sector leadership remains vague and uncertain (Peck, 1995; Peck and Tickell, 1995). On STEP private sector involvement has been characterised by the involvement of key individual interests:

"The private sector are a bunch of individuals, they are bosses and they are not sufficiently co-ordinated to pursue a particular set of interests. The private sector are making individual contributions rather than through consensus forming. At STEP I don't feel like I represent the private sector, I represent myself and perhaps my company and the other hats I wear." (STEP Chair)

Additionally, one business representative implied that unlike other partners, 'business people only had a limited time to devote the partnership' and so focused their attentions on the board meetings. The Chair argued that the private sector bring particular skills to the partnership, specifically in terms of running the meetings, but that they do not constitute an identifiable set of interests or perspective on regeneration, rather:

"Business people only have time to prepare five minutes before a meeting so they make off the cuff contributions. They bring a managerial perspective, they can chair meetings and they are good at monitoring, for example I've had to explain what a summary is. But as a body they are not well structured. The private sector brings efficiency and a way of working and a way of handling lots of information and making decisions. But we're not very knowledgeable about what's needed, we don't know what's going on in the community; we have the gun but the community need to aim us at the target." (STEP chair)

This echoes comments by Peck and Tickell that private sector leaders do not 'perform the role of strategists', rather their involvement tends to be a pragmatic and apolitical focussing on 'getting things done' (1995: 70). Despite the seeming acceptance of the partiality of the private sector contribution, the failure of the private sector to engage in the construction of local policy agendas is still recognised as 'one of it's biggest problems'. It has come instead with 'instant decision-making' and appraisal skills that are promoted as being distinctive skills which other partners do not possess. This links to a belief that the local authority is too bureaucratic and inefficient and the community sector lacks experience. For some STEP representatives such judgements are deemed 'patronising' and 'misplaced'. In particular it is

felt that the leadership style is sometimes 'unprofessional', although the Chair has argued that his experience has made him very wary of creating divisions between the sectors:

> "My background in the West End (of Newcastle) has been important. I've been very aware of what could go wrong. I have learnt that people make lots of judgements about the other parties, thinking they are baby eaters, and these create enormous barriers. I've been aware of these kinds of barriers."

Nonetheless, other community representatives have argued that, initially at least, the Chair sought simply to impose his will on the proceedings. Whilst this reveals difficulties with private sector leadership, other evidence suggests resistance by the private sector to involve themselves in governance processes. Despite claims that the local chamber of commerce is growing in strength and influence, private sector engagement is described as being based upon a few firms who have a diverse range of interests. The general reluctance by business to become involved in joint working with the local authority is, according to some private sector members, the result of historically poor relations between businesses and STMBC:

> "Perhaps the main barrier to private sector involvement has been the profile of the members. They have often regarded the private sector as very affluent people, parasites. They've had a very negative view, and there have been a lot of clashes and a lot of mistrust has built up." (Private sector representative)

Tension-ridden relations have resulted from a collectivist style politics which is perceived as being anti-private sector. Moreover the private sector involvement which been stimulated has been demarcated along the lines of 'large' and 'small' businesses. One private sector representative felt that although the smaller firms had brought dynamism to STMB, they had been sidelined by the participation of the bigger firms in STEP. Recognition that private sector input has been 'patchy' has led the STEP co-ordinator to seek mechanisms to broaden private sector involvement. One local authority officer suggested that the lack of private sector support has curtailed innovation in the policy process:

> "STEP could have been an innovatory tool, helping to develop business support for example. But we are still only working with a minority of the private sector who have found it difficult to activate their members. They are somewhat envious of STRIDE who have had more success in mobilising their members, despite the board make-up."

Whilst neo-liberal urban policy has attempted to establish a degree of private sector responsibility for strategy development, this is difficult to implement, perhaps as one interviewee said, 'because their role is essentially profiteering'. This raises fundamental questions about what role the private sector can have and the evidence suggests it is more indirect than stimulating income and jobs as the TEC claims. Despite this there does appear to be an ethos of responsibility emerging:

> "I think the biggest change we will see is the recognition that you have to pay back to communities- you can't take all the time. You have a moral responsibility. But I'm not sure how we're going to persuade big business to do that. Where is the responsibility to communities? Companies are

beginning to recognise that they can have a role in raising the expectations of workers outside work in their community and social life. And that this type of involvement and support can produce more committed workers." (Private sector representative)

The ability to develop this into a more coherent movement may however be limited,

> "We are increasing interaction between companies. We've started holding events for inter-trading where big and small companies get together. But it's difficult I might spend £100 million buying products from other companies, but they are quite specialised, so I might spend about four pence locally." (Private sector representative)

Also, whilst businesses have strong ties to the locality, this dependency does not necessarily extend to individuals within the private sector:

> "At the end of the day many of us get into our cars and drive out of here, and I suppose you feel a bit guilty." (Private sector representative)

Several community members suggested that some STEP meetings were held informally 'in the pub in Ponteland', a wealthy suburb north of Newcastle where several of the private sector members live. This highlights a sense of different worlds inhabited by various elements of the partnership, as Robinson has argued "...divisions within Tyneside are as wide as any North-South divide...Ponteland...is a sort of Henley on Tyne" (1988: 196). Despite this sense of being excluded by business representatives there was a strong feeling amongst STRIDE members that, in practice, the local authority are the lead organisation.

At the outset there was a perception that the local authority would try to obstruct tripartite policy structures, this perhaps ignored the importance politically, as well as socially and economically, of drawing resources into the borough.

> "Relations are changing but it is still early days, although I think they are likely to change even more. You used to have to have local authority approval for anything to happen in South Tyneside, perhaps quite understandably. Then they realised that if they wanted money they had to start talking to folk, at first they didn't want to, but they had to go through the motions. But then some officers began to realise that it's quite a useful function to meet with others and to get their perspectives. It might even be a way to get greater support for the local authority because there has been a lot of criticism. But some officers just go through the motions, one is even scathing and sarcastic at meetings. I think it's very sad it doesn't reflect well on that person. The meetings need to be helped a long a little bit - and I'm sure it will get sorted. (STRIDE member)

There is some acknowledgement within the authority that STEP may be helping to secure new governance practices, which enhance rather than undermine the authority's role. It has been claimed for example, that STEP has helped reduce barriers to communication which have existed in the borough. STMBC officers have also expressed a belief in the benefits which they have gained from the partnership, whilst maintaining their political credibility - since partnership has been 'forced' upon them:

> "What's important is that we're being seen to be fair, we've become more transparent. The partnership has given the local authority much more credibility and there is more trust. Previously there was a perception by GONE that the local authority were just pursuing their own agenda."

With the recognition by officers that they can retain power within the partnership, tensions between the TEC and STMBC have lessened. Whilst there are strong feelings amongst some interviewees, that the local authority are leading the partnership, particularly in terms of strategy development, there was also a sense from councillors that their role in the policy process was being undermined. One described their condition as 'impotent'. This has been exacerbated by the development of mechanisms to support regional level governance:

> "A Labour government will introduce the Regional Assembly structure. We need this type of overall view but for nitty gritty you need the local level input. We were a bit concerned we wouldn't get this, and councillors at the bottom level may disagree with it because we are the bread and butter politicians."

Reflecting upon the contribution of the community sector role, there was a consensus amongst all the sectors that the community sector had been the most successful at mobilising support and involvement in local regeneration policies through STEP:

> "...the community has successfully organised itself, more successfully than the private sector. On STEP they have led the way in how to get organised." (Private sector representative)

Another private sector representative commented:

> "The community sector are very active within the partnership and make a full contribution, a bigger contribution than the others. The TEC provide assistance and give specific help, and they pull things together, but the local authority and the community are key as local partners."

However questions over the legitimacy of the community sector contribution given the 'narrow membership base' of STRIDE concerned other partners:

> "The community sector have got their voice more successfully on STEP than the private sector, but they still represent a minority. They should be more pro-active in seeking the views of people who don't want to turn up to meetings at a particular place and time." (Local authority officer)

Also, questions have arisen over how the community sector is involved. For example, a TEC officer stressed that it was important that the community input was at the 'right time'. STRIDE members have highlighted their participation in STEP as an important achievement, but remain concerned over the quality of their contribution. In part this was felt to be dependent upon STRIDE's internal processes but STEP's lack of constitution may also be a barrier. This is compounded by a feeling that other partners have a lack of understanding or willingness to understand the community and voluntary sector, reflected for example in the running of meetings. Thus, community members felt that STRIDE and it's representatives

have an important role to play in educating other partners, whilst the community role itself needs to be developed.

Whilst the SRB has signalled the development of some new policies and practices, the extent of this is more uncertain. As a strategic partnership STEP's key policy document has been the Regeneration Strategy which reflects the priorities laid out in the economic development plan:

> "The Regeneration Strategy is all about where we're coming from and where we're going. It established delegated responsibility and who deals with what areas. I think putting the Strategy together has been a considerable achievement. It identifies the needs of the Borough and was truly written in partnership, through the working group, the local authority doing the most, the other STEP partners and TEC doing about a third and STRIDE doing some sections. But it didn't identify priorities, the community audit was in the in-depth analysis."(TEC officer)

There is some concern that although STEP has broadened policy processes there is now 'a bit too much complexity'. However it has been a very successful formula for attracting SRB. The partnership has therefore been used as a vehicle through which to identify needs, develop intervention strategies, seek funding and put in place the delivery agencies. However, there is concern that it hasn't been very innovative and does not have a clear sense of it's own priorities. One local authority officer commented that although STEP had been effective at relationship building and has altered policy processes, it has not created new economic development strategies. According to STMBC officers, the strategy content remains dominated by the local authority:

> "STEP regeneration strategy was done by the same people who did the work on the Economic Development Strategy. We are still the big agency, the one producing the strategy. The private sector understands but they haven't really brought new insights or changed the way we as a local authority are looking at things. There is now wider support for the things we are doing but, the content is still the same."

In addition to the complexity created through new forms of policy process, as a method of producing policy it has lacked an overarching perspective. Although this happens to some extent through progress reports, one TEC officer commented that making the partnership more strategic would entail effective evaluation and monitoring systems.

> "... there needs to be an overview of how different aspects are coming together because there are different cultures." (TEC officer)

The forum meetings were an important indicator of the changing relationship between the local authority and the community and voluntary sector. Community members felt that local authority officers coming to the community to discuss local authority policies and strategies marked a new phase in the development of local relationships between the community and voluntary sector and the local authority. Thus, the SRB has led to changing practices by some local authority officers, specifically those employed in the regeneration team. It is,

however, difficult to assess whether this extends to other spheres of local authority activity and the question of how far three way partnership has challenged 'management practices within local government' remains open (Davoudi and Healey, 1995: 81). That STEP has been able to evolve in South Tyneside is seen by many as an achievement in itself. Whilst the bridging of cultural divides has been seen as an important outcome there remain cultural gaps and tensions:

> "STEP has gone through some incredible changes...the first two years have been a tremendous learning curve. The private sector has learnt how the public sector work and visa versa. There's more dynamism in the private sector and there's a very basic difference - the private sector are never guaranteed a salary. There was an incredible culture gap to bridge and we've slowly begun to bridge these gaps, and come to recognise other players like the community - the people we're trying to help. Both the private and public sector have failed to recognise that you need to involve the community. An important outcome is that through STEP there is dialogue between sectors and growing understanding. There has been a breaking down of barriers between sectors and a blurring of the edges." (Private sector representative)

Davoudi and Healey (1995: 84) highlight the potential for three-way partnership to bring about cultural transformation. In South Tyneside, despite community representatives commenting on the failure of the other partners to understand how the community and voluntary sector operates, STEP is regarded as having contributed to a new era of relations in which trust and communication now play some part. Consequently STEP has been cited by GONE as a successful model of partnership in the NE.

> "Now we are beginning to see broader ways of helping each other. But this lateral thinking has been difficult - everyone comes to the table with their own baggage and sense of importance of their sector. STEP's major achievement last year was in breaking down barriers and building a greater degree of trust. Although I'm not saying people don't still come with their own agendas." (TEC officer)

Finally, one councillor commented that STEP had marked a new era of pragmatism in local politics, which is helping to 'change the political face of South Tyneside.'

6.10 Reviewing Third Sector Politics in South Tyneside

This section reviews some of the key findings to emerge from the case study investigation and highlights some of the tensions surrounding the operation of community politics in South Tyneside. One of the distinguishing features of community organising in South Tyneside has been the attempt to construct an overarching and 'autonomous' co-ordinating mechanism. Empirical investigation has sought to explore the local political factors which have helped to shape this mechanism and the broader partnership mechanism of STEP, and in turn, explore the effect of these new institutional mechanisms upon local political relations. The analysis has been concerned with the pre-existing sediment over which new institutional forms are

being laid, exploring the relation between emergent and previously dominant modes of organising, processes and relations. Overall, it is argued that whilst the over-arching community co-ordinating body may be encouraging new forms of engagement, it not only has to address pre-existing relations but is itself the source of new difficulties and dilemmas. Central themes emerging from the study are the continuing importance of traditional political relations and associated culture within the borough, and, the degree of complexity being created through new institutional mechanisms and processes.

The study has sought firstly, to investigate who the community sector are and how a 'community interest' is being constructed and defined. Second, it has explored the development of third sector organisations, agendas and representation in and around local policy processes. Finally, the study has considered more general questions regarding the roles and relations being adopted within the new urban governance and the impact of this upon third sector politics by focusing on the character partnership relations and processes. The following discussion distils these themes further with regard to the case study findings and reflects upon the ability of the three models of urban politics previously discussed; networks, progressive regimes and three-way partnership, to capture the operation of community politics.

In exploring the question of who the third sector are in South Tyneside, the study was mainly concerned with identity issues stemming from the attempt to construct a new third sector umbrella organisation. Within the community sector literature (Hoggett 1997) it is argued that where tensions over community identity exist it is the local authority version that is likely to dominate. In this case, the search for independent and autonomous representation was led by activists seeking to avoid existing local authority constructions of community and community identity. The key rationale for establishing a new form of community interest in South Tyneside is the pre-dominance of the local authority 'as community' enacted through the Community Education Department, the STVP and the councillors. In particular, considerable dissatisfaction has arisen over the way councillors have represented the community and voluntary sector, leading to demands for direct representation in policy processes:

> "We want to have a voice to tell the council what we think therefore, we don't want councillors on STRIDE. They don't know ordinary people's views, they have their own idea. Councillors are supposed to be representing us but that's a fairy tale...at the moment they're busy looking after number one." (STRIDE member)

However these traditionally dominant modes of community constitute a major barrier to new forms of organising. The resultant struggle between new and old forms of representation has created barriers to the development of new collaborative relations, undermining claims that

old forms of representation and relations have broken down (Stoker and Young, 1993; Davoudi and Healey, 1995). Critically, whilst all the models identify the dynamic nature of local political relations, there is little detail regarding the inter-play between local sediment and attempts to construct new community identity.

A number of tensions surrounding the construction of a 'new' community interest have been identified. The mobilisation of community activists against traditional, local authority dominated modes of community organising is a central theme of progressive regime and urban social movement literature. The progressive regime literature highlights the mobilisation of bottom-up interests attempting to establish new agendas, values and practices and draws attention to the potential conflict between different understandings of community. The progressive regime model therefore offers some insights into developing an understanding of the emergence of STRIDE. Urban social movement analysis highlights the actions of distinctive social bases to try to change dominant policy agendas and policy direction (Lowe, 1986: 3). In the case of South Tyneside the specific goal of achieving more autonomous community representation was also however motivated by central government working through the Task Force to establish a three-way partnership. Thus community mobilisation came about through a combination of top-down and bottom-up processes (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993; Eisenschitz, 1997). Whilst support from the Task Force played a critical role in creating an alternative community agenda and new forms of community organising this is not necessarily incompatible with the definition of an USM, which may be partially driven by state forces (Lowe, 1986). A key claim by STMBC officers is that this has led to new, less accountable sources of influence over community such as the community professionals working 'independently' of the local authority. There has been a general resistance to STRIDE's formation driven by concerns that STRIDE will infringe upon, take-over or duplicate existing roles and activities:

> "It's been a very long struggle to get people to believe that we
> weren't out to destroy other projects." (STRIDE member)

This reflects more general concerns that partnership working may be a route to organisational proliferation and duplication of effort. STRIDE defend themselves against such criticism by highlighting the distinctiveness of their approach. This distinctiveness centres upon claims of independence driven by an alternative value base. This has however led to criticisms that the organisation has moved too far away from local authority led community development and has marginalised experienced professionals. Moreover, the substantial level of influence which community professionals working for STRIDE seem to have over new community agendas has been criticised by local authority community

163

development workers. In particular it has been suggested that professional power may potentially undermine democratic processes:

> "An important issue is the role of the worker, how does the worker lead what the groups are doing? Although there is a stress on the representativeness of the organisation the worker can play a persuading and cajoling role." (CED officer)

Hence rather than a decision-making gap being filled by the reconsolidation of professional power as Hart et al suggest (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 352) it is suggested that there is a shift in the nature of the professional role as those working outside the local authority take on more responsibility.

Central to changing third sector politics in South Tyneside are the linked processes of co-ordination and representation. The study explores different levels of co-ordination, first within the community and voluntary sector, distinguishing between STRIDE and non-STRIDE organisations and activities, and secondly between the third sector and other agencies. The rationale of STRIDE to act as one co-ordinated, autonomous and independent voice for the third sector is reflected in its organisational form and representative structure. STRIDE claims to fill a gap in the pre-existing institutional structures by providing co-ordinated and independent community representation on STEP. Attempts to establish representational credibility have led to an emphasis upon the development of community networks. Thus STRIDE is both a tool for networking and gains it's own credibility through networking. For Atkinson and Cope (1997: 213) community umbrella organisations assist long-term community capacity building processes, in turn protecting against political or professional domination of community:

> "It is only in such fora that negotiations over the allocation of resources and the co-ordination of strategic action can take place."

Whilst networking through the area forums is helping to develop a new approach to community organising and a new set of politics are beginning to emerge through this mechanism a number of problems remain. Whilst community networks can provide a basis for developing overarching aims and objectives, the notion of an overarching body to act as the voice of the community is seen as problematic by some. Critically the co-ordination of community interests into a single voice from the many (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997) is fraught with difficulty given the complexity of community (Atkinson and Cope, 1997). Whilst some community members have stressed the powerful constitution which this creates, perhaps unsurprisingly agencies such as the TEC and Task Force have stressed it's

practical value (see McArthur 1993, 1995). Representatives of STMBC have however questioned the identity of STRIDE and the legitimacy of the 'one voice' approach:

> "STRIDE is essentially a creation of national government, it is a policy based around the distrust of local government. Perhaps the distrust is well founded - organisations can become separate from the communities they are supposed to be serving, so you might want a multiplicity of agencies, you might want more representation. But a concern is whether you can be the overarching body. Experience has shown that the local authority can't be, so why replicate that error?" (CED officer)

McArthur has argued that such fora may encourage group representation at the expense of residents having direct participation (1993: 313) and may exclude established activists (1995: 66). Questions are raised as to whether such an approach undermines democratic processes. For example, one STRIDE member suggested that by moving away from the traditional bases of community the focus has shifted toward more 'one-off' groups and lost the benefits of previous modes of community organising and the wide base of community involvement through the community associations. This highlights the perennial question of who represents community and how (Davoudi and Healey, 1995). The development of STRIDE as a co-ordinating mechanism essentially rests upon the effective development of the area forums. The study has revealed the different community traditions and identities which characterise the different forums and which the three-way partnership model highlights as being key to the development of co-ordinating mechanisms. Whilst the different areas do have distinctive identities, it is the symbolic poignancy of these differences which is perhaps most striking and the deeply politicised nature of local identity. The importance of these boundaries practically and symbolically presents very particular barriers to the notion of 'one voice' representing the borough's third sector in STEP and on other fora.

Another issue concerning this particular mode of co-ordination relates to the need to create a balance between achieving central co-ordination and local control. Currently community members are still very dependent upon the expertise of the director and other actors suggested that this 'over-reliance' upon the co-ordinator was potentially problemmatic. Diffusing skills and knowledge throughout the organisation is both difficult and a time consuming process and increasing pressure is being placed upon unpaid community activists. Thus an important question raised by Hart et al (1997) is how much responsibility members can or should take. Although STRIDE has placed a strong degree of emphasis upon training and education, as emphasised by DeLeon (1992) in his analysis of progressive regimes, this involves volunteers committing even more time to the organisation to the extent that for some it has become a full-time job. However, the current director supports the ethos

of the organisation being controlled as far as possible by its members rather than paid staff. This relates strongly to a commitment to seek new ways of working which reflect an alternative set of values.

In an attempt to develop democratic relations both within STRIDE and within wider governance relations and practices, one element of STRIDE is the ethical framework outlined in a statement of core organisational values. The focus on shared values is one aspect of network typology (Skelcher et al, 1996) and of progressive regimes. This indicates the way in which STRIDE has attempted to influence the character of local policy processes, and alter the basis of representation (Davoudi and Healey, 1995). However tensions have arisen over trying to achieve more democratic and egalitarian processes, which Mayer (1995) asserts are part of the new governance frameworks. The specific concern with process has meant that much time and effort has been directed into the internal structure of the organisation. However this focus on democratising governance practice is regarded as being in tension with organisational effectiveness. Some members have commented that the emphasis upon structures may have been at the cost of achieving more tangible benefits 'on the ground'. Here there is some discrepancy between those who view the appointment of new staff as an achievement in itself and those who view this as a diversion of resources away from direct community benefit. Hence, although much emphasis has been paced on the development of shared agendas and values through network development, there are disagreements over the extent to which this process should be allowed to dominate the organisation.

In addition to the problem of how to operationalise the value base many interviewees expressed concern over the wide remit that STRIDE has set itself. One specific criticism is that whilst STRIDE is becoming very adept at fund-raising it lacks clarity about what purpose this should serve. Thus, a number of commentators both within and outside the organisation felt that there was a need for STRIDE to clarify and consolidate its remit:

> "An umbrella organisation is one thing, but will it be a conduit for funding? It can deliver some things quite well, but are mechanisms available for delivery? They need to start building relations with other delivery agencies, they can't do everything. They have created a lot of energy, but that can be dangerous, you need to channel that energy. They are South Tyneside wide and they have a variety of aims, you could see that as impressive or dangerous. Are they an umbrella organisation or a delivery agency? They must focus."
> (Government officer)

Whilst there is a feeling that STRIDE has been a successful mechanism for generating ideas, there was concern that this needs to be more focused, rather than 'scatter gun'.

There is a tension between the different goals and as with any organisation it only has limited energy. The community network and progressive regime models both highlight the importance of agenda setting within the community sector. However in the network model this is assumed to be a relatively consensual process given that network membership is voluntaristic, the progressive regime model stresses much more the difficulties of establishing shared values or agendas. A study of Wester Hailes (McArthur, 1995) found that even very well resourced community organisations need to focus community involvement. The all-encompassing approach by STRIDE has inherent problems in terms of duplication and may yield a 'collage of projects' whilst sacrificing an overall strategic framework. This contrasts with claims by Atkinson and Cope (1997) that community umbrella organisations provide a basis for strategic action. However others are more sceptical about the role which community are playing in current partnership processes and stress the difficulties of developing a strategic, rather than just operational role for community sector (Murdoch and Abram, 1998; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997: 32). McArthur argues (1995: 63) stresses the importance of the strategic role played by the community in local policy processes and argues that it has helped to broaden strategic agendas. A further issue is the ambiguity surrounding terms like regeneration and capacity building:

> "These are bland statements, what do they mean? If you asked
> STRIDE members you would get a series of different answers.
> There is a need for us to be more strategic." (CED officer)

Some commentators have argued that the ambiguity which surrounds regeneration helps to depoliticise policy processes and so assists the process of coalition formation (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994; Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). They are critical of the way debate has been structured so that 'regeneration' is considered to be a self-explanatory and neutral term when it can embrace very different activities and approaches. This problem maybe further complicated at the level of STEP, for example some STRIDE members have questioned strategies such as 'Youth into Jobs' as being unrealistic but this approach to regeneration fits with the output driven nature of central government funding. In summary, there is a strong degree of organisational complexity stemming from the wide remit of STRIDE and the multi-tiering of representatives. The confusion and difficulties resulting from this are compounded by broader ambiguities over the notions of regeneration.

Evidence suggests that a small number of individuals; professionals and activists, have been very influential in the development of STRIDE agendas, organisational structures and practices. This has resonance with the claim that individuals have a pivotal role in developing community networks (Skelcher at al, 1996). However the behaviour of individuals has to be located within broader processes, including central government

167

localism, which has helped provide support and legitimacy to community activists. Whilst recognising the importance of these broader processes, the influence of a few key individuals is striking and perhaps not surprising given the limited role of community development within the borough (Gilchrist 1998). However this may lead to the emergence of 'self-sustaining elites' (Skelcher et al, 1996: 17). This tendency is more likely given the organisational complexity and it's wide-ranging remit. This has proved a barrier to spreading power through community networking.

The third main area of concern in the study was the development of new political relations through multi-agency partnership mechanisms. The literature on three-way partnership emphasises the formality of partnership relations and the problems this poses for the community (McArthur, 1993). However this contrasts with the 'chaos' of board meetings described by Davoudi (1995) and the informality of STEP. It has been argued that STEP is characterised in practice by a degree of informality and lack of agreed protocol. This contrasts somewhat with the notion of formal partnership relations (Lowndes et al, 1997). However the findings do have resonance with claims that private sector representatives prefer to operate through more informal relations (Peck and Tickell, 1995: 68-69). However given the general levels of mistrust by the community combined with the early authoritarianism of the chair, the lack of protocol has generated more tensions between the partners. This is accentuated by perceptions of community members that some of the real decision-making occurs in arenas from which they are excluded. Such perceptions were partially confirmed by a private sector member of STEP who commented:

"...if we want to get something done we ring each other."

However even within this there are tensions between different elements of the private sector. Whilst the literature on three-way partnership delineates between three distinct sectoral divisions in the case of STEP some important differences have been noted in the way that small and large businesses participate in local policy processes with the former being increasingly marginalised by the latter.

The relationship between STRIDE and the STEP board has developed from difficult beginnings. This stemmed in part from the community representatives being told at the outset that their function was to 'rubber stamp' the bids. Whilst this relationship has gradually been improving and STRIDE have managed to increase their involvement and have their say in the way that the bids have been developed, difficulties remain within this relationship:

"The other partners are used to the voluntary sector being voluntary, we have been very professional - more so than some of the other partners. STRIDE have been the only ones to act professionally but the other partners expect them to do it for nothing. There has been a lack of understanding, but we are re-educating the other partners. When they talk to you they seem to understand, but it's what they say when they go away...I wish people would be more up front, they need to talk about their reservations openly. A true partnership means that sometimes the gloves have to come off." (STRIDE member)

This reflects the more formal and less trustful relations operating at partnership level. In particular STEP appears to be a key site of struggle between STRIDE and the local authority. STRIDE members are in general agreement that STMBC still exert a lot of control over STEP thereby creating conflict. In addition cultural divides between the different partners have been difficult to overcome (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997). For example, there is a feeling that the other partners have little appreciation that STRIDE is built around volunteers, or that the way STEP operates can actively prevent attendance at STEP meetings:

"The step meetings are very male oriented, they've never taken into account that a 5 p.m. meeting means no woman who has to get the tea ready or look after kids can be there. Cooking tea and childcare is ignored, of course their teas will probably ready for them when they get in. They are not aware of the hardships the voluntary sector have to go through to be there."(STRIDE member)

STRIDE is still a fledgling organisation and one member cited it's achievements so far as being 'down to a few key people, money and support particularly from the Task Force' and it's creation as being facilitated by a 'strong mutuality of interests'. One of the historical problems of community based work is the time devoted to process, however this could also be interpreted as it's rationale:

"Personally I think that STRIDE should concentrate on the representative/ democratic function rather that drift into community business and/or local delivery of economic venture. There has been a tendency in recent years to see community business as the 'holy grail'. Personally I can't see why, they are good community development, but very poor economic development. STRIDE could be very effective at enlisting ordinary folk and ensuring community participation and the voice of the community in political processes. They could be democratising local economic development processes." (Consultant)

The potential and necessity for more communication and joint working has been acknowledged by a variety of interviewees. For example, there is a recognition within STRIDE that it will have to work more closely with councillors, however some interviewees have suggested that in an attempt to create an independent community sector voice STRIDE

have alienated some councillors who are 'very wary' of the organisation. From another angle it has been suggested that as STRIDE grows in strength the councillors will 'have to work with STRIDE'. Within STEP relations between STRIDE and the elected representatives have been subject to review in an attempt to develop more constructive relationships. One member suggested the use of a part time liaison officer to try to help build communication. Whilst such evidence suggests a struggle between STRIDE and the councillors to represent the community voice, it has been suggested that this is a struggle between the weakest elements of the partnership.

One member of STRIDE has asserted that the very fragmented nature of local politics and 'politicians antics' within the borough has created a need for more grass roots activity. However it is also these processes have percolated down into the communities themselves reproducing fragmentation:

> "...there are communities within communities. When STRIDE goes to Hebburn it's who are you, who are you linked to and what's your history? There are important historical allegiances."

STRIDE regards a key part of its work as being to overcome some of these barriers which result from the failings of representative democracy:

> "The system of elected councillors hasn't proved to be a good enough system for dealing with the needs of the community."... Councillors are very busy basically involved with crisis management. STRIDE has a role to play which is less crisis management, the two systems should work alongside each other."(STRIDE member)

However some councillors, have expressed the view that moving toward this dual approach may have only limited value:

> "The local authority is the accountable body, participatory democracy already exists, it is alive and well through the local authority. Local accountability is excellent, we are not some removed personage. STRIDE have a role in decision-making, but having an area forum is as good as having a Greek parliament, they don't represent everyone. We have to take account of the silent majority." (Local councillor)

Some members of STRIDE highlight the potential for developing much closer relations between the two systems of representation. Whilst political division and area identity are fundamentally bound together, STRIDE has chosen to work from the basis of these divided geographical identities through the area forums. Whilst area identities within the borough are clearly very important, one local authority officer question the wisdom of using only geographical definitions of community.

In response to the criticisms of both the local authority and STRIDE, more collaborative mechanisms are being put in place, for example, CED and STRIDE meet every two months, 'to avoid confrontation' and to work together on common ground and prevent duplication. These types of mechanisms are developing to support relations between agencies, hence developing the local policy network around regeneration. However, basic underlying tensions still exist, and collaboration will hold together for as long as there is strong mutuality of interests created by present funding regimes. This highlights some of the difficulties that surround changing systems of governance and the establishment of more collaborative relationships across the public, private and community sectors.

So, in South Tyneside, an area fundamentally characterised by a high degree of parochialism, attempts have been made to drive a borough wide co-ordinating mechanism. Whilst STRIDE and STEP present new institutional structures which challenge old parochial boundaries, community network development through STRIDE attempts to build upon these traditional community identities. It has been found that this has been of variable success and has been weakest in Hebburn which retains very powerful religious identities and political networks. Network development has also been limited in the south of the borough where mining associations have been long-standing self-help structures of the community. This serves to emphasise the importance of quite localised social relations and their impact upon new forms of community governance.

Drawing on the progressive regime literature STRIDE can be regarded as an attempt to set up new value bases and new ways of operating in opposition to traditional practices and thus challenging widely held perceptions about the community and the voluntary sector. However this process is inevitably limited by the need to collaborate in order to be part of the new institutional structures and policy processes. One example of this was the reluctant signing of the SRB bid by community representatives. Although angry that their input into the bid was marginalised, community representatives felt obliged to sign the bid, unwilling to jeopardise potential funding sources. However in undertaking this action, community members felt that the democratising aims of STRIDE had been compromised. For Lowe (1986) an important concern within USM analysis is how particular forces help screen out social conflict. It may be argued that three-way partnership has to an, albeit limited, extent been a tool for consensus building within the borough.

The local authority have played a very dominant role in the past and have been trying to preserve this whilst simultaneously recognising a new degree of impotency. Central government has sought to develop new institutional relations in the borough by imposing

new modes of community and private sector representation. STMBC have felt they have had albeit reluctantly to accept STRIDE and STEP. However, there remain numerous tensions between different partners and within the community and voluntary sector. This raises the issue of how far local communities can control what either STRIDE or the local authority are doing. The development of an umbrella organisation may well appear to provide a convenient way of accessing the community voice (McArthur, 1995) however the complexities and tensions arising through this approach are exemplified within South Tyneside.

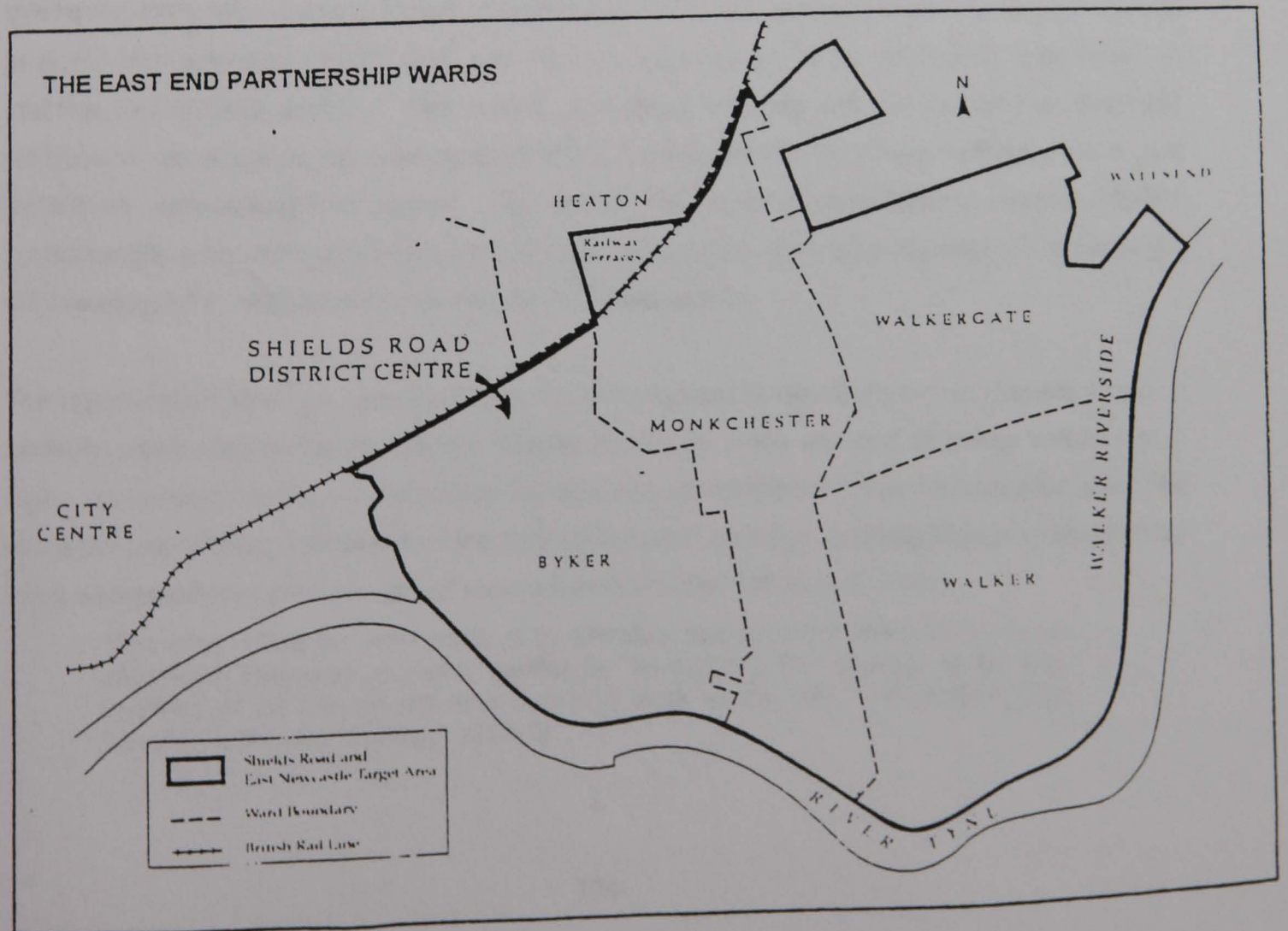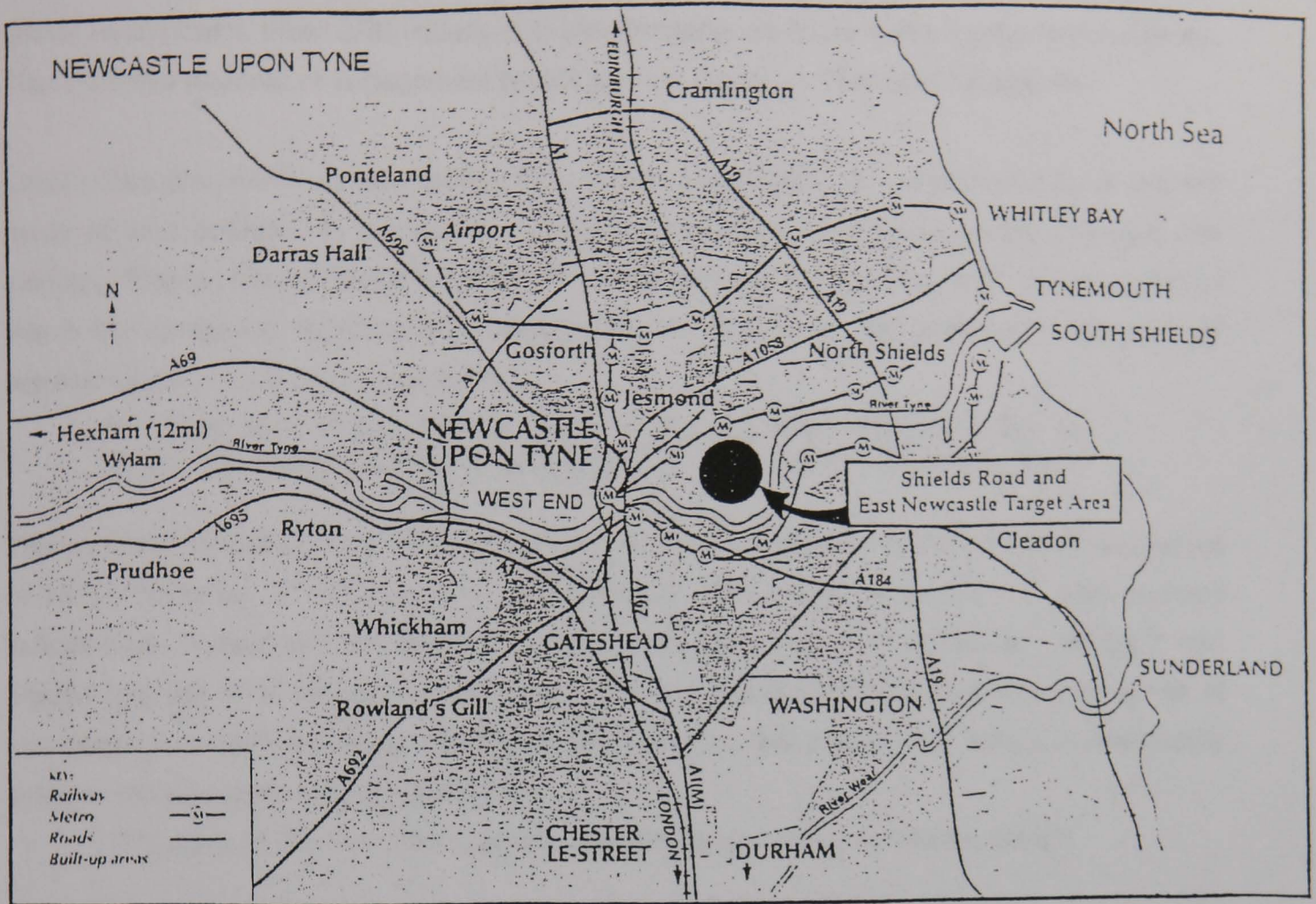# Chapter 7: A Study of Third Sector Politics in Newcastle's East End

7.1 Introduction

This document explores community involvement in local policy processes in the East End of Newcastle, focusing specifically on the 'East End Partnership' (EEP). In 1995 Newcastle City Council brought together a number of local actors to establish a partnership mechanism to bid for SRB funds. Underlying this process were growing concerns over the general worsening of social and economic conditions in the East End. The area covered by the plan covers about 35,000 people and is made up of electoral wards in the EE of the city including Byker, Monkchester, Walker and parts of Walkergate and Heaton (see Figure 4). The wide geographical spread of the EEP strategy is justified in terms of its 'coherence' related to a common set of social and economic problems:

> "...it would be artificial to sub-divide the Riverside communities which exhibit similar levels of deprivation and social stress." (Newcastle City Council, 1995:2)

Despite justifying the bid area as being based upon riverside wards which share a coherent identity, it excludes the Sandyford ward which is the subject of a separate SRB bid 'The Ouseburn Valley: A Sustainable Future' (1996) led by the voluntary sector.

The strategy being implemented through the EEP received formal approval by GONE in December 1995. The emphasis of the EEP has been upon the physical outcomes of the regeneration strategy as opposed to the policy process itself, which has been highly problematic. The policy process has been characterised by a lack of clarity over roles and a blurring of the boundaries between sectional interests in highly contentious ways. Some of the partnership practices have also been subject to internal questioning by partnership members and scrutinised both in the local press and more formally by the district auditor. Despite claims of a 'new managerialism' corresponding with new relations of governance (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997; Wahlberg and Geddes, 1995), there seems little evidence of this within the formal partnership structure. Yet, or perhaps because of this, the management of internal relations has become the dominant concern of many partnership members who feel that current approaches are jeopardising the future of the partnership. Overall this has had the effect of undermining effective community involvement, exacerbated by a lack of structures to support community development processes. From its inception the EEP has had structured but limited community and voluntary sector involvement, to a large degree dominated by local church organisations. Thus a particular type of third sector involvement has been invoked by new three-way partnership mechanisms. This corresponds with the dominance of the church sector

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

North Sea

Cramlington

Ponteland

WHITLEY BAY

Darras Hall

Airport

TYNEMOUTH

SOUTH SHIELDS

Gosforth

North Shields

Jesmond

NEWCASTLE
UPON TYNE

River Tyne

Hexham (12ml)

Wylam

River Tyne

WEST END

Shields Road and
East Newcastle Target Area

Ryton

Cleadon

Prudhoe

A184

Whickham

GATESHEAD

SUNDERLAND

Rowland's Gill

WASHINGTON

River Wear

KEY:
Railway
Metro
Roads
Built-up areas

CHESTER
LE-STREET

DURHAM

THE EAST END PARTNERSHIP WARDS

N

HEATON

WALLSEND

Railway
Terraces

WALKERGATE

SHIELDS ROAD
DISTRICT CENTRE

MONKCHESTER

WALKER RIVERSIDE

CITY
CENTRE

BYKER

WALKER

RIVER TYNE

Shields Road and
East Newcastle Target Area

Ward Boundary

British Rail Line

in representing community interests in the EE. However whilst the EEP has minimal third sector involvement, other SRB initiatives in neighbouring wards have been voluntary sector led. These distinct patterns of engagement reflect and are driven by local political relations.

Local policy processes, as exemplified through the partnership, are underpinned by a resilient mode of local politics. In contrast to notions of re-building local relationships (Davoudi and Healey, 1995) traditional patterns continue to underpin local policy processes. A key aspect of this is the continuing importance of local Labour councillors as the dominant mode of local representation in local policy processes:

> "In some parts of the city it is accepted that the local authority is the key player and that they control what goes on." (Community development officer)

This comment reveals a continuing acceptance of the local authority reflected in the dominance of local structures of representative democracy in EE policy processes. It also perhaps indicates the current lack of alternative institutional mechanisms in existence. Whilst it was argued that the SRB process should build upon the strong community identity and sense of community to avoid the spiral of decline in the West End, the very limited nature of community activism led one interviewee to comment:

> "Why look at the East End if you are interested in community involvement?"

Whilst the SRB bid evokes a sense of 'traditional, territorial, gemeinschaft community' (Evans in Duffy and Hutchinson 1997: 356) and thus an apparent basis for community organising, in practice this is very limited. The church and local authority are the remaining dominant institutional structures in an area decimated by the loss of the traditional industrial base and institutions representing local labour. The lack of new forms of local politics seems to reflect conservatism amongst local people and the controlling power of local politicians. This assertion will be explored in relation to contemporary policy processes.

The regeneration strategy focuses largely on the physical re-development of Shields Road 'a declining retail area' in Byker and the Walker Riverside, once an area of heavy industry and major employment and now designated for business development. The regeneration plan sits within the overarching framework of the City's Economic Strategy, echoing similar sentiments to those expressed in a previous era of redevelopment in the 1960s and 1970s:

> "The new vision for Newcastle is to develop and promote Newcastle as an important European regional capital by harnessing the energy, skills and qualities of all the people who live and work in the city." (Newcastle City Council Economic Strategy, 1994-7)

The area covered by the EEP is located to south east of the city centre, separated from the city centre by the Ouseburn Valley and the urban motorway built in the 1970s. Beyond this boundary are:

> "...the residential areas of east Newcastle ...the extraordinary redevelopment at Byker bounded by the flats forming the 'Byker Wall'; and Walker, an appendage of the ailing shipyards." (Robinson, 1988: 6)

The Byker Wall was part of the transformation of the city in the 1960s and 1970s driven by the desire to create the 'Brasilia of the North' (Hampton and Walker, 1980). This period of redevelopment has been interpreted as being of symbolic significance:

> "In that era, the objectives of clearance and redevelopment went beyond a concern with poor physical housing conditions. It involved a rejection of the whole environment of the rows of Tyneside flats inherited form the 19th century, and the desire to create a housing environment that was a visual symbol of modernity." (Robinson, 1988: 128)

The architects of Byker Wall sought to create an innovative housing project that would protect the strong social ties and attachment to neighbourhood. The Byker CDP, set up at the beginning of the redevelopment period, sought to encourage collective action and create a dialogue between local people and the local authority. It is claimed that by the late 1970s community work was a major employer in Byker (Hampton and Walker, 1980: 16).

This part of the city, bounded to the south by the river Tyne, developed through the growth of heavy industrial and engineering processes in mid to late 19th century. Housing was built to accommodate the unskilled and semi-skilled workers employed in shipbuilding and related activities, coal mining and in the iron, glass and chemical works. With the collapse of the industrial base key local firms closed, including Swan Hunters and more recently NEI Parsons engineering. Although the Neptune yard has continued in production it has been on a much smaller scale. With the closure of the big companies has come the loss of many other smaller associated industries. However, others have survived by diversifying into offshore, fabrication and oil-related sectors, for example AMEC have been involved in developing oil technologies. These new growth industries and the recent re-opening of Swan Hunters yard have meant a revival in local marine-based activity. Additionally, the local authority, which owns part of Walker Riverside, has, in conjunction with other government directed agencies, including English Partnerships and the UDC, been leading the redevelopment of the site which is targeted for inward investment opportunities. Some factories, such as Wellstream, have been built and the old naval yard has now been converted into an offshore technology park. These form the central strands upon which the council is seeking to rejuvenate the local economic base. However, the employment generated through these activities is on a much smaller scale than

previously and many of the jobs require specialist skills not possessed by the local labour force. Hence, the key issue for people continues to be a 'lack of jobs'.

> "The industries being attracted are specialist off-shore companies, involved in small-scale, hi-tech activities and operating in something of a niche market. But the question is how can this be of direct benefit to the immediate hinterland? The answer of course is not a lot. The target area of the bid is characterised by very low levels of educational achievement, low skill levels and there's a mismatch between local labour and the labour required within these industries."(Local authority officer)

With the collapse of local employment has come the myriad of associated local economic and social problems. Male unemployment in the regeneration strategy target area has been 26.5 % compared with a city wide average of 18.4% (1995). The 1991 census showed that over 16% of heads of household were unskilled/semi-skilled manual workers, rising to 25% in the southern side of Walker - the group most acutely affected by de-industrialisation. The impacts of de-industrialisation have been compounded by a tradition of low educational achievement. Within the Byker, Monkchester and Walker wards over 50% of households are in receipt of housing benefit (Newcastle City Council, 1995). Some 20% of the population of these wards suffer from a long-term illness, with high rates of both coronary and respiratory diseases. A study conducted in 1991 ranking the 678 NE regional wards according to health and social indicators placed Walker fourth and Monkchester fifth (Newcastle City Council, 1995). The social fabric of the East End wards have become characterised by rising levels of crime, particularly among juveniles, and a high incidence of violent crime. For example, over a six-month period, there were more than fifty reported stabbings on Shields Road (Newcastle City Council, 1995). Vandalism to industrial premises and council housing stock is an issue of increasing concern and there has been a growing sense of stigma attached to living in some parts of the EE. Hence, current strategies are concerned with improving the area's image ranging from the demolition of Felling View - a street with persistent problems of high void rates and vandalism - to the redevelopment of the Walker Riverside:

> "The developments have helped turn the image around. That in turn has improved the status of the area and that brings a benefit of it's own; the area loses some of it's stigma." (Local authority officer)

Therefore regeneration policy has focused not just on improving material conditions but on dispelling the current stigma and creating new images of the area. The SRB programme hinges on the rationale of taking remedial action to prevent a 'spiral of decline' and reduce the area's vulnerability to civil unrest. Policy documents contain frequent reference to the idea that failure to reverse current trends will result in conditions similar to those experienced in the West End of the city. Policy documents, councillors and officers alike have asserted that the East End,

despite acute social and economic problems has managed, in contrast to the West End, to preserve its sense of community:

> "The East area of Newcastle has up until now not experienced the level of acute civil disturbance which has taken place in comparable neighbourhoods in the West End of Newcastle and in North Tyneside. One of the reasons for this in the view of the local authority and the police is that the degree of cohesion and mutual co-operation has remained within the East End of Newcastle which has to some extent been lost in these other areas. This cohesion has been greatly assisted by the positive work of the Churches in the East End over a number of years." (Newcastle City Council, 1995: 4)

This point was reiterated by one of the councillors:

> "There is still community spirit here - there's none in the West End...Although we share many of the same social problems we've got much more community."

This sense of community reflects the continuing importance of traditional forms of social relations and the particularly strong kinship and friendship ties. This has its roots in the homogeneity of the population and their shared identity as part of the industrial workforce. However whilst there are factors such as the homogeneity of the population characterised by a 'conservatism', policy-makers also inflate this sense of community against areas with higher levels of social unrest, such as Meadowell Estate in North Tyneside or the West End of Newcastle. However some of these areas, such as Scotswood in Newcastle's West End have high levels of community activism (see McKellar, 1987) and are 'relatively rich in networks' between community development processes and the local authority (Davoudi and Healey, 1995).

One important process in the West End has been the driving of community politics and organisation through local state community development processes. In contrast, in recent years, such processes have largely been absent from the East End. Yet, with the loss of key local employers the opportunities to create and maintain communal identity have been reduced. The principal institutions remaining are the church and the local authority. There has been a loss of institutional mechanisms through which the local community, both men and women, can exert any independent control:

> "Traditional forms of solidarity building have been through shared work experiences - particularly employment in large enterprises and through co-operatives. There may have been something like twenty or so co-operative stores in the East End twenty years ago. The women's branch of the co-operative guild has been very important - it was an important way of exerting some local control."(Voluntary sector representative)

Interviewees, including voluntary sector activists, have commented on the insularity of the East End and the importance of friendship and kinship ties which underpin the basis of local social networks and which can be hostile to 'outsiders'. The area's insularity has been reflected in a local authority survey which showed that young people expected to be able to remain in the local area and walk or cycle to work. More recently, a group of Bosnians allocated housing in Byker were forced out of the area because of racial harassment:

> "People don't pass through Walker, and it's very difficult to slot into the community if you are a newcomer."(Voluntary activist)

The homogeneity of the local population is reflected in 1991 data which shows that the area covered by the EEP strategy has under 400 residents from ethnic minority groups in a total population of 35,000. Whilst the local authority claims to provide support for vulnerable groups, in practice, this is difficult to enact. Even within these communities, it is clear that many people, particularly young males, are at the margins of the existing social structures (Campbell, 1993).

Hence, although there is perceived to be a strong sense of community remaining this is not reflected through strong community institutions or politics, for example, there are a distinct lack of community structures into which the partnership can hook. Further, partnership members do not necessarily perceive this as a problem reflecting perhaps the continuing role of local state and church as community. This supposed sense of coherence, portrayed as a positive local characteristic in policy documents, may be regarded as a barrier to the development of community interests within the partnership. The claimed sense of coherence and identity is applied to a geographical area which, coincides with the power base of the dominant Labour faction. Hence the lack of community activism may be the result of continuing dependency upon the local authority, a dependence which local councillors defend. This is partly related to key local political ideology centred on councillors 'as community':

> "All the Walker councillors are from Walker and we live nearest to our wards."(Local councillor)

Within the partnership there is no general recognition of the need to build up autonomous community representation or impetus toward constructing new forms of community interest representation and politics. This is reinforced through the local authority and church as being the major institutions present in the locale. One characteristic of the wards covered by the regeneration strategy is the predominance of local authority housing, the relationship between the local state and local people therefore being mediated through decentralised neighbourhood housing offices as well as through the councillors. This contrasts with the situation in some West End wards where housing tenure is much more mixed and there are high levels of private rented housing combined with political representation through 'non-local' councillors. According

to Davoudi and Healey (1995: 87), a new generation of 'new left' councillors has found it difficult to gain political leverage within the city.

The barriers to the development of new forms of relationship between community and state emanate from the character of local social relations and the social networks of which they are a part. One dimension of this hinges on what is understood to constitute 'collective responsibility'. In this there is an apparent gap between the expectations of central government policy and local perceptions:

> "People can be quite righteous and judgmental in a very individualistic way. In this sense there is a clear separation between collective and individual responsibility. This is linked to the local culture and values. Collective responsibility is seen as education, jobs, healthcare and housing. But behaviour is viewed much more as individual responsibility- it is not necessarily seen as a collective problem. You can preach about unemployment but not poverty - that is much more difficult." (Church representative)

One reason for people accepting the dominance of the local authority may be seen to stem from 'a lack of self confidence, which is part of the culture'. One voluntary sector representative commenting on patterns of local voluntary activity stated that although there was a core of some twenty or thirty activists on the south side of Walker Road, over the years these individuals had changed:

> "One of the 'problems' is that individuals tend to use the skills they have acquired, for example through volunteering, to firstly advance themselves up the bank and then over the road and then to a different area."

Here, reference is being made to the symbolic divide of Walker Road, which separates the Pottery Bank Estate from the St Anthony's estate. Pottery Bank has, over recent years, gained a reputation for being 'hard to let' with high void levels and vandalism. One 'informal' housing policy that has been in operation is that of threatening tenants with rent arrears in St Anthonys with re-housing in Pottery Bank. However, the local culture also creates other types of barriers:

> "Locally there is a deep suspicion of people getting above their station. People are suspicious of people who take on leadership roles, even if that is only being the chair or secretary of a tenants association. It's a nasty pressure, which can be carried over into different spheres; the boundaries can become blurred and diffuse. As a general point ...it is easy to start something but it is much more difficult to sustain it. You are always walking on eggshells. Abstensionism is a key way of exerting power." (Voluntary activist)

179

The notion of abstaining as a way of exerting power has fundamental implications for any strategies based around active participation by the local community. Hence, there are a number of internal barriers within the community to developing and sustaining more autonomous forms of community activity that might feed into local policy processes. Current modes of community organising are mostly located within the institutional frameworks of church and city council and demarcated by age and gender:

> Women are the main force in community development and community change. The men have been punch drunk by unemployment and are only really active on club committees. (Voluntary activist)

This has resonance with claims by Duffy and Hutchinson (1997: 357) that for males the loss of paid work tends to break their bonds with community. The process of institutional impoverishment through the loss of paid work has led one church representative to claim:

> "...it is only really the church which remains as the major force. It is by the far the largest single voluntary organisation here. But, the problem is that the centre of gravity of the congregation is sixty year old women. This raises the question of what attitude you are likely to get...in many voluntary organisations practising Christians are grossly over-represented. Grandmothers are sustaining communities at the moment."

This highlights both the narrow base of community activism and the potential problems around sustaining this base. The loss of local employment has undermined the solidarity built out of the shared work experience and for Campbell has led to the ongoing marginalisation of young males. One voluntary sector officer described a lifestyle characterised by:

> "...a cycle of immaturity - staying at home then moving in with partners for a while and then moving back home. They don't take any responsibility. Development gets truncated at the age of twelve when they know all there is to know about being streetwise. (Voluntary activist)

Another strand undermining local identity has been the loss of community political structures located within the locality, such as the Trade Union movement which 'generated respect - even if you didn't get much power'. Rather than seeing new policy structures as offering the potential for diversifying and increasing opportunities for political representation, there is a concern about the loss of formal political structures. In particular, key voluntary sector representatives were keen to stress the undermining of local democratic processes through the emergent modes of governance. Hence one voluntary sector interviewee highlighted the need for more formal structures:

"There needs to be urban parish councils or their equivalent. A formal political structure that has standing and clout in it's own right because it represents the local unity. Although councillors would fight this, in terms of community building it would be politically very important. With community bodies their representation can always be called into question."

Hence, there is a concern that emergent modes of governance are being built around 'flexible' structures which do not have formal political status or a long-term life span. Such structures are perceived by some interviewees to lack political clout because of their 'transient' nature and because the representation delivered is 'always on someone else's terms'. Such perspectives stem from a belief in the continuing political dominance of the local authority, and result in a lack of alternative modes of representation and activism. The lack of community co-ordinating mechanism was viewed by one voluntary sector officer as undermining any potential for the development of community solidarity. Whilst the church may be attempting to fulfil this role, reinforcing the key role of the church around community development processes and voluntary activity is problematic. Whilst it may stimulate some members of the community it may help marginalise others. Reflecting upon the nature of local social structures brings into focus the partial interpretation of 'social stability' held by officers and by local politicians. Local people, community and voluntary sector representatives have identified how this can also be reflected in insularity and prejudice. This has resonance with claims that the community compares favourably with the West End of Newcastle, despite sharing may of the same socio-economic problems. The lack of independent community structures or inhibition of local community activism raises fundamental difficulties for the whole notion of three-way partnership.

7.2 The Local Policy Context

One theme running through policy documents and highlighted in interviews by officers and politicians was the need to retain the sense of community that exists in the East End. This is in contrast to the West End where rioting formed the catalyst for increased public spending on community development (see Campbell, 1993, 1995), leading to antagonisms between West and East End councillors. In the EE SRB processes have not been supported by community development despite the emphasis placed upon this by central government (DoE, 1995). The imperative for action which has existed in the West End has not occurred in East End until recently, reflecting something of the continued strength of the local authority and local political forms.

Although the East End lacks community based structures there may be a danger of overstating the differences between the East and West. For example, whilst preliminary work has identified a myriad of structures and initiatives in the West End (particularly before March 1997 and the end of City Challenge) the basis of community representation within these structures is open to question. Further, whilst some have claimed that policy processes in the West End have been more oriented to social development others have argued that physical projects have absorbed most of the resources. Additionally, one youth worker commented upon the lack of long-term changes realised through community programmes in the West End. This confirms general concerns regarding the overall effectiveness of local authority led community development strategies (Knight, 1993) and also the scepticism of one EE church leader over notions of community drawn from liberal welfare programmes.

A second theme arising in discussions of local policy is the strong resistance to new forms of central government localism by the local authority and specifically by some EE councillors. This is reflected in the council's 'fraught' relationship with both TWDC and Tyneside TEC. Interviews with local councillors highlighted their anger and frustration at the power and resources that have been channelled away from local government into non-elected quangos:

> "Basically we've had nineteen years of wasted government - one that didn't care. One part of that is the TEC- they're obnoxious. They're interested in looking after their own jobs and they get paid well. One of their officers came to a recent meeting - he had a hard time although we shouldn't really shoot the messenger. The chair of the TEC is obnoxious - they've done nothing for us. I hate her - you can quote me on that- she is obnoxious"

Another councillor claimed that more effort would have been made to accommodate the TEC and work co-operatively with its officers if it had been concerned with investing in local people as opposed to 'looking after their own people as their priority'. Consequently:

> "Relations with the TEC have been very antagonistic. The government agencies have sold the people short. I hope with the new government there will be a new agenda. But we're not under any illusions we know it won't happen over night- we've kept our feet on the ground." (EE councillor)

Some interviewees were keen to stress the connection between this form of urban policy and a Conservative government that worsened economic conditions in the North East through de-industrialisation:

> "The Tories policy for the north was just to discipline labour. If we'd had Tories up here they wouldn't have closed all the shipyards." (EE councillor)

Hence the politics of the EE is characterised by a group of Labour councillors who have remained defiant towards central government intervention through institutions such as the TEC and TWDC. The style of politics is also characterised by a belief that the local authority should dominate local policy processes, a belief which is upheld to a certain extent by the local community who accept local politicians as a controlling force. The degree to which the local authority and local councillors have sought to dominate local policy processes has been variable across the city, reflecting perhaps the deep divisions within the ruling Labour group. Whilst the EE councillors see themselves as part of the community they represent and criticise West End councillors for being more remote from their constituencies:

> "The councillors here in the East End continue to play a very important role. We always turn up to our surgeries and we know the people. We've got a much better rapport here than in most areas. People will have a drink with us down the club, though we might get a bit of stick as well." (EE councillor)

However community workers in the West End have stressed the ease of working with their local councillors because they are not attempting to control the whole process. The mode of EE end representation, which has filtered through to partnership processes, has been summarised by one local councillor:

> "Because we live here we know what's needed. We get recognised and people will tell us if they're not happy with something. We are very hands on and that stretches to the MP Nick Brown- he will socialise here in his old patch....There should be more community involvement to support the regeneration programme, but, that should happen through us rather than through outsiders."

This reflects a mode of politics in the EE infused by notions of the councillors being the most appropriate representatives of the community. This is rooted in a deeply paternalistic style of local government and local modes of representation borne of an insular working class culture originating in the local shipyards. Davoudi and Healey (1995: 87) reflect upon the 'old labourist-trade union political nexus' dominant in NE politics, which has resulted in a 'paternalist clientelism' (88). The machine labourism evident in the politics of the EE has its origins in the growth of the working class franchise at the turn of the century (Keating, 1991: 43). The continuing dominance of the councillors in local decision-making processes is reflected in a general scepticism of other individuals and agencies, even where they are working in the local area:

> "In the riots in 1991 we were on the streets and we calmed people down. When we went out into the streets we did calm people down, unlike the clergy- when the vicar came out he agitated people even more. I've got a troublesome priest down here, but he's going thank-goodness." (EE councillor)

183

Therefore, whilst local authority policy documents acknowledge the positive role played by the church in helping consolidate the local community, the attitude of EE councillors is that they should have the autonomy to operate without 'interference' by others, whether local officers, the voluntary sector or government agencies. This commonality of interest has gained the local councillors the reputation of the 'East Tyne Mafia':

> "We've stuck together down here even if we don't agree with each other." (EE Councillor)

This style of local politics feeds through the partnership, to create a particular set of internal tensions. A long-standing supporter of the Labour party and ex-member of EEP, commented that this type of solidarity amongst the local Labour representatives had undermined local democracy and produced a 'dictatorship'. The strength of the Labour councillors dominance over local policy processes in the EE led one community member to remark on the difficulties for other groups of 'having a say' or 'exposing things behind closed doors':

> "When something has been exposed about what they've done and it appears in the paper, they have still just closed ranks and ignored it...The strength of the local Labour party means that if anything goes wrong they're covered- they just close ranks. There is no opposition. I'm a member of the Labour party but it isn't democracy, it's a dictatorship. Even though some of what's happening has been exposed- they are still going strong and the individuals concerned are still going strong." (Community representative)

These comments refer in particular to the fall-out in the EEP over collaboration between the EE councillors and key local business interests. Private meetings between one particular councillor and the local business leaders have been exposed in the local press and the councillor involved was 'rapped on the knuckles for speaking to developers' by the Labour whip (Evening Chronicle 20/2/97). However, apart from this exposure, community activists felt there had been little change in the approach of some councillors.

Community based activity has tended to revolve around small groups with an area based focus. In the main these are the residents and tenants associations with local authority-run community associations. As previously identified, the church has played a key role representing the community in local policy process and supporting community based projects. An example of this is the St Anthony of Padua church near Churchwalk, led by a man who has been described by one local authority officer as an 'empire builder'. He has initiated a number of 'parish initiatives' run by the church and it's members and believes that these provide an important point of contact for community members:

"In 1980 we set up an association, the basis of which was to respond to the local needs of the community from the cradle to the grave. People were not being catered for by the statutory agencies and there were huge gaps in the services being offered. In 1980 we set up the training workshops, that was very early, long before government policy emphasised the provision of training workshops." (Church leader)

Some of initiatives run by the church include a day care centre, domicillory service for the elderly, a youth centre catering for special needs, a community radio station and the Walker Open Learning and Fitness project (WOLF). In discussing his approach to community and it's development, he acknowledged both the importance and difficulties of community based activities.

"There should be planners, but they should work out in the community. They should get the community to do as much as possible - not coming down from above. There should be community ownership and control."

Those voluntary activists interviewed during the study did not identify new sets of possibilities raised by the new institutional structures driven by City Challenge and SRB as emphasised in some of the literature (Healey and Davoudi, 1995; Barr, 1995; Mayer, 1995; McArthur, 1995). Moreover many were keen to challenge the rhetoric of potential empowerment:

"I'm very sceptical of the empowerment model; the term is manipulative and is used by those with power about those who don't have power. Fundamentally it has allowed poverty to become the problem of the poor. The power imbalance is ludicrous. And there is the idea that if something doesn't work then it's your fault- regeneration is wasted on the poor. The whole model of empowerment posits impossible tasks and withdraws support at the point it's most needed. Empowerment theory is based on the premise that the poor should manage it all on a voluntary basis - even though they are up against the Shepherds of this world. Empowerment is a myth and a con- the only value being that the rich and powerful can opt out of their responsibilities." (Voluntary sector representative)

This perspective rejects the 'potential empowerment' discourse of academic commentators (see Hastings and McArthur, 1995) and allies more closely to the 'scapegoat' interpretation of urban policy (see Raco, 1998). This interpretation notes shifting responsibilities between the public and private sphere described as 'privatising poverty' (Gaffikin and Morrissey, 1990). These fundamental criticisms of the empowerment model can be contrasted with those who are critical of local authority–based community empowerment. In particular it has been argued that this form of community development is mostly geared towards operating 'in the little gaps' and that:

"...political formation is lacking in contemporary approaches to community. They fail to raise political consciousness, in contrast to the CDP approach that took you beyond a pride in your own area to a vision of how things could be. So although community development maybe useful it may also be domesticating and far removed from any notion of empowerment. Such strategies do not address the potential for re-distributing power." (Voluntary sector representative)

Although the local authority has played a key role in developing the priorities and strategies of the EEP this contrasts with other EE regeneration projects where the voluntary sector, in the form of the local churches, has played a pivotal role in initiating and developing strategies. One example of this is the Walker Open Learning and Fitness Centre (WOLF) developed through one of the local churches in response to being offered a building, originally owned by the City Council.

"The city were trying to set up some sort of project in partnership with NACRO, but when NACRO dropped out they offered us the building. I had been to see open learning in initiatives in Bradford and Sheffield and thought it could be useful within this community- which has never been keen on learning. The building had been a youth club and was saddled with a gym. It would have been too expensive to convert the gym so I invented the idea of combining learning with a health initiative. This fitted in well because we are very concerned to promote health improvements in this area." (Voluntary sector activist)

An executive of local people was formed to take charge and ownership of the project accessing funds from the ESDF, ESF and SRB. Whilst this is an example of a successful voluntary sector-led SRB bid, one interviewee suggested that this reflected only a temporary shift in government policy away from 'local authority bids', driven by pressure from NCVO, which would probably not receive SRB funding under the current climate. However, this example is indicative of the considerable impetus provided by the voluntary sector, particularly in the form of the church, within the EE. The project is now being funded by SRB channelled through the EEP, and consideration is being given as to how this training initiative could ally with other projects under the umbrella of the EEP. The other main regeneration partnership has developed from the Ouseburn Trust. Since initial attempts to incorporate this into the EEP were abandoned they are now two distinct entities, although, there is some overlap of membership. The relationship between the two partnerships reveals some of the tensions prevailing within EE politics and the distinctive identities that are being reproduced.

Initially, both of these partnership strands were driven by expressions of central government localism, albeit in different forms. The EEP, the local authority claims, stemmed from an opportunistic use of SRB to finance the local authority policy agenda for the EE. The SRB II agenda built upon an earlier unsuccessful bid for the second round of City Challenge, which

failed according to one politician, 'because the government shifted the goal posts'. However one local authority officer claimed that part of the reason for the failure was that fact that 'it didn't have a mechanism to float anything on that was radically different from the status quo.' This indicates that the local authority attempted to use new partnership mechanisms to push a long-established local authority agenda. This has historical resonance with the CDP experience in Byker in the 1970s (Hampton & Walkland, 1980) where, despite the housing re-development programme, there was an ongoing resistance to the creation of new structures creating major tensions within the project. Local councillors were particularly antagonistic to the CDP fearing they would be 'by-passed' if a voluntary agency become responsible for community development work (1980: 49). One councillor reflected that they could not permit movements over which they did not wield influence and that ward politics was based upon retaining public esteem (1980: 61).

The second strand of partnership arose from concerns about a specific area of the EE, the Ouseburn. The Ouseburn Valley, a pocket of extreme poverty, lies adjacent to land that has been under the control of the TWDC. Local people were concerned about the impacts of the East Quayside re-development upon the Ouseburn, and so the Ouseburn Trust was set up under the leadership of a local vicar. Initially, the trust sought advice from GONE about how to develop their ideas, revolving around the need to 'protect' the area. The advice was to amalgamate with the bid being put together for the EE and, although 'good working relationships were developed between local authority economic development officers and the community and voluntary sector', other tensions emerged.

The final EEP SRBCF bid submitted in September 1995 focussed on the redevelopment of Shields Road District shopping centre, employment generation, a youth programme, housing and environment projects and leisure facilities. However during the production of the bid more projects were 'tagged on'. Throughout the summer of 1995 councillors pushed forward various projects from around the EE until the bid became 'incoherent'. One voluntary sector representative reflected that ultimately the bid 'was just bits and pieces tagged together' although Shields Road remained as 'the key'. GONE advised that the bid area was too large, and that the local authority ought to reduce the number of EE wards encompassed within the bid. However, the decision to remove the Sandyford ward, and hence the Ouseburn Trust from the EEP, was driven not just by the unfocussed nature of the bid, but also by political antagonisms. Sandyford ward is politically distinct from the other EE wards that comprise the EEP and tensions had became apparent between one of the leading EE councillors and a councillor from the Ouseburn Trust. This reflected an important political division between the Sandyford councillors and the rest of the EE councillors who form distinct factions within the

187

Labour party. The result was that the Ouseburn Trust was pushed out of the EEP but was able to produce a successful, independent SRB bid. Local authority officers claim the resultant EEP programme is an amalgam of projects that the local authority had otherwise been unable to pursue because of financial constraints. As such, there are claims that it represents a local authority agenda:

> "The programme reflects the desires and priorities of the local authority." (Local authority officer)

Currently, although local authority officers claim their ideas dominated the SRBCF bid, other forces were also influencing the agenda, including a group of local traders. In 1993 local shopkeepers contacted the council with a view to trying to make some environmental improvements to Shields Road. As a consequence, the Shields Road Traders Association (SRTA) was set up as a forum to represent the interests of the local businesses. Members of this organisation became directly involved with developing the regeneration agenda in conjunction with local authority officers. At the outset traders had been keen to attract in a major retailer but the only option deemed to be financially viable was a supermarket. Three alternative proposals by Private Finance Initiative developers were considered each including a supermarket in their plan. This would underpin a development package including a new swimming pool and library:

> "People were and are worried, currently about 13% of the shops are vacant and more are likely to go under. People are hanging on. There aren't many shoppers about when you look at the street, not nearly as many as there used to be. A recent retail study showed that of a population of 68000 here in the East End only 10% use Shields Road for their main shop. People travel to other centres or just stay on the bus to town. Therefore the supermarket is a lifeline for Shields Road, at a conservative estimate attracting 10,000 more shoppers." (SRTA member)

Hence, from the outset it was clear that the supermarket would be pivotal to the regeneration strategy. Some community and voluntary members have commented that the attention focused on the supermarket issue has 'overshadowed' other positive outcomes of the partnership. In particular attention was drawn to the role partnership members had played in the development of alternative plans for a superstore within the bid target area.

7.3 The East End Partnership Structure and Processes

> "The East End partnership has come out of the Tories undermining the power of the local authority and then giving some of that power back to quangos. The City Challenge and SRB are bait for the local authority to nibble back some of the power they have lost. Central government calls it partnership, but neither central government nor local government understands the meaning of partnership with the community. As far as they're concerned it's a case of 'here is the money if you do as we say'. The machinery of consultation is a sham."
> (Local church leader)

The above comments locate new EE partnership structures and policy processes within the restructuring of central-local state relations. This interpretation of partnership, from a key local voluntary sector representative, embraces both a general critique of the state understanding community, in contrast to the church, but also raises a specific concern that Newcastle City Council as a organisation has had little commitment to new governance practices. Such evidence supports claims that partnership in the 1990s is constructed from above (see for example Peck and Tickell, 1994; Raco, 1998b).

Initial attempts to develop a City Challenge bid involved a few key councillors working with an individual from a long-established church-based project in Walker. The councillor Chair of the EEP, saw the bid as very much a product of the EE councillors. However there were tensions between the then Leader of the Council and the EE councillors, and it was felt there wasn't the broader political support for the EEP. Different partners have expressed a range of opinions as to how the SRB strategy was developed and who was the driving force. In an interview with the chair of the EEP, the story varied from the EE councillors being the driving force behind the bid to the chair being reluctant to accept the position of chair because of his scepticism:

> "With the SRB it was basically the councillors who put it together. Within the city there is infighting between the different areas. In the early days it was definitely those who screamed the loudest who got. But we won this money because we all pulled together as a community, the officers and everybody.... We didn't expect the amount of money we got. I was called to a meeting with Flynn and Beecham and they said you chair it. To be honest I was cynical I felt like I was being set up for failure." (Chair EEP)

This approach of inter-ward competition for resources has been accentuated through the role of the Priority Areas Teams, which since 1976 have provided some financial devolution within the city. However the attitude of councillors who regard themselves as the key players helps explain tensions with other partners and in the partnership processes:

> "...the formal structures are exclusionary and the informal structures are dominated by the local authority." (Voluntary sector representative)

189

Community and voluntary sector interests have been marginalised both due to the nature of formal partnership structures and through the informal relations of partnership actors. Both of these factors have helped construct barriers to community sector engagement. Some of the most exclusionary practices arise through the actions of councillors in conjunction with private sector partnership members outside of the formal partnership processes. The formal partnership structure is seen to be at least in part a product of the EE political culture. Whereas in the West End the SRB partnership ('Heart of the West End') operate as a limited company, the EEP remains unincorporated, described by one officer as being a 'partnership of well-wishers'. It therefore may present less of a challenge to traditional representative structures. The partnership is comprised of nine councillors, nine representatives from the private sector, training and regeneration agencies and nine representatives from the voluntary/community sector and public services. Thus, central government agencies are included in with private sector representation and the community and voluntary sector are considered as a single grouping. Whilst it was envisaged that the full partnership would meet only once or twice a year in practice this has been much more frequent. The ongoing management of the strategy is the responsibility of an executive group that meets monthly, and has three representatives from each sector. However, the local authority administers the strategy and services the partnership as the 'accountable body'. The diagram below illustrates the overarching administrative framework. The officers are located centrally in the civic centre although this was not the original intention and according to one local authority officer has created additional barriers to community involvement. The aim to relocate officers to the EE to co-ordinate the different projects and activities has so far been inhibited by lack of suitable premises and structure of SRB funding:

> "Relocating will give us a much higher profile and will be an important means of establishing dialogue, which is very hard from the civic centre. It will help things a lot." (Local authority officer)

190

Figure 3 - The Structure of the East End Partnership

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐   │
│   │              The East End Partnership                │   │
│   └─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘   │
│                            │                                 │
│             ┌──────────────────────────────┐                │
│             │      Regeneration Manager     │                │
│             └──────────────────────────────┘                │
│             ┌──────────────────────────────┐                │
│             │     Regeneration Assistants   │                │
│             └──────────────────────────────┘                │
│          ┌──────────┬───────────┬──────────┐                │
│   ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐                  │
│   │  Admin   │  │   Info   │  │Accountant│                  │
│   │Assistant │  │ Assistant│  │          │                  │
│   └──────────┘  └──────────┘  └──────────┘                  │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
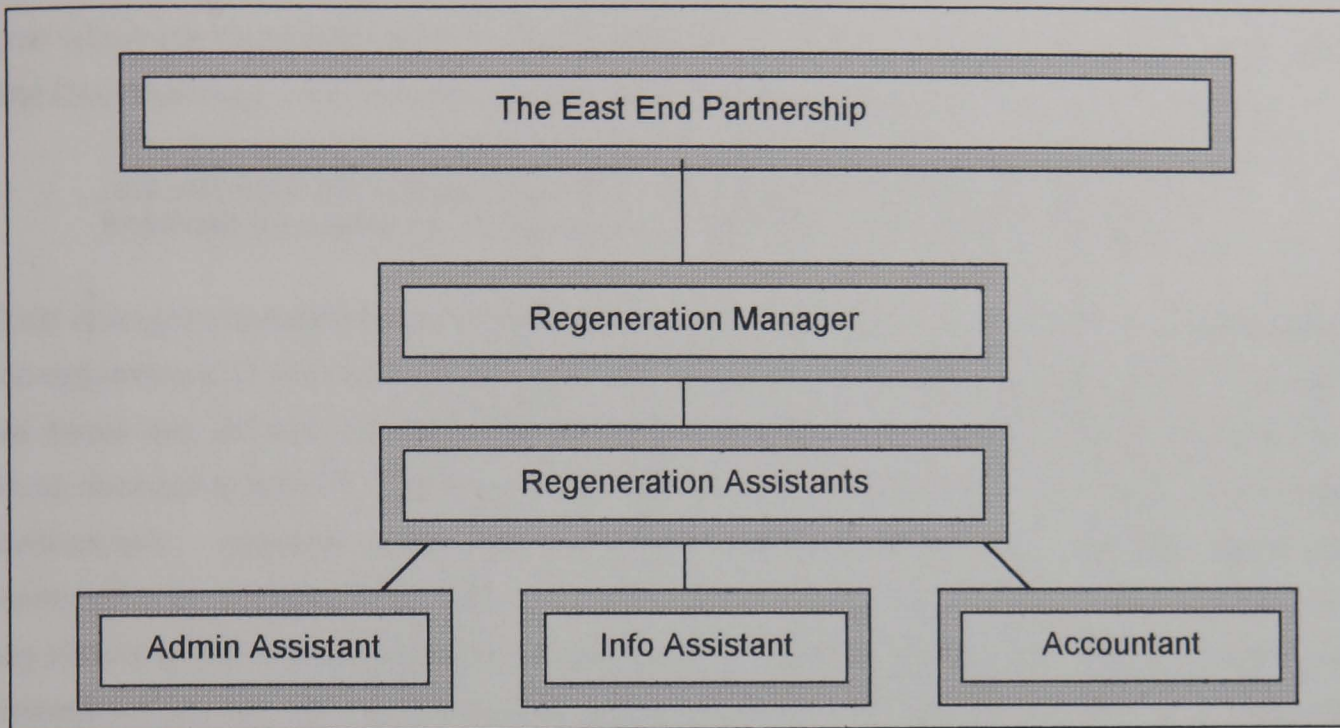
The EEP is located within the Chief Executive's department since 'the local authority is the 'accountable body in the EEP.' Although this approach is deemed to have fragmented the partnership it is seen as advantageous because it contributes to the development of a corporate approach within the council:

> "There was a recognition of the dangers of separation and factionalisation, so the decision was taken to locate the partnership in the Chief Executive's. This reflects the fact that the regeneration function is becoming increasingly regularised. The momentum for this began in the West End, the local authority wanted some consistency, a more corporate approach." (Local authority officer)

Hence although partnerships may be interpreted as a part of more decentralised governance, in this case it has been part of a centralisation process. Bringing together the partnerships within the Chief Executive's Department allows the authority to develop some consistency of approach, but also provides a method of exerting more leverage over governance processes. Hoggett (1987) has observed the role of decentralisation as a tool for exerting more central control and increasing managerialism and depoliticisation.

The parent committee of the EEP is the regeneration sub-committee and guidelines are currently being drawn up to provide a framework within which to establish the new forms of internal relationships and working practices. This will provide a basis from which to develop regeneration strategies as a key component of corporate 'enabling' strategies. There is

recognition that this has involved a new approach that is centralising responsibility for regeneration strategies. According to one of the local authority officers this has led to a shift in the internal culture of the council, consolidated by the creation of a Corporate Policy Manager post within the Chief Executives. This position was given to the chief executive of the West End City Challenge, who now has overall responsibility for regeneration within the council:

> "This has been very helpful because it has been a very steep learning curve and you can't afford that with SRB. He has facilitated planning which is very important especially for community involvement." (Regeneration manager)

Such changes are justified on the basis of promoting community involvement by consolidating the experiences of development and implementation of local regeneration strategies. However the social and political relations that dominate the West End are significantly different from those dominating the EE. Additionally, the EEP has been set up with very limited community involvement. Although within the partnership the community and voluntary sector are represented as a single body, they are represented in quite distinct ways on the board. Two, key voluntary sector representatives are from the church, the others are from a local housing association and the YMCA. Community representatives have been drawn from four of the five ward sub-committees involved in the partnership (excluding Heaton which is located on the fringes of the bid area) however there was still a feeling that a process of selection had taken place:

> "Within the EEP it's the councillors who have decided who the community and voluntary representatives should be." (Voluntary sector representative)

In addition to this direct form of control exerted by the council over the community, some voluntary sector representatives have highlighted more subtle forms of control. One example of this has been the use of local authority grants to pursue recreational style community development which:

> "...combined with people's low self esteem makes for a culture of endurance, not a culture of liberation. There is a certain fatalism...liberation in the past didn't work and it takes too much energy."

Furthermore, one voluntary sector representative argued that this fatalism is augmented by a culture in which decision-making is based upon who makes the argument rather than the argument itself. This would seem to reflect the politics of machine labourism and the parochial way the local political system operates in defence of the EE politicians who maintain a united identity:

> "Councillor X says so and so and people go along with it. But this behaviour is based on proven survival strategies- in other words loyalty to your mates. This explains 100% u turns in two seconds flat. It's based on what survival strategies work and not trusting outsiders." (Local voluntary representative)

As the ruling collective on the council, the behaviour of individual councillors remains largely unchallenged. In the EE this is compounded by social and economic conditions which contribute to an ongoing culture of dependency upon the council and in particular the elected representatives. Despite the cuts in local government services the City Council remains a potent institutional force in the EE, to a degree challenging claims of disrupted relations between local government and their citizens (Davoudi and Healey, 1995: 82). However within the partnership itself tensions soon emerged.

Partnerships within Partnerships: The Superstore Issue

> "People tend to think it's all about a supermarket but its much more than that. It's about wider benefits to the whole of the East End." (Chair EEP)

The dominance of one key issue on the partnership - the supermarket development - has served to further marginalise the community and voluntary sector. A couple of months after the EEP was established one of the key private sector players in the EE submitted a planning application to develop a supermarket on a site less than half a mile from Shields Road. The private financiers supporting the SRB bid felt that the viability of Shields Road redevelopment depended upon having a supermarket development. A short period into negotiations with one supermarket chain, it was felt that the supermarket was losing interest in the proposed development. It was then discovered that they were meeting with one of the private sector representatives to negotiate an alternative development, for an 82,000 sq. foot supermarket:

> "After we had selected the preferred developer, which had the supermarket located at the north-west end of Shields Road, they continued to make progress through the April and May. Then the preferred developers said that the supermarket operators were going cool. It turned out some of the councillors, including the vice-chair were negotiating with Morrisons over a site in Walkergate - which was owned by another member of the private sector partnership." (Voluntary sector member)

Whilst there is a recognised need for more retail provision in the Walkergate area, the collaborative actions of the councillors with Shepherd are perceived by other partnership members as jeopardising the whole partnership programme. Community, voluntary and private sector members felt that councillors seeking to lead partnership processes have been more interested in personal gain, despite their claims of support for the partnership:

> The councillors on the SRB committee are all involved with Shepherd - whether there is corruption or not, it looks that way to me." (Member SRTA)

The conflict between the councillors and the SRTA chair, arose because of the latter's opposition to the alternative superstore site which councillors were supporting. In particular, the councillors backing for the campaign convinced many local people to support the alternative supermarket, thereby potentially jeopardising the whole regeneration programme:

> "The councillors have leafleted and agitated people in Walkergate- they told them that they have the right to have a supermarket there. They have done a good job on the locals and the traders have stayed out of this. Unfortunately the councillors have the ear of the local press...the councillors have been standing on people." (Ex-chair SRTA)

This episode has had profound impacts upon the development of internal partnership relations and processes.

194

Subsequently a number of other supermarket applications have been submitted for various sites in the East End (by the end of 1996 there were six applications) and there is anger that local people have been manipulated into giving their support because of the lack of local shopping facilities. These processes have had a profound impact upon partnership relations and in particular upon the community and voluntary sector contribution. The allegation of 'untraceable transactions', whilst uncorroborated, has been commented upon by private and community and voluntary sector representatives. Elements of the private sector and voluntary sector representatives have worked together to challenge the practices which have damaged partnership relations. Chairs of both the private sector and community and voluntary sector grouping wrote a letter on the internal difficulties of the partnership over which the councillors were 'up in arms':

> "Due to the degree of problems caused over the supermarket issue, the voluntary and private sector chairs from the partnership wrote a letter to the GONE to air some of the internal problems of the partnership, but we were advised not to send it by the local authority." (Voluntary sector representative)

The actions of the local authority to diffuse this situation (Hambleton in McArthur, 1995) may be interpreted as undermining a challenge to partnership practices. However the consultants PIEDA were commissioned to investigate whether the SRB was still viable without the supermarket. The politically contentious nature of the issue led one interviewee to suggest that any decision based on the consultants report would be deferred until after the general election because 'too many local people said that they wouldn't vote Labour'. PIEDA's findings if accepted by the partnership would then be presented to the regeneration sub-committee of the local authority. One private sector representative stated that if the decision jeopardised the SRB money then evidence would be presented to the ombudsman. Whilst councillors supporting Shepherd's application have been keen to stress the desirability of having shopping facilities in Walkergate, others have highlighted the implications for the partnership strategy as a whole:

> "The councillors are not thinking about local people. They've broken all the rules; they've not adhered to the code of conduct and some of them are meeting with Shepherd privately. The councillors have embarked on a campaign of dirty tricks. They've been blocking things and deliberately slowing things down. They would now like to see the back of SRTA. They wanted us in at the start when there was no other options but as soon as there were, in the form of Bruce Shepherd, they wanted us out." (SRTA Member)

One member of the SRTA described the intimidation he felt he had been subjected to over the supermarket application:

> "At the planning sub-committee I was called on to speak against the superstore application - the SRTA had asked me to act as their representative. One of the councillors tried to gag me...he took out an injunction against me. Although the councillors shouldn't lobby on the planning committee in this case it was relentless. At the planning sub-committee Nick Brown (Local MP) had an open say about the store."

This episode demonstrates the way in which expressions of community interest may be in opposition to formal partnership strategies. In the case of EE the main mobilisation of community interest has been support for an alternative supermarket development. This raises broader issues over which community interests are represented in three-way partnerships (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997).

The above discussion exemplifies the way in which community and local interests are being defined in competing ways within the EE. In order to substantiate their arguments, SRTA surveyed local businesses to assess the level of support for a supermarket on Shields Road. The response was overwhelming in favour of the Shields Road site, with only two against the proposal:

> "When this was put to the council it became a political fight. I didn't join the partnership for that- I joined to help regenerate Shields Road and then you come up against these tactics. The committee they had at the outset was pretty dedicated- but the councillors were prepared to oppose the other representatives because of coercion or whatever. It's a very extreme example and now the focus is on delivering a package for Bruce Shepherd."(SRTA member)

The perception that collaborative relations are developing in support of individual rather than collective interests has led to disillusionment amongst partnership members. Moreover some have expressed the view that underhand tactics have been used including the intimidation of partnership members who have attempted to confront the internal conflicts of interest. The depth of feeling was reflected by the comments of one person, who had attempted to expose the councillor's role in the alternative supermarket proposal:

> "I'm a Labour member but I would happily shoot them all and serve prison for it." (Community representative)

However, what is perhaps more surprising is the apparent acceptance by some community representatives of these events. Despite the problems and conflicts of interest surrounding Shepherd's involvement in the partnership there was widespread support amongst interviewees to continue with the existing membership on the partnership board. Although voicing criticisms of individual's actions, community representatives in general displayed a tolerance to the situation:

> "Shepherd's owns a lot of the sites within the regeneration area, but we've all had to sign statements saying we have no pecuniary interests. He must have pecuniary interest so I don't now what happens there. But I suppose as long as the community gets what it needs..." (Community representative)

Perversely there was also a suggestion that the involvement by Shepherd was something which might be challenged by other partners but that this would conflict with support by local people for Shepherd. Whilst GONE have raised questions about the legitimacy of Shepherd's involvement and representation on the partnership, complexity arises from the support given by Shepherd's to local community and voluntary projects:

"Shepherd Offshore, as well as being the biggest single industry in the East End, bought up part of the Riverside site as a speculative investment, - they have representation on the partnership due to the importance of this site. But they are also promoting the Walkergate site for the supermarket. With any big corporation like that there are bound to be conflicts of interest, but they are a key local employer and we want them on the partnership...If we didn't want Shepherds on the partnership it could be very misunderstood by local people." (Regeneration manager)

At another level problems have been caused by departmentalism within the council (Davoudi and Healey, 1995). In particular tensions have arisen within the partnership because of the separation within the local authority between the regeneration function and the determination of planning applications:

"The other partners felt powerless. Power in this instance was being exercised by council committees which were not central to regeneration." (Voluntary sector member)

This chimes with an analysis of Newcastle Priority Areas Actions Teams (PATs) which concludes that these devolved structures, set up in 1976 in the poorest wards in the city to identify the 'concerns and desires' of the local community, had limited influence upon main departmental decision-making (Hoggett and Hambleton, 1987). Although the regeneration manager has attempted to establish more collaborative working practices within the local authority, including the planning department, others felt that because planning decisions were taken in a different realm this fundamentally undermined the power of the partnership and their ability to bring about change:

"Local support was whipped up for the planning applications and the development control sub-committee had little basis upon which to throw it out. The community and private sector have increasingly grown together due to the behaviour of the councillors, particularly the vice-chair and one other who were hand in glove with Bruce Shepherd, the private sector partners who owned the Walkergate site. People had become suspicious of the back-handers and there were shades of T. Dan Smith." (Voluntary sector representative)

Whilst these tensions within the EEP have helped marginalise community and voluntary sector engagement in partnership processes there are a number of other complexities:

"The partnership is not three-way." (Regeneration manager)

Despite a formal partnership structure that includes three vice-chairs one from each sector, divisions within the membership are characterised by much greater complexity. For example, within the private sector element there is a distinctive split between the small local traders and the key EE companies. Additionally, this grouping includes public sector regeneration agencies such as the TEC and English Partnerships. The community sector includes community representatives and voluntary organisations like the YMCA, in addition to public sector

organisations like the police and health service. This reflects not just the varied interests that comprise community sector involvement but the diversity of agencies and interests which fall broadly within the public sector category. The divisions within the private sector also impact upon notions of community. Such complexities undermine the conceptual validity of 'three-way partnership' specifications that assumes distinctive sets of interest representation. The role of different partners has been complex, as are the collaborative relations that have emerged. Partnership members have not just had problems in getting a 'handle on the content of the programme' but in understanding the unwritten 'rules of the game':

> "Both grasping the reasons for the content of the programme and the rules we play by can be difficult. For example, one private sector representative couldn't understand why the bid includes an expansion to one of the schools when as far as he was concerned this was clearly an Education Department matter. The question is what do other people understand by regeneration? The varied range within the partnership reflects different interests and priorities. This is not necessarily a limiting factor but it possibly might be." (Regeneration manager)

Part of the problem relates to the different sets of cultures (McArthur, 1993, 1995) coming together within the framework of the partnership combined with the declared need to create some equality between partners. This situation is made more complex by the ongoing strength of departmentalist cultures within the authority. Thus whilst there may be strong factions of political leadership the departmentalism of operations creates significant co-ordination problems (Davoudi and Healey, 1995: 87). Within the partnership the level and nature of decision-making that occurs outside the formal partnership meetings reinforces elitism (Davoudi, 1995) and augments such difficulties. Community and voluntary sector representatives noted their marginalisation through a culture of 'meetings behind closed doors'. A perspective which was recognised to some degree by the city council regeneration manager:

> "Part of the ethos is that we are capacity-building for all the representatives in the partnership. We need to treat them equally even if their requirements are very different because they all need to perform to the same level. This is a complex and difficult approach, the Chief Executive's department is looking at this part of the process and we are developing a corporate perspective."

This suggests a particular stance toward capacity building linked to corporate modes of strategy building and implementation, and the local authority repositioning itself to take a more central role within governance frameworks. This would suggest the development of particular modes of local authority 'enabling' developing out of some of the inequities and differences between partnership members:

> "The role of the local authority as the accountable body is to ensure that the partnership is supported as a partnership. The local authority is the main beneficiary of the partnership because it is a way of delivering it's own programmes. It is possibly the biggest visible capital project happening in the East End of the city, and the local authority owes the partners quite a lot.

Therefore the local authority has a duty to support the partners." (Regeneration manager)

This view that the local authority has most to gain from the partnership helps to reinforce the centrality of the city council at the centre of local policy processes. However, there was concern that the city council was at risk due to the uncertainty created by the involvement of GONE in policy processes, based upon limited knowledge of the area. This suggests a contradiction between the more local emphasis within policy processes and the critical role of the 'remote decision-makers' such as the GONE. Whilst Davoudi (1995) questions whether local authorities will respond to leadership opportunities presented by three-way partnership, Keating (1991) argues the structural constraints faced by local authorities – their subordinance to higher tiers of government and limited ability to effect organisational change- places limits upon the governing capacity of local authorities.

7.4 Third Sector Involvement in the EEP

"There has been no community sounding board." (Regeneration manager)

Contrasting interpretations over the nature and degree of community involvement within the EEP reflect the locally contested meanings of community and it's representation. Whilst the lack of community structures is seen by some as problematic, this perspective is not shared by all. Within the local authority there is a contrast between the view held by some officers that processes need to be opened up to allow more community involvement and the EE councillors who have emphasised their own effectiveness at representing the community:

> "One of the strengths of the EEP is that we had community involvement long before the SRB came along. The infrastructure was already there." (Local councillor)

However the attempt by the City Council to develop a more corporate approach to partnership working and increase third sector involvement may create new tensions. More centralised modes of urban management seems to be in something of a tension with this and notions of a less hierarchical local governance (Stoker and Young, 1993). The increasing importance of centralised processes seems to contrast with the notion of 'more pluralist' state forms (Mayer, 1995: 243). Such concerns are compounded in the EE by the narrow base from which autonomous community representation on the partnership has been drawn:

> "The community have been brought into the partnership through reserved places rather than through bringing proposals forward themselves. There are questions about how the representation function is working and about how community representatives are taking information back to their communities.

> We didn't have a mechanism in the East End to act as a conduit; although the councillors are very active. We don't have a fund of public interest into which we can tap and there hasn't been active community involvement in the compilation so far." (Local authority officer)

A number of factors underpin the limited involvement including the local culture, character of the local authority and dominant modes of political representation. These key local social forms are the foundations for first, the lack of any community co-ordinating mechanisms to support ongoing community involvement in the regeneration strategy. Second, and linked to this, the notion of there not being a 'fund of public interest' beyond that represented by the local authority. Finally, another inhibiting factor has been the lack of resources invested in community development processes.

Due to the pivotal role adopted by the local authority as the lead partner one officer claimed that the onus is upon the authority to support community development processes. However this has been limited by the SRB funding structure. Under SRB guidelines staffing may only account for 5% of the total programme, which has meant running the programme 'short-staffed':

> "A key problem has been the lack of dedicated staff." (Local authority officer)

However one interviewee alluded to the lack of community development staff as being a political choice. Thus one of the barriers has been the resistance of local councillors:

> "Unlike City Challenge in the West End we don't have money which is a dedicated resource for community workers. We have very canny elected representatives, and they are acutely aware of succession issues. They know there will be hell on if services are withdrawn, so they want programmes to be completed within the seven years, or, have other agencies in place who will be responsible for the work so it doesn't fall on the local authority's shoulders." (Local authority officer)

Councillors have been concerned to create only a minimum of jobs in connection with the SRB because the local authority will be picking up the redundancies at the end of the programme. Additionally this approach may also have been informed by recent events in the West End, where the end of City Challenge has been marked by struggles over the withdrawal of funding from schemes and initiatives. The anger and resentment amongst local users of the service has, in part at least, been directed at the local authority (BBC1, March 1997). The succession problems experienced in the West End have made councillors wary of creating expectations. However, it has been argued that this is unlikely because of the fundamentally different focus of the West End strategy on 'people oriented' revenue intensive projects, which are very difficult to close down. The lack of staff to support community development processes has been compounded by an initial focus on 'the technicalities of the project' such as setting up the

200

appraisal mechanisms. Also the running of the partnership from the Civic Centre has made it difficult 'for the team to get an active handle on the community angle'. With only limited funding coming on stream in the early stages it was also felt there were few incentives to attract the community.

Whilst accepting that there has been a lack of formal or even informal mechanisms which could operate as a community 'sounding board' to feed into the partnership, a number of 'compensatory factors' have been identified. First, has been the appointment of new staff members, in particular two 'community people' one from the West End and one from the local authority Community and Leisure Services. Another factor is the local knowledge of officers, which it is claimed, feeds directly into policy processes, enabling officers to make judgements about the acceptability of some of the ideas being fed into the bid. However, this also raises questions about the power which professionals are exerting by assuming they know what is acceptable to the community. Such claims also challenge the notion of a shift away from hierarchical local government:

> "I knew the community in the East End quite well, I had experience of working with them and I knew that the bid was not radically upsetting." (Local authority officer)

However, the main compensatory factor identified by local authority officers was the ward community sub-committees. This has been the main vehicle for bringing about formal community representation in local policy processes and has been the tool upon which the partnership has depended. The community representatives of the EEP serve on the community sub-committees and are supported by the dedicated officer attached to each committee. The sub-committees originated from the Priority Area Teams (PAT) which according to Hambleton and Hoggett represent 'one of the longest standing examples of sub-municipal forms of political decision-making' (1987: 57). However they also note that although the PATs have supported devolved spending they achieved little in the way of re-casting local authority-community relations.

Each sub-committee has a budget and according to one local authority officer operates 'largely autonomously'. Local councillors chair the meetings and there is open recognition of their vote winning importance. The four committees in the target area are Monkchester and Walker, which meet monthly, Byker, which meets bimonthly, with Walkergate 'somewhere in between'. These meetings which are held in the ward are open, public meetings. In seeking community involvement these mechanisms were 'the first port of call'. However so far:

"It has been one way traffic, us informing them. But we hope that increasingly this will be two-way. One important question for the partnership is how they can be utilised." (Regeneration manager)

Hence, although the sub-committees are being used as the primary tool of involvement there remains a lack of clarity about how they can be used. Moreover there are a number of problems concerning the use of this mechanism. First the sub-committees are tied to local political representation and hence:

"...the vitriolic nature of the superstore issue has hindered the use of this mechanism." (Regeneration manager)

This political link is also problematic given the series of political changes occurring within the council and period of restructuring following the change of leadership:

"Under the previous leader, although he was on the right of Labour, there was an openness. Senior staff felt secure and shared information. Under the new leadership there has been a lot of infighting and difficult political wrangling by the councillors which may potentially be corrosive." (Voluntary sector representative)

A second issue is the uncertainty created by the current financial climate, which has undermined the resource base of community structures:

"One of the other problems is that these formal structures of community involvement have been undermined by resource cuts. Maybe 15/16 years ago the Walker Priority Area Team had a budget of £70,000, now its only £18000. That's a huge reduction in real terms and we as councillors had control of that budget. No offence to the guy who does the job but the worker who is paid to service the budget gets paid more than the budget itself." (Local councillor)

Despite these problems the regeneration manager felt that the mechanism was 'pretty sound' offering an important point of local contact and 'an important means of establishing dialogue.' Those outside the authority shared this view:

"I think the community subs are positive - they are regular formal settings in which representatives of the local community groups are involved. The carrot is small amounts of cash but they are important. The full-time paid staff member supports the service and depending on the individual they can have an excellent overview. The negatives are that they aren't reflexive and analytical and they encourage short-termism. They can also be domesticating and contain the same disabling elements of the local authority and community development work."(Voluntary sector representative)

Both councillors and voluntary sector members shared the view that having the formal structure and regular meetings of the sub-committees were beneficial and helped promote two-way communication, although as stated above this has been quite limited. Additionally each community-sub produces a newsletter, which are seen as a valuable way of collecting and

disseminating information. Overall therefore, they were described by one interviewee as being a ' way of keeping a handle on things' and it is through this vehicle that the local authority has been conducting community audits. Whilst one voluntary sector representative commented on their tendency toward parochialism this was not seen as 'inevitable'. This view of decentralisation as encouraging parochialism is perhaps not surprising given relatively powerless nature of the institutions and the resistance to fundamental shifts in local political relations (Hambleton and Hoggett, 1987).

Other important expressions of community interest have been in the form of local church organisations and local traders. Although the latter group are clearly part of the private sector membership on the partnership they see themselves as promoting local community interests, as opposed to other private sector members. This again reinforces the difficulties of interpreting community (Keating, 1991; Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993; Eisenschitz, 1997) and reaffirms that community varies according to the spatial and historical context. Various commentators have raised the question of who the community sector are (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994; Davoudi and Healey 1995; Atkinson and Cope, 1997), which has resonance in the context of the EE where boundaries are blurred. The active involvement of church organisations as key voluntary players within the partnership reflects both their active role in the EE and the desire by local authority officers to include them within the partnership:

> "I did suggest strong input from the church because they have such an active role in the East End - especially the Catholic Church. I was keen to include agencies who would contribute something."

Although meetings were set up with other voluntary organisations these were mainly operating from the City rather than the EE. The community role has been described as 'more genuine' around the Shields Road part of the regeneration strategy, although this has been primarily in the form of local traders. The strategy is however:

> "...at least derived from a more partnership approach. This part of the programme has come from the regeneration strategy developed by the local authority and the local traders. They had a joint working group that developed the strategy and this was then fed into the bid. Part of this was the idea for a superstore." (Local authority officer)

Although different expressions of community indicate some conceptual ambiguity it is clear the City Council has dominated attempts to define and shape third sector involvement. However, through the EEP some forms of community have challenged local authority defined community representation. One of the most forceful expressions of local collective action has been in support of a supermarket development in Walkergate, thus potentially undermining the local authority sponsored Shields Road regeneration strategy. This is the issue around which the community has coalesced, albeit with encouragement from some local councillors:

"At the moment local residents are happy to be involved in a campaign (for the Walkergate superstore) which could damage the overall regeneration strategy for the East End. This is a major inward investment opportunity, but the Shields Road programme is complex and there is a lack of understanding about the programme. This creates a very difficult situation for community representatives. This has been compounded from our point of view by not having the staff available - even at the end of the second year of the programme." (Local authority officer)

This alternative expression of community involvement challenges the claim by one officer that there is 'no fund of public interest' locally. Institutional constraints have been combined with community involvement being manipulated around different and conflicting agendas by different members of the same partnership structure. However other interviewees highlight the more direct community involvement occurring around specific projects, particularly concerning social regeneration. But, this is not the mainstay of the bid and many of the projects have been 'local authority inspired', however:

"Although many of these other projects are local authority inspired there has been many years of work gone on behind the scenes and there has been plenty of pre-contact." (Local authority officer)

The local authority approach has been to develop proposals prior to meeting with the community to avoid 'going round in ever decreasing circles'. But although community involvement has occurred around individual projects, within the overarching structures and processes this involvement has been much more limited:

"The question is how do communities endorse the whole programme? I'm much more coy about this....Individual projects that have targeted specific users - I'm much more comfortable with that - as long as it's not someone's flight of fancy. We could have done more consultation and it could have been more comprehensive and then it would have promoted more active discussion." (Local authority officer)

In this sense the level of community involvement is limited with the local authority playing a dominant role - although within this there are tensions between officers and the local councillors. However another dimension to this has been the coalescence of community interests outside of local authority-constructed structures, as reflected in the supermarket issue. This has created particular difficulties for the community representatives on the partnership. This section explores how the community are represented through the formal partnership constructions of community, which as suggested is partial, and as the quote below illustrates, driven by central government agendas:

"The GONE said there had to be community involvement in the partnership, so the local authority asked one community representative from each ward to sit on the partnership. There's two of us from CAs, someone else who has

been trying to get elected as a councillor and a fourth who we never see but I think there's some controversy over him anyway. Of the four community representatives, three of us have a lot of history in community involvement and we're interested in community. In a small way we hope we're a go-between those who are in power and the man on the street." (Community representative)

However community engagement in partnership processes is limited due to both the form of partnership processes and the narrow base community interest representation. The processes of bringing about community involvement have been limited:

"The first meeting I went along to was in February 1996. I was volunteered as the representative for Monkchester ward because of my involvement in Monkchester Community Association - I have been chair of the CA for the past nine years. It was the local authority area co-ordinator who called me and asked me to go along... to the meeting up at the Civic Centre."(Community representative)

Moreover community representation has been dependent upon pre-existing community networks rather than attempts to develop new sets of community relations:

"I had my name put forward for the partnership, but they didn't have any other nominees. Those who nominated us thought that with our connections we could represent the community. We go to the area sub-committee and have a good working relationship with the councillors. But we got nominated whether we wanted to go to the regeneration meetings or not." (Community representative)

Another theme was the limited extent of community influence within the existing institutional mechanisms. Amongst the community representatives there was some disagreement as to whether this basis of involvement provided them with any influence within the partnership. One member suggested that representatives of CAs with a bigger membership had more 'clout'. However another representative questioned whether the basis of their representation in the CA structure conferred them with any particular authority given the leisure base of the CAs:

"Although I've been involved in all sorts of small amenity improvements I wouldn't say that I had influence. All the groups who use the CA are private groups- there's two youth clubs and the rest is mainly elderly people. I do get to hear people's views and I do feel as though I'm quite well informed about what people think needs to be done. But, we're restricted on the partnership because all the other partners have their say." (Community representative)

Hence although community representatives were keen to stress that their involvement within the partnership was important, they were also sceptical about how much influence they have been able to assert. In particular this related to the way the partnership operates. For example, the way the meetings are conducted was found to marginalise the community contribution and there was a perception other partners had only limited expectations of the community sector contribution. This ties in concems expressed in the literature about the varying expectations of

205

partnership members (McArthur, 1995: 65) and the unequal role played by the community as 'junior partner' (Atkinson and Cope, 1997: 212).

> "We have got the ordinary connections but we haven't really been asked for our opinions. We put our two pence worth in, but the problem is they tend to use very high fluted language. It's not easy to understand what it's all about. Sometimes I wonder at the end of a meeting what it was all about. But we are taking part." (Community representative)

To this remark another community representative retorted, 'Yes, we're making up the numbers.' Therefore limitations arising from the particular mode of community organising and the perceived lack of linkage between the nature of CA activity and that of the regeneration partnership, are compounded by unequal treatment within the partnership. Although community representatives have been invited to sit on the partnership's sub-committees, one commented that they had never received an invitation to go to the meetings. Another felt that her local expertise was ignored when it came to selecting people to sit on the Community Chest committee which makes decisions about funding to community and voluntary groups:

> "I'm on the Community Support Committee, which elects members to sit on the Community Chest. I put my name forward but I didn't get on. It was the councillors that got on - but I had all the experience. I think it was all sewn up, about five of them arrived about five minutes into the meeting and proposed each other. I don't think there are any community members on. I've sorted out lots of problems that community groups in the area have had and I've got a business background. I've seen some things and I think it's very important to visit the projects and see how the money is being spent. I've done that in the past and I think that experience would have been very useful on the community chest committee." (Community representative)

Despite claims of community marginalisation within partnership processes, there was also a perceived failure on the part of other partners to acknowledge the community sector members as unpaid volunteers. In contrast to the perception that the community had little to input in partnership meetings, it was suggested that more demands are being made upon their time, in particular to attend meetings:

> "They told us it would only be one meeting per month but it's been about once a week and there's thousands of pieces of paper. The meetings are always at the civic and we go up there and they don't even offer to pay us the bus fare." (Community representative)

Another representative commented on the expectations of paid council officers who relied upon them to complete time consuming and complicated monitoring forms:

> "They forget we don't have their knowledge, they send us forms to fill for Community and Leisure Services monitoring - they forget that we're volunteers. They're asking us to do more and more things unpaid."

Another community representative said simply, 'councillors get paid and we're just volunteers'. Thus the community are being disenfranchised through a dual process of marginalisation, for example not being invited to attend meetings or sit on committees, and, through their lack of capacity to understand the mechanics and language of policy processes. Despite these problems community representatives maintain that they have a good working relationship with the councillors because they are seen as being 'sensible and reliable'. This however, partly reflects their willingness to fit into the role carved out for them within the partnership and to accept the prescribed status quo. Their contribution seems to represent the acceptable face of the community (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997). Moreover, the problems associated with community representation are not confined to this realm but exist at the grassroots. This is due to the nature of the partnership processes themselves and the lack of involvement by community representatives over key issues. This is compounded by a lack of appropriate structures within the community through which to feedback and the discrepancy between the goals of the partnership and desires of local people:

> "I find it difficult to feed back to my members about the partnership, partly because I might take ideas forward to the meetings but no decision ever seems to be made. It's been in the local papers about the delays on account of the supermarket site. The councillors in Walkergate held a meeting about the superstore and hundreds turned out. There was a feeling that they might not get what they wanted...and to me that seems quite wrong because it's what the community wanted - there's no shopping there. The people who wanted it to be located elsewhere are the people who don't live there. It's not exactly a power struggle ...but there are other factors which the community representatives as non-executives don't know anything about. There are lots of pieces of pink paper which we know nothing about." (Community representative)

This highlights some of the complexities associated with the representative function. Whilst the system of local representative democracy may be regarded as inadequate to the governance task, the EE case study identifies a myriad of barriers to developing new modes of representation. In particular, the supposed interests of the community sector being addressed through partnership strategies differ from those expressed by community members around the supermarket issue. Whilst officers have claimed that this reflects a limited vision on behalf of local people and a lack of understanding, it renders the representative function highly problematic and illustrates the difficulty of defining and identifying 'community interest'. It is these types of tension surrounding community representation, which confirm the complexity that lies at the centre of any new local political relations. Whilst the partnership strategy for the East End hinges in large part upon a supermarket development on Shields road, community representatives have been to meetings where local people have supported alternative plans for superstore development when presented to them by the councillors. This indicates the particular way in which permissible community interests are being defined for inclusion within

partnership processes and the fundamental tensions this creates between partnership members. In this context definable interests groupings are also diffused by the councillors regarding themselves as community, as well as being the local authority and having very close relations with one the private sector interests. In this situation councillors it could be argued that councillors are sitting on all three sides of the 'round table' (Mayer, 1995). A further issue raised by community representatives was the lack of suitable grassroots level structures through which to stimulate dialogue:

"The community representatives have found it very difficult to feed back to local people. Partly because there is nothing on the ground - no structures. There was supposed to have been a newsletter but there has only been one so far and that was very flimsy. At the moment there seems no prospect of something like a community forum, which would be good, something to bring people together." (Community representative)

Here reference is also being made to the lack of 'container' organisations underpinning the process of community involvement in local policy processes. One representative suggested that the CAs could be a framework for feedback, however as already identified, there is the problem of the nature of CA activity and the lack of perceived links to partnership activities. This is compounded by the lack of information which community representatives have access to:

"There are other CAs in Walkergate, but I have never been invited to the other CAs to talk about the regeneration programme. But then to be honest what would you tell them? A friend asked what was happening to the top of Shields Road; she said 'you should know you're involved in the regeneration programme'. I had no idea I couldn't tell her anything. In the meetings we don't talk about the top half of Shields Road, only the bottom half. They don't believe us though when you tell them you don't know but there is a lot of non-information." (Community representative)

This comment further hints at the exclusion of community representatives from the 'real issues'. There is therefore continuing reliance upon local authority mechanisms including the CAs and the community sub-committees to act as a conduit for the community voice despite the problems associated with them. Whilst there continues to be a lack of autonomous structures through which the community and voluntary sector can work, there is a sense in which the local authority is effectively imposing the mode of involvement. These factors limit the effectiveness of the community representative function. The claim that more broad-based community involvement will evolve through additional partnership staff has been meet with some scepticism by community representatives:

"The partnership has been very slow in getting off the ground. There will be more interaction, for example, there will be the extension of community involvement through the Community Chest initiative. But, I couldn't hazard whether we will have any more powers. Although the community are the most important element because we need the education, training and jobs. At the moment it's a shadowy question as to how community involvement might develop- but if we don't get started we might lose people's interest because we can't see anything happening. It's difficult to say how our position might be enlarged - unless a body of community people harassed us."

One barrier is the disbelief amongst local people than the partnership will bring about tangible changes. Community representatives are concerned that their local dependence is given low priority within the partnership and although they have the highest stake in the outcomes of local regeneration processes, with the majority of other partners not living in the area. Community representatives have also raised questions about the professionalism of the other partners:

"There's lots of pink pieces of paper, which are supposed to be confidential and then you find out that things are always being leaked."

There was some difference of opinion amongst community members depending upon which ward they were representing. For example, the community representative from Byker was more supportive but still expressed criticisms of partnership processes, stating that 'a lot of things happen undercover'. This support is perhaps not surprising given that Shields Road is located in the Byker ward. The Byker representative had a much more positive view of the role taken by the councillors and the effectiveness of the community representatives, although still acknowledging the limited role of community representatives in the central issue of the supermarket:

"The programme strongly reflects the concerns of local people. The councillors have worked very closely with the community representatives. The superstore has been the stumbling block but that hasn't really related to any of the sub-committees I've been on- that issue has been discussed at a much higher level, it has been out of my hands." (Byker community representative)

Other community members had concerns both about how the superstore issue had been handled within the partnership and how it related to the desires of the local community. In interviews with consultants PIEDA, community representatives were asked to reflect the views of the wider. In Byker this coincided with the SRB strategy, however there are differences according to the ward represented. Overall, there appeared to be a division between the Byker representative and the others reflecting the bid's focus on Shields Road. The Byker representative had a different perspective on relations within the partnership, believing that the partnership protocol was in place and being adhered to:

209

"There is a code of conduct in operation at the meetings so that you must state if you have interests so that you aren't personally gaining- those who could personally benefit must leave the meeting. They have been very thorough- you could say that no stone has been left unturned."(Byker community representative)

However, this person also believed, in contrast to local authority officers, that the council had attempted to identify community priorities. Again, this reflects perhaps Byker as a central focus of the bid, rather than any active processes of community participation. Also whilst Byker lacks co-ordination between the various community groups and forums the ward representative claimed he understood what local people wanted because:

"I meet people when I'm out on Shields Road"

This is an important reflection of how the representative function works within the Byker ward which has a main shopping street where people exchange news. The community representative relies not upon formal structures but informal and chance encounters with local residents. Thus the effectiveness of the representation functions stems from knowing local people (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997). All the representatives had adopted to varying degrees a quite pragmatic approach to their involvement. The informal and loose networks which underpin community involvement in local policy processes are supported by a continued belief that the local authority are working on behalf of the community, despite the superstore debacle.

Whilst the lack of co-ordinating structures has been identified within the EE, the local authority has initiated a project through the Leisure and Community service compiling a data base on community and voluntary sector groups in both the East and West End of Newcastle. Part of the aim of the project is to enable groups and projects to share resources. However one community member commented that it was 'jobs for the boys' because such processes were dependent upon trust. Not only was this lacking but currently few community relations cut across the city in this way. Hence there was very little basis in existing relations to support this process:

"I don't know anyone over there, you couldn't just ring up and say do you know this group, is it okay for them to lend us a mini bus? It's all about network building across the city, but can it be done? You need to have trust and build up a relationship. At the moment there is no common point of contact."

Any broader development of community relations across the City would have to overcome the barriers of parochialism which dominate in the EE and the continuing importance of political divisions which thrive on maintaining an EE identity. Even attempts at co-ordination between different groups operating in one of the EE wards has proved problematic:

"Although the Byker resource centre is a very important focus for the community around here, community groups should meet regularly to iron out any problems because people across the area are having the same problems. We did try to get some things together with three or four groups but it fell to one side. Perhaps we could revive it- I do think it's important we do get together." (Byker community representative)

Another dimension to community involvement is the central role played by the church. The church has been elevated within local policy processes and has been very active. One particular theme is the close relationships that have developed between church and the local community, in particular local schools. The strength of the church is reflected in the lead role it has taken in the Ouseburn SRB, in the Sandyford ward, adjacent to Byker. One church representative was keen to stress the difference between the churches understanding of the community and that held by the local authority:

"Statutory bodies have no idea how to build communities- the church is the basic building block. Churches give people spirit- look at the secular social services and liberal state provision - what can they offer elderly people who think about dying all the time? The churches first job is to build community - we are part of that process here in the East End. But there is still community unlike in the West End. You can't build community through statutory agencies (look at the West End) but they don't understand that. The bureaucrats don't understand community. The church gives people spirit, of course what people don't like are the duties and obligations which go with that."

This critique of the welfare state, has resonance with some aspects of the communitarian debate, especially the work of Etzioni (1995) which stresses individual rights and moral obligations and which has been an important strand of New Labour thinking (Hoggett, 1997: 13). Clearly the concepts of community involvement developed by the church stem from theological underpinnings. In the example of the Catholic Church the discussion of community is predicated on two key elements: 'subsidiarity and solidarity'. It therefore embraces both the principal of decision-making at the lowest possible level in order that the people affected by decisions are part of that decision-making process and the principal of mutual aid. The social setting therefore should provide for basic things and can be seen as objective outcomes e.g. employment, education, security and health. One example would be social networks - which constitute an important part of people's lives. Hence from this perspective 'community' would help establish and develop these social networks. In the EE it has been this particular brand of community that has most successfully established local projects.

7.5 Reflecting on Emergent Relations and Practices

"The fashion is for building relationships, but it begs the questions of why you want to build the relationships, where are you starting from and whether that is a good place to start from?" (Voluntary sector representative)

A number of factors have inhibited the development of collaborative relations in the EE of Newcastle. By exploring these in more depth fundamental questions are raised about the assumed opening up of local governance (Mayer, 1995, 1996). One of the contributory factors has been the lack of institutional mechanisms to support community engagement in local policy processes. The reliance upon local authority-led approaches and structures reflects minimal attempts by either the local authority or community to move towards new forms of community organising. This has been linked to both dominant cultural norms, and the continuing expectation that the local authority should or will act on behalf of community. Without the broader mechanisms at grass roots level, agencies are brought together through a variety of means, often through individual relations (Skelcher et al, 1996) contextualised within the pressures and inducements of contemporary funding regimes.

"In the EEP the SRB is a big carrot, but it is still not enough. It has been dominated by infighting rather than by the opportunity to work together. Regeneration post-holders might be the collaborative workers but how do you enforce that? Also, although the councillors are from the East End - they live here and want something for the area and have a genuine commitment to that- I might profoundly disagree with how they operate." (Voluntary sector representative)

This highlights the importance of sectional partnership processes that deliberately by-pass community representatives and to some degree even marginalises church and private sector representatives. This would suggest that local policy processes have only been embedded to a very limited extent within the formal partnership structure. Some interviewees, contesting the notion of three-way partnership, also drew attention to the lack of collaborative working practices within broader policy contexts. One example cited was the decision by the housing department to demolish one of the streets in Pottery Bank in Walker against the wishes expressed at local meetings by local residents. Also one voluntary sector representative commented on the breakdown of opportunities to liase and develop relations with other service providers such as health and social services as a result of welfare state restructuring:

"The cut backs in social services have meant rather than be engaged in active consultation processes with the local community they can hardly raise their head above the parapet."

This contrasts with claims that state and local state restructuring have created new, more open and pluralist forms of governance (Stoker, 1991; Stoker and Young, 1993; McArthur, 1995). Additionally some interviewees resented the loss of informal relationship building and replacement by 'formal settings'- although it is notable that other interviewees did not consider the EEP to constitute a formal setting:

> "There has been a steady creation of a number of formal settings. Outside agencies are in there with their people - but although the formal framework is important it doesn't guarantee anything - you can have dire formal structures just because they are badly chaired." (Voluntary sector representative)

This echoes theoretical claims that formal three-way partnership processes are not necessarily meaningful and may even be to the detriment of relationship building. One exception to his was felt to be the police who had increased the degree to which they were collaborating with local people by 'turning up to meetings and listening to people' as part of the community policing initiative. It is within these broad tendencies that the specific dynamics of partnership processes are located.

Some voluntary and private sector representatives have argued that their lack of political astuteness was detrimental to the early stages of partnership development and that they have been forced to work together more closely in order to challenge local authority practices:

> "The private sector and voluntary sector have, given our experiences, now recognised the need to be extremely vigilant about all sorts of things. Our consciousness has grown, we've learnt to ask awkward questions and read everything. We've found our teeth in a way which didn't happen earlier." (Voluntary sector representative)

Whilst this suggests new patterns of collaboration arising from the need to challenge local authority practices, it has already been noted that there are important divisions between Shepherd, one of the key EE business players, and the smaller local traders. Thus, despite claims by the regeneration manager that it has been 'very easy to get private sector involvement' this involvement has been characterised by the development of highly adversarial relations. It is claimed that Shepherd has been able to manipulate the membership of other private sector representatives on the partnership leading to the chair of the Shields Road Traders Association (SRTA) resigning:

> "Recently I stepped down as Chair of the SRTA. I couldn't see things ending without violence I was so frustrated at the lies I knew were being told. But the main reason I resigned was because I received a letter from one of the councillors saying that if I didn't behave then Shepherd would resign and take his money with him." (Ex-chair SRTA)

However, officers involved in the partnership simply stated that the individual had resigned 'due to pressures' and that a new committee with a new chair had been established. There was an unwillingness to discuss the processes that had led to this situation. Whilst SRTA members feel they have continued to play an important role within the partnership, the change in leadership has caused some disturbance and there is speculation that it may change again. Many would continue to support the partnership claiming that the future of their businesses depended upon it:

> "The traders are very disillusioned but they still want the development to go ahead. They need it - most of these businesses won't last another twelve months. There is no quality shopping here anymore- not like there used to be. We need to give people quality shopping not just charity shops. If a supermarket is built then some of the shops will go - but that's going to happen anyway." (STRA member)

One SRTA member was concerned that the new chair was cultivating relations with the councillors, in particular the MP Nick Brown and with Shepherd. Whilst being interviewed the chair of SRTA made reference to the promises she had extracted from the local MP before the general election which had not been fulfilled:

> "I fax Nick Brown everyday about his pre-election promises and I won't give up until he responds. You must complain. The problem is the community doesn't feel that they'll be listened to and people thought they wouldn't be listened to which is very frustrating. But they'll listen to me!" (Chair SRTA)

This attitude has led some SRTA members to question whether the current chair has the political astuteness required to operate effectively within local policy processes. Whilst the chair of SRTA was very critical of the way things were being conducted within the EEP, during the interview she phoned the key private sector player Bruce Shepherd. The conversation referred to the previous partnership meeting, and she was asking for Shepherd's support in complaining about councillors' conduct within the meeting which, she said, 'should not be condoned':

> "At last night's meeting some of the infighting re-surfaced and it's not on. We're not going to have it - I just won't accept it.... The meeting had been called and a group of councillors walked in at the very last minute- it was due to start at 5.30 p.m. - and then Douglas (EE councillor) walked in and said I want to challenge the chair. So all the councillors went outside and just left the rest of us sitting there like lemons for twenty minutes- until I raised the roof... Some people on the partnership feel very frustrated because of the inner wrangling, they should sort out their differences elsewhere." (Chair SRTA)

214

However, the conversation also concerned the chair of SRTA arranging to have lunch with Shepherd's wife and a discussion about the distribution of football tickets for Newcastle United matches. Hence, the relationship between the two key factions within the private sector element of the partnership is undergoing change from being adversarial under the previous chair. In the re-forging of relations between these two groupings a new set of dynamics have come into play, the implications of which are as yet unclear. However, the process of the chair calling upon Shepherd for support with regard to a complaint about the councillors raises some interesting questions since it is alleged that the councillors are 'dancing to Shepherd's tune'. Moreover in openly discussing the distribution of football tickets, the chair raised an issue regarded as divisive by community representatives.

There is implied criticism that local authority officers have not engaged with the infighting reflecting a lack of power to manage partnership relations. This raises important questions about the relatively limited ability of officers to impose local authority leadership on the partnership. In contrast to Davoudi's findings regarding the West End City Challenge (1995: 340), local authority officers do not appear to be controlling the EEP agenda now the partnership is operational. Rather, the leadership role is dominated by elected representatives in combination with Shepherd. This represents an important barrier to more open political systems, including the active engagement of the community and voluntary sector where the elected representatives see themselves as the main form of community representation. Further problems are created by the calibre of the elected representatives, with the SRTA chair reflecting that 'half of them should not be councillors'. The question of councillor calibre is one of long-standing concern that has received renewed attention (RTPI, 1997; DETR, 1998). Many interviewees from across the sectors highlighted the practices of local councillors as contributing to the difficulties of partnership working. One interviewee suggested that the problems were not just confined to the partnership but reflected fundamental difficulties of the local political system, which are played out through partnership processes:

> "Party politics might work at a national level but they don't work locally. The politics of the local area are the community politics. We need to get back to the whole concept of thinking that. At the local level party politics is adversarial - the politicians are greedy for power and it is the local people who lose out and who suffer." (Church leader)

In addition to the two strands of private sector interests identified the third, less obvious strand, is the church led ecumenical training project (NCTC) whose leader is a private sector signatory on the partnership:

> "Strange as it may seem I am with the private sector. But the entire private sector has vested interests except me; I am the only one who is just there for the community. They are just interested if there is money involved for them

215

personally. There is so much hypocrisy with regard to the whole idea of partnership because there is so much self- interest they are unable to look at any issue objectively. The EEP is highly adversarial."

Whilst the local authority portrays itself as the lead body on the partnership, the problematic nature of this leadership has already been highlighted. Thus although according to one officer the SRB was put together at the 'behest of the local authority' a defining feature of the leadership has been the division between the councillors and the officers. In particular there was a feeling, amongst some private sector representatives, that the local authority officers involved have been 'impotent' and have failed to 'stand up' to the councillors. One of the councillors commented that they had effectively led the SRB programme and had only been hindered by the officers:

> "The problem is the officers who try and stymie everything that we try and do. With the SRB it was basically the councillors who put the bid together."
> (Local councillor)

Thus not only are the EE councillors resistant to involvement by other agencies, they are critical of the work of their own officers. The division between the officers and the politicians raises conceptual complexity around the issues of identifiable sectoral divisions that underpin the three-way partnership model. Other members highlighted the councillor's role in the superstore issue as being a key source of internal tensions:

> "Since then it's been fanaticism on the part of the councillors, they don't even see or perhaps don't even care that they are risking the whole partnership and that the SRB money could be withdrawn. Councillors know all of this but their relationship to Shepherd is so strong. It has been allowed to dominate. When the EE got the SRB everyone was over the moon. We had never had the chance to dip our bread in the gravy. But now they are happy to throw that away for local people - the councillors have got the blinkers on and Bruce Shepherd has the reigns. It's very corrupt; it's deals in paper bags. It's not democracy- it's dictatorship." (Ex-chair SRTA)

One of the problems, already identified was the lack of an early understanding by other partners of the political processes occurring 'behind the scenes'. One interviewee, a local community activist, stated that the 'political naiveté' of the people heading up the private and community and voluntary sector interest groupings, exacerbated the problems. This reflects the problem of involving people in 'three-way partnerships' who have little experience or understanding of local political alliances or policy processes:

> "They haven't seen all of this coming- they thought it was the norm and now at last they've woken up to themselves. They don't know how things work and they hadn't been involved with councillors before. The councillors have their offices in the civic and they are in a position to manipulate and just go and have chats with people. At the start I was the only person standing up to

them and that made me very vulnerable. If the partnership would stand up and say enough is enough rather than letting themselves be manhandled. They are getting stronger but they need to do it before they fall over the cliff." (Ex-chair SRTA)

Whilst some partnership members recognise their earlier political naiveté as being problematic, others with greater understanding of EE politics have faced criticism for voicing the concerns they have had. One individual from the SRTA who did challenge partnership practices has been described as 'a loose canon'. Whilst some interviewees have expressed sympathy with the questions he was raising, he found himself isolated within the partnership, with little open support from other members. A subsequent arson attack on his shop on Shields Road (Evening Chronicle, 1997) was perceived to have been the result of his position as the chair of SRTA. The resistance to open discussion of the problems surrounding current practice contrasts with characterisations of new governance processes based upon round-table working and dominated by a politics of negotiation (Mayer, 1995). This indicates some of the theoretical and practical challenges that surround 'making sense' of complex local political processes. It also begs the question of how useful it is to characterise partnership processes in terms of a politics of negotiation (Mackintosh, 1992; Mayer, 1998). The evidence presented suggests a general absence of negotiation around partnership agendas and decision-making processes, at least for many partnership members.

Despite this apparent alliance of councillors in support of an alternative supermarket development, there are also divisions between councillors which are being played out in partnership meetings. One interviewee asserted that the current chair of the councillors would be removed and replaced by another councillor at the behest of Shepherd, because 'the current councillor hasn't served Shepherd well enough'. Such perceptions raise the general difficulty of accounting for the role of personal influence and decision-making 'behind closed doors' within partnership processes. This has also helped create conflicting impressions amongst those outside the partnership, including the local community. From within the partnership members there has also been a strong resistance to the involvement by outside agencies and there has been limited acceptance of the need to work with agencies such as the TEC. As previously described this has stemmed from a political ethos which has been unwilling to accept the processes of central government localism, perhaps reflected in the less formal, unincorporated partnership structure, which it has been argued is less threatening to local authority leadership in the form of councillors:

"With big agencies such as the TEC you have to include them because they are official consulates - you get them foisted on you." (Regeneration manager)

Additionally, there was felt to be a divided community and voluntary sector. Although the government recognises the community and voluntary sector as distinct (DoE, 1995) in practice there is little specification of how this difference operates. One community representative commented on the lack of co-ordination between the community and voluntary sector members of the partnership and it was felt that their failure to meet regularly has inhibited effective input into the partnership. Significantly, despite community representatives acknowledging these limitations they expressed a sense of achievement through simply having some involvement. Within the community one important barrier to developing involvement are dominant norms of the local political culture. People have had limited expectations of involvement based upon experience and the historical relations between the council and EE residents and continuing sense of dependency upon the local authority:

> "We feel very honoured to have been picked to represent the community...
> but sometimes we wonder why we are there. The views of the people aren't
> really being listened to at the moment."

One voluntary sector representative commented that extending the scope of community involvement would require astute negotiation of the partnership agenda:

> "It's a lot of commitment, but with this type of integrated approach you do
> need more involvement - I'm not arguing about that now but I am bearing it
> in mind."

A further strand of the community feeling marginalised within the policy processes was the limited time dedicated to discussion within the partnership meetings:

> "When there is lots of money involved you need to give proper time to
> discussion, there was one week when they were all going off to the match
> and hurried everything through, but you need to give it time. At other times
> other issues have taken over. I often come out of the meetings feeling
> frustrated."(Community representative)

There is evidence that a number of councillors and business members of the partnership are enjoying the hospitality of Shepherds, including tickets for Newcastle United games. This type of partnership culture helps increase a sense of marginalisation amongst community members. This is exacerbated by the supermarket controversy, preventing or circumscribing debate. In this context the role and function of community representation has become simultaneously tension-ridden and diffuse:

"...there is now a significant controversy. And in this situation we have to look after community representatives rather than expose them." (Local authority officer)

However, in seeking advice about their role as community representatives in relation to the superstore issue, one community representative felt that they received no support from other partnership members:

"I had to go to a meeting with PIEDA the consultants. I wasn't sure where I stood. I was told that I was going to the meeting as a representative of the people of Walkergate rather than to represent the partnership view. Before that I had rung one of the councillors, because I wasn't sure about where I stood but he didn't even ring me back. I asked him why not but he didn't bother to say."

This indicates both the problems associated with community level representation and the problems of defining the community interest. One dimension of this is how the community perceives their own interests, and some interviewees have complained that the community has failed to understand the significance of the regeneration strategy. This is compounded by the nature of local policy processes:

"People tend to lead with their feet and any reflection or analysis lags miles behind. There is a lot of energy but it can be difficult to focus it effectively, one of the effects of this is that different parts of the community can be played off against one another." (Local authority officer)

This also reflects the parochial nature of the EE wards, reflected in the character of local politics. Another dimension of local politics is the dominance of Labour on the council. Both community members and local traders have seen the lack of opposition as detrimental to local policy processes. However, the deep divisions between different political factions of the local Labour party have presented further barriers to effective community involvement:

"... the councillors are often against one another even though they are from the same party." (Community representative)

Despite tensions between community members of the partnership and councillors and the recognition that councillors are ' after all just men off the street' there is also a continuing sense of respect towards the councillors by community members. In this sense the process of establishing community engagement in the EE does not have the characteristics of progressive regime politics attempting to establish new patterns of influence and agenda setting. There was little sense in which interviewees expressed a desire for a more autonomous voice, whilst recognising the problems caused by the councillors acting as community in closed policy processes. The relationship between the partnership structure and community involvement has

been diluted because the two main prongs of the bid are physical projects; and it is in these areas that community involvement has been weakest, according to local authority. Additionally questions have been raised about what benefits will accrue through the proposed physical developments:

> "Partnership and redevelopment are the sacred cows but what about the development of the people? That's what we're here for not the development of the area. They are talking about building a new bingo hall as part of the Shields Road development but that is not for the people - is that what they really need to get hooked into gambling and intensify their poverty? It doesn't serve the community." (Church representative)

One voluntary representative highlighted some of the fundamental problems of contemporary regeneration agendas:

> "A scathing definition would be in terms of nice projects, characterised by short-termism which get positive write-ups... in the absence of a general assessment of what regeneration means the EEP is basically driven by Shields Road traders pushing for improvements."

A further problem was identified as being the criteria for prioritising projects linking into theoretical work on the ambiguous effects of policy processes and the ideological importance of policy rather than it's actual effects. One voluntary sector representative commented:

> "The problem is that all decisions with regard to the allocation of surplus are taken outside the local area - at least all private and most public. But tackling this problem is not manageable instead you start with the little arguments, for example, about day care."

Both of the above comments link to crucial questions about who benefits from regeneration strategies. One voluntary sector interviewee highlighted the type of 'game playing' which it had encouraged and the 'bricks and mortar rather than people agenda' that had dominated and which had 'nothing to do with boosting community'.

7.6 The Politics of Community and the East End Partnership: Some Conclusions

Despite claims of a coherent community identity this study illustrates the limited nature of community governance in the East End. There is little evidence of either community networks developing or new modes of community representation. Moreover, the community sector has largely been sidelined and its contribution constrained through broader partnership processes. Critically, pre-existing political relations dominating the EE have prevented new modes of

community organising. Paradoxically, also it may be argued that the claimed sense of community and social cohesion, underpinned by insularity and parochialism may constitute an additional barrier to the development of new sets of community politics. There was a belief amongst local community activists that society 'rewards rioters' and that the (relative) passivity of local residents had contributed to their problems. Despite the acute economic and social problems the lack of civil unrest has, one interviewee argued, meant that 'people have lost out badly'.

At a general level the local authority appears to have maintained a resistance to restructuring pressures exerted by central government through quasi-public organisations like the TEC and TWDC. Whilst local economic development officers have been critical of these organisations, the attitude of local councillors has been one of open hostility. EE councillors argue, for example, that TEC officers do not have the local knowledge or commitment to the area. The ongoing importance of a ward based politics resistant to external forces is reflected in Davoudi and Healey's (1995) analysis of the West End City Challenge partnership. They note that whilst there is a new political flavour in the West End and some other wards (including Sandyford) elsewhere ward politics have retained a traditional focus on competing to capture resources for the neighbourhood. This ward-driven form of politics, supported for example through the PAT structures has contributed to a continuing parochialism. In the EE political identities are entrenched and held together by strong political networks, united by 'old Labour' political values and enacted through spatial allegiance. This is in contrast to the relative absence of interest group or resident networks and agendas. The resistance by councillors to external 'interference' is not confined to TWDC or TEC. They have also challenged the role of local authority officers and of local church representatives to act on behalf of the local community. This contrasts with notions of increasing centralisation and corporatism within the City Council through the development of the Chief Executive's Department. In the West End there was criticism of delays in devolving partnership executive functions out of the civic centre (Davoudi and Healey, 1995: 88), yet similar delays have occurred in the EE. As a result this has, according to the Regeneration Manager reduced the opportunities to extend community involvement. Hence the EE case study reveals contrasting processes of centralising partnership functions and the continuing importance of highly localised and parochial political relations. These tensions are an ongoing feature of partnership relations.

In the EE 'councillors as community' is an important element of political rhetoric, justified on the basis that local councillors are part of the local community and know what is best. As stated the

local councillors play a key role in promoting themselves as community and resisting alternative forms of community representation (McArthur, 1995). The dominance of this patronage model of community organising is reflected in partnership practices, for example through the 'hand-picking' of community representatives by local councillors (McArthur, 1993, 1995; Davoudi, 1995: 339). The pool of community representation from pre-existing ward structures serves to reinforce pre-existing patterns of domination. Local social relations militate against alternative forms of community mobilisation. The lack of other institutional bases in the locale beyond church and local authority has meant such practices go largely unchallenged. This combined with dominant cultural patterns in which abstaining is regarded as a means of exerting power help to prevent the development of new forms of community organising. The only significant mobilisation of community has occurred over the superstore issue and this it is claimed has jeopardised the EEP regeneration strategy. Thus new partnership structures are being used to restrict what constitutes a justifiable and legitimate form of community interest and representation. However an additional element to this picture is the claim that councillors were influential in bringing about this community mobilisation. In contrast to claims that a lack of identifiable community interest may lead to a gap in decision-making and thus to a reconsolidation of the professional role (Hart et al, 1997), in the EE it seems there is no real arenas within which a decision-making gap could exist.

Despite acute economic and social conditions in the EE, relative to the West End, there has been little in the way of social unrest. For many this stems from a continuing sense of social stability, and a continuing belief by local people in the importance and strength of the local authority. Despite the extreme nature of political manoeuvring to retain elected representative power there has been little open challenge to these processes. Although there is criticism of partnership practices and 'shades of T. Dan Smith', there is still a reluctance to be directly critical of individual councillors. The councillors power base, whilst not unquestioned, remains intact within the area and there has been little attempt to push for more autonomous forms of community representation. Partnership processes suggest their role; attitudes and patterns of behaviour have not radically altered through the operation of new governance mechanisms. Despite these experiences one community member concluded:

> "Overall it's been very positive although you can't see any bricks and mortar yet. ... It will all come together; everything has been very thorough. I'll just be happy when the first brick is laid."

This suggests an understanding of community involvement predicated upon community receiving the (physical!) benefits of regeneration strategies rather than being engaged centrally in the policy processes. It reflects a tradition of a paternalistic Labour authority, the ideology

and practice of which continues to permeate partnership processes. For example one community representative noted that it is a local authority officer has been the 'backbone of the partnership'. So far direct criticism from the third sector has been through a senior voluntary sector representative supported by an influential private sector member. The lack of autonomous community activism means there is little basis through which critiques of dominant practice could evolve and, so far, the development of relations between the community and other agencies has largely been mediated through the local authority. Thus there is little scope for community network building through which to develop alternative agendas or value bases for community engagement.

Despite the limited formal representation of community on the partnership, the case study also identifies the variable representations of community interest, which highlight the conceptual limitations of the three-way sectoral division between public, private and community and voluntary sector. The formal partnership structure embraces a number of different community interest representations, for example church, councillors and small local business all claim to represent the interests of local people, reflecting the ambiguity of community. This has resonance with the regime approach to urban politics, which highlights the ambiguity of political interests and lack of clear boundaries between sectors.

One of central features of governance in the EE has been the continuing importance of old modes of political organisation and practice. The governance literature highlights the fragmentation of governing (Cochrane, 1993) and related to this Healey and Davoudi (1995) explore the idea that old sets of norms and relations have broken down and are being re-formulated. However the evidence from the EE suggests more attention needs to be paid to the continuities as well as the changes. In addition, whilst the City Council is seeking to establish more corporate approaches to regeneration, through centralised management in the Chief Executive's department, there is evidence of ongoing departmentalism:

> "Departmentalism within local government continues to flourish and, if anything, has been aggravated by financial devolution and competition policy." (Hoggett, 1995: 107-108)

The case study conducted in Newcastle's East End provides a critique of the planning system, and in particular the separation of development control processes and regeneration strategies of the EEP. Additionally, there are tensions between the local economic development department and community education. There are however broader debates ongoing in the City over the exercise of political power in development control decisions. As the case study was being

undertaken debates were taking place within the City over the proposal to build a new Newcastle United stadium on part of the town moor. Labour councillors met and voted to support the proposal although no planning application had been submitted. Local protests focused on the closed nature of decision-making processes with meetings taking placed behind closed doors. In this example the type of relations noted historically between key private sector players and the public sector have been apparent (see Benwell CDP, 1978).

The case study findings beg the question not only of whether the state has the ability to build community capacity and representation through current urban policy, but also the extent to which it is desirable to seek this outcome. This ties into critiques over the contradictions of driving policy through community (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). The adversarial nature of politics across the City does not lead however to a single identifiable approach toward community. In the crisis-ridden West End there have been fewer barriers to community involvement, but also little in the way of private sector interests. The difference between areas also raises questions about how the consolidation of local authority corporatism might be expressed differently across the city. Whilst some activists have found the authority to be 'relatively permeable' with fairly open access to information, there have still been criticisms that it has failed to do more to ensure that community groups are kept informed and one voluntary sector representative commented:

> "In Newcastle I would say that although it may be relatively easy to influence local decisions - it is very hard to influence strategic decisions."

This highlights an important aspect of community engagement, namely the level at which it occurs. Some commentators contend that new three-way partnership structures provide a basis for community to exert strategic influence (Hart et al, 1997; Hastings and McArthur, 1995; McArthur, 1995). However this can be contrasted with claims that the roles prescribed to community are not generally at the strategic level (Murdoch and Abram, 1997). This has resonance with an earlier study of decentralisation in the city through the PAT innovation. This found that although the PAT provided an important forum through which local residents could have a voice, this had little influence over central departmental priorities and spending (Hoggett and Hambleton, 1987: 58). This illustrates the limited capacity exerted through structures with limited devolved political powers. Further, in the EE it might be argued that the claim of community influence over local decisions is not even borne out. The EEP demonstrates how difficult it is to have a community starting point given the form of local politics. This highlights the importance of local social relations in influencing the shape of community politics that in turn inform the broader politics of partnership and coalition.

The structure and processes of partnership have further served to marginalise community. In contrast to claims of formal and stable partnership relations (McArthur, 1993), the EEP has been described as a partnership of 'well-wishers'. One officer claimed that this suited the councillors and that any attempts to formalise partnership arrangements would be resisted by them. However the flexibility of new institutional arrangements has been blamed for reproducing community marginalisation by reducing the political influence of the community sector. This marginalisation has been reinforced in a number of ways. One aspect of this is the use of jargon that some community representatives have found difficult to understand, although 'you do start to pick up on it' and having to understand the financial details. Community representatives commented upon the lack of support they received and felt that councillors had access to advice in order to understand complex policy documents or financial matters. This reflects the lack of support for the community sector representative role. The difficulties surrounding the superstore issue have been fundamental in contributing to these feelings of marginalisation, creating tensions within the representative function. Frustration has also arisen around the amount of time spent discussing the superstore issue that has been allowed to dominate the partnership agenda. As one community representative claimed 'we've wasted so much time'. The lack of devolved power, compounded by the reluctance of councilors to allow other forms of community into policy processes has marginalised the community sector. Evidence from the full partnership meetings testifies to this:

> "Sensibly there could be development of community sector involvement but at the moment I can't see it. It's very difficult to speak with all those people around. They sit on one side and we sit on another. They never say to us: 'What do you think?' We're lucky if they find you when you put your hand up to say something. And the councillors always think that they know everything." (Community representative)

Such evidence suggests that on the EEP, the community representatives do not even qualify for the role of 'junior partner' (Atkinson and Cope, 1997). This was compounded by perceptions that community representatives are 'not told the half - there are so many meetings behind the scenes'.

Despite claims that new institutional relations create new sets of possibilities for community engagement (Davoudi and Healey, 1995; Barr, 1995; Mayer, 1995; Stoker and Young, 1993) and opportunities for increasing the breadth and plurality of policy processes (McArthur, 1995) the evidence from the case study reveals that such potential has not been realised. Old forms of local relations, based around local authority domination and the role of political elites have led to a continuation of paternalist politics of old labourism. However this is in the form of machine labourism characterised by strong alliances between the political and business elite.

There has been little attempt to keep these relations hidden, one of the more innocuous examples being over football tickets for Newcastle United matches. This provides an example of institutional inertia preventing new forms of local political relations. It is difficult to see how, given the potency of these relations, there is scope to carve out new relations. The supposed new arenas of three-way partnership (Davoudi and Healey, 1995) do not offer much prospect of developing community engagement in local governance processes. However, according to Lowe (1986: 61) the passivity or non-action of community, despite it's importance, remains a relatively unexplored area of political analysis.

The notion of three-way partnership is questionable given the tensions between local authority officers and councillors. It might also be argued that councillors would sit on all three sides of any round table that might exist. Within this general scenario commonality has developed between some elements of the private and community and voluntary sector to challenge established local authority practices. The network model of informal and dynamic relations is perhaps realised in the operation of 'formal' political processes. Councillors have resisted attempts to formalise partnership relations and processes and the operation of local political power both within and outside the partnership is informal and hidden. This form of local relations further marginalises the community sector. However one of the main features of local political relations is their durability and stability despite the development of new institutional forms. One of the problems with the models presented in Chapter 3 is that there is little specific concern with the barriers to community mobilisation. Thus although the three-way partnership literature usefully highlights marginalisation of the community sector within partnership arrangements, this may not be helpful if there is a lack of community to involve. This would suggest the need to combine these models of urban politics with insights from the urban social movement literature. However even within this Lowe (1986) has argued that there has been much less concern with barriers which may prevent any form of community organising or mobilisation.

PART FIVE: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8: Conclusions

8.1 An Overview of the Empirical Findings

The research has explored the question of how particular communities are seeking or being sought to engage in local policy processes. The context and background to the research is the institutional reconfiguration of governance frameworks and the accompanying changes in local political processes (Mayer, 1995). Within this context important claims have been made regarding the role of the third sector and the elevation of community sector politics. The conceptual framework has highlighted the contribution of regulation theory within which attempts are being made to develop greater understanding of economic and state restructuring. Within this framework Mayer (1995, 1996, 1998) has made key claims regarding third sector politics and how these are unfolding within the new frameworks of governance. Within the regulation approach significant emphasis is placed upon changing institutions, norms and mechanisms, which in turn has informed the empirical investigation. Mayer claims that new patterns of urban policy have led to an expanded local political sphere within which new co-operative, network relations are characterised by round-table structures and by the processes of bargaining and negotiation. Following from this, Mayer suggests that some aspects of the new arrangements are more egalitarian and offer new opportunities for third sector politics. This argument helps to reinforce a dominant assumption in the literature that changes within urban management are opening up the potential for community empowerment. The thesis has sought to explore both conceptually and empirically the nature of third sector politics within the new institutional framework of governance. The empirical foundations of the thesis are two case studies of community politics within the NE.

Given the emphasis placed upon the notion of fragmented governance combined with claims that previous urban policy has failed due to a lack of co-ordination (Cochrane, 1988) one of the themes guiding case study choice was the notion of increasing political co-ordination. Through the case studies it was hoped to explore how relationship building was occurring within the community sector and whether new mechanisms of community co-ordination were developing to address fragmented urban policy and governance. This seemed particularly pertinent to the NE context which has been characterised as having 'an ethos of mutuality' (Thompson, 1980: 462) crystallised through trade and political unions. Whilst the notion of a strong and socially cohesive identity forms an important part of local rhetoric, the case studies reveal very different patterns and styles of community politics. In the Newcastle case study it became clear that debates about city-wide and NE wide co-ordination and network

development were more speculative than actual and in some respects the greater degree of co-ordination in South Tyneside study has yielded more material for empirical analysis. However, through a comparative analysis of the data important insights are gained into the nature of community politics in general and the dilemmas which surround the carving out of new modes of community governance. This is achieved through exploring both internal community processes and relations with other actors and agencies.

One important feature of the case studies is the contrast between South Tyneside which constitutes a borough-wide study, embracing a much broader geographical and social basis than the Newcastle study which focuses on only one part of the city. Whilst the wider range of social relations in South Tyneside may account for the broader base of activism in the area this does not explain the lack of community activism in the East End of Newcastle. Despite varying levels of activism a shared feature of the case studies is the claim that there is a strong sense of community. This rhetoric has, in both cases, formed an important element of local dialogue and influence upon local policy processes. The notion of social stability has been an important underpinning of community organising. Policy-makers have in both cases used community as a rationale for the way in which local economic strategy has been constructed. The foundation of this is the assumption that there is a recognisable community identity. This perspective is reinforced by many community activists who were keen to contrast their community with those in the West End of Newcastle and North Tyneside which have experienced episodes of acute civil unrest, subsequently attracting more media and research attention. These experiences have provided a catalyst for re-directing central government resources into these areas. One of the themes unifying the case studies was the sense in which local residents, and to some extent local policy makers, felt as though their passivity has resulted in them being penalised in terms of resource allocation. Thus, despite claims of a regionally constructed culture reflected in dominant political patterns, within Tyneside there are contrasting manifestations of community responses to the acute socio-economic problems. Further, whilst it has been argued that both the case studies share to some extent a passivity they display contrasting outcomes in terms of emergent forms of community politics and organisation. This in turn has produced different institutional relations and patterns of governance. However, at another level, the research has shown that within South Tyneside there are important distinctions and variations in the way that the community identity works and the levels and nature of community activism across the borough.

Whilst some contemporary literature stresses the tensions and ambiguities which surround community identity and politics (for example Hoggett, 1998) some critiques question the extent to which this is a simple restatement of old claims (see Butcher, 1998). Within the case studies community has a range of guises. In both cases the community appears strongly as the church, especially perhaps in Newcastle where there is a paucity of

community activism. Also evident in both cases is the continuing notion of elected representatives as community and the barriers which have been set up to prevent alternative constructions of community. These findings raise difficulties for the concept of three-way partnership, which implies that discernible and distinctive sectoral interests are evident within local policy processes and even for the whole notion of community involvement, which is central to urban policy rhetoric. This evidence also suggests weaknesses in the network model of urban politics, which pays little attention to the possible tensions between identities, or to adversarial relations in general. Regime theory is perhaps most sensitive to the local politics behind coalition construction since it begins to address how interest and sectoral divisions may merge within local policy processes.

One of the reasons for the differences between the case studies has been the stronger influence of central government localism over community organising and three-way partnership within South Tyneside. It might be concluded that the desire by central government to discipline STMBC has deliberately led to the creation of new opportunities for community politics in this context. This top-down pressure combined with a local base of activism opposed to local authority dominated community politics has helped to mobilise new forms of community. However, this process has generated tensions over community identity. In particular there has been a loss of some of the more traditional forms of community, and, despite attempts to create a more inclusive sense of community identity embracing different geographical areas and interest groupings, there remain exclusionary forces. For example the central role played by church-based activism has been perceived by some as discouraging youth interests.

In the East End of Newcastle, the dominance of councillors as community remains relatively intact and unchallenged. This lack of autonomous community has resulted in fewer tensions over community identity. Yet even within this context there are still ambiguities over community identity and community interest representation. Local businesses, for example, see themselves as representing the community interest in contrast to other private sector players. Another important expression of community arises through church-based activism. In particular one church within the boundaries of the EEP has set up a number of regeneration projects through an independent SRB bid. In the adjacent Ouseburn area of the EE, deliberately excluded from the EEP, another SRB regeneration project has been established through the voluntary sector with the church playing a lead role. In both cases the dominance of the church as an important expression of community is evident. In South Tyneside religious divides have also been important in the organisation of local politics, expressed through the system of elected representatives. Within the urban policy literature little attention has been paid to the role of the church as either representing community or playing a leadership role within urban governance, yet both case studies illustrate the importance of the church in local partnership arrangements and community organising.

A further problem for theoretical development is the important role of community outside the formally constructed roles ascribed to community within urban policy. In the case of the EE where there is a lack of community to tap into, alternative community organising by local residents has been in opposition to the EEP strategy. This highlights the problem of how community interests are constructed for use in policy processes. These findings indicate broader concerns over what types of community identity, representation and interests are being selected or constructed for engagement within local policy processes. The manipulation of community into legitimate forms in this way raises important questions over claims that politics is broadening out and that new opportunities for more pluralistic politics can be exploited as Mayer suggests (1994, 1995). Overall the research indicates the importance of historical modes of relations in influencing the progression of new forms of representation. Again, this emphasises the specificity of local conditions and how these interact with broader processes of state restructuring.

One of the key difficulties in both cases was how to establish mechanisms that allow 'effective' and 'representative' community involvement. A central concern in relation to this is the interplay between old and new modes of community representation. One of the key differences between the cases is the lack of popular movement in the EE contrasting with the drive for more autonomous forms of community representation in South Tyneside. Although urban social movement literature draws attention to the importance of factors which inhibit the development of movements (Lowe, 1986) in general this is an under-researched area of contemporary urban politics. In the EE one of the primary factors inhibiting new modes of community politics is the continuing dominance of councillors in local policy processes. Local councillors have however been a key force in stimulating community support for re-development plans that conflict with the local SRB strategy. In contrast, political opposition to councillors has formed an important impetus in attempts to establish an independent community voice in South Tyneside. Hence, one of the key processes identified in the research is the interplay between traditional modes of community representation and more recently evolving participative approaches.

A consistent feature of the EE case study is the very limited nature of community involvement. One of the key barriers to broader partnership and more open governance are pre-existing forms of representative democracy. This is articulated at every level in the EE. A key question is therefore why in South Tyneside there has been a much greater ability to develop new modes of representation despite it being described as the last unreconstructed local authority with 'very disruptive' councillors. The explanation of the changes in South Tyneside lies in the interaction between the overarching power of central government localism allied with a base of community activism. This in turn links to historical relations, the perceptions of extreme political manoeuvring by civil servants and the strong traditions of

self-help and voluntarism within the borough. Whilst the evidence from the EE indicates some extreme political activity and claims of 'dictatorship' style politics, this represents only one part of the city. There is also a sense in which Newcastle may have been more powerful in resisting some of the pressures of central government localism. The differences between the case studies raise important questions over the extent of Labour hegemony in the NE and the limitations of regional characterisations of political and cultural relations.

Within South Tyneside the development of an umbrella organisation has been regarded as the principle means for creating new forms of community representation, centred on the development of area forums. Within the literature considerable emphasis has been placed upon the need for co-ordinated efforts to address urban problems. In South Tyneside the area forums are regarded as necessary for STRIDE to justify claims to be the voice of the community and voluntary sector. General themes arising from this are the complexities created through community representation at each level of the organisation and on the STEP board and the level of resources required to sustain these representative processes and co-ordination mechanisms. Also, given the continuing importance of area identities there are limits to the co-ordination of community representation. These features of local social relations make extensive co-ordination difficult to achieve and sustain. In addition, this approach to political representation has been criticised by local authority officers. They have argued that attempts to represent the community through the single voice of the local authority were widely discredited by a community and voluntary sector who regard themselves as many voices. However they suggest that STRIDE is replicating this type of approach. Within the third sector a number of difficulties have been experienced in trying to develop community representation through an umbrella structure. The experience of developing forums has been varied across the borough in particular in areas where there is a strong tradition of self-help and independence from the local authority. Moreover the notion of less hierarchical relations is undermined at this level through the tension between local control and central co-ordination. The ability to devolve control through area forums is limited by the lack of experience and understanding community members have of broader policy processes. Hence, an emphasis has been placed upon building local capacity through education and training and through employing support workers. Despite such innovations, the influence of professional tends to be in a leadership rather than supporting role with community members arguing that the representative role is both complex and time consuming.

At one level a co-ordinating mechanism like STRIDE provides a basis through which to develop relations between the community and the voluntary sector and the state, and other governance agencies. Mayer (1995, 1996) has highlighted the need for new co-ordination mechanisms to address the problems caused by more flexible welfare provision. In turn this links to broader debates about how to conceptualise the changing relations between the

231

state and community and voluntary sectors. However, whilst conceptualisations of the shadow state indicate the importance of the third sector in delivering privatised welfare there is much less evidence of this in practice. Currently the concept of the shadow state seems to hold symbolic rather than material importance.

In the EE where there has been little attempt to co-ordinate the community and voluntary sector voice, there has been confusion amongst community representatives over who they are representing. The case studies reveal, therefore, various tensions at the core of the representative function. In seeking to ensure the 'representativeness' of community representatives problems of complexity and commitment have arisen. Thus important questions are raised over how community representation can be developed effectively within the complexities of governance in which unpaid community representatives need to acquire substantial knowledge both of the formal and informal aspects of local policy processes including key political allegiances. The lack of political astuteness by third sector players has been commented upon in both case studies with reference to the problems this has caused.

Within South Tyneside the setting up of an umbrella organisation has raised fundamental questions about the purpose and function of community network development. In seeking to develop a holistic approach to community involvement in local regeneration, the efforts of the group have become dissipated across a range of activities and goals. Early efforts to democratise local policy processes have been dissipated by engaging other activities such as service delivery and community business support. Whilst much theoretical emphasis has been placed upon the democratisation of policy processes and potential for community empowerment, for STRIDE, pressure has been exerted internally and externally to engage in activities with more tangible outcomes. This allies with claims that STRIDE will gain credibility through the multi-million pound BLISS project rather than through time perceived as 'navel gazing' by private sector representatives, who have been reluctant to adopt a formal constitution for the three-way partnership. This would suggest that private sector partners may be unwilling to adhere to more formalised governance procedures and practices.

The research has shown that building new sets of relations is a complex and tension ridden process. Whilst Davoudi and Healey (1995) stress the breakdown of old forms of relations and Mayer (1995, 1994) notes the more pluralist arenas of governance, there is considerable evidence of institutional inertia. Moreover in the EE there appears to be something of a backlash by councillors against the imposition of new institutional frameworks. Whilst Mayer contends that new institutional arenas will be characterised by new political processes which centre on bargaining and negotiation there is limited empirical evidence to support such claims and considerable barriers exist to achieving such changes in practice. In the EE and

to a lesser extent in South Tyneside there is a resistance to opening up policy processes to the community. As suggested above this stems partly from the informal way that business relations are conducted (see Peck, 1995). Within STEP the community signatory felt obliged to sign up to the SRB bid despite the lack of consultation in the bid preparation. This lack of power creates profound difficulties in attempts to construct new institutional relations and practices. Such evidence would support arguments made by Murdoch and Abram (1997) that an important aspect of the new institutional relations is the level at which community engagement takes place. In particular they emphasise the way that community actors are largely excluded from the strategic level of decision-making. This was particularly acute in the Newcastle case study, however it was also to some degree evident in South Tyneside. Evidence from the EE has shown that community representatives have been excluded from strategy discussions and that the bid itself has limited discussion of the community sector and its role.

Mayer (1995) notes the degree to which new relations of governance depend upon local sediment laid down through previous patterns of political relations. In both case studies it is clear that pre-existing relations profoundly influence the way in which new relations are unfolding. In South Tyneside, the politicised nature of many activities has led to a suspicion about the roles being adopted by various actors and the nature of developing relations. This was characterised by one community activist who argued there is considerable concern with 'who you are' and 'what your history is'. This has a strong parochial dimension given the important history and identities of the areas that form South Tyneside. There are some important parallels in the relationship between community and local political affiliations and the parochialism of elected representatives in both cases. Whilst in South Tyneside one interviewee warned not to under-estimate the power and influence exerted through parochial sets of local politics, this has also been a pervasive force in Newcastle's East End. A prime example of this has been the power to reconstitute the EEP, pushing out the Sandyford ward, which has a different set of political affiliations. An important difference in the way that new institutional relations are being constructed is that Newcastle City Council has taken a central role within partnership development being the self-selected accountable body. In South Tyneside the multi-agency partnership body STEP acts as the accountable body, presenting more of a challenge to traditional local authority practices. Relationships within the partnership and the style of partnership operation are also different. In South Tyneside the marginalisation of the community sector has at least been on the agenda of board meetings.

One of the barriers to the development of more co-ordinated strategies is the continuing influence of departmentalism. Within South Tyneside, for example, there was a clear division between community education and local economic development, with one regeneration officer being critical of the failure by local economic development to take on

board the community perspective. However, similarly it was felt that the community education department maintained a leisure focus rather than responding to a new social and economic climate characterised by high unemployment levels. It was through the work of one particular professional that these norms were challenged. Within the Newcastle context there was also a marked divide between local economic development and community and a criticism by LED officers of the calibre of community development work. The growing importance of more centrally co-ordinated approaches to regeneration emanating from Newcastle City Council also sits uneasily alongside Mayer's claims regarding the opening up of policy processes. Whilst it is still too early to evaluate the effects of this, it seems there may well be tensions between attempts to develop more central leadership through the officers and the current political relations.

The research has identified the very different outcomes experienced in the two case study areas despite their close physical proximity and shared cultural context. The research has also highlighted the numerous tensions that surround the task of constructing community engagement and the resistance of pre-existing political relations to new forms of community politics. In South Tyneside there has been much more explicit attention by the community to setting up new forms of representation and increasing the democratic nature of local policy processes. Whilst this suggests an increasing concern with more pluralistic modes of governance achieving this in practice is fraught with difficulty.

The ambiguity surrounding community politics is evident within the case studies (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Thus whilst much has been made in the literature of the democratising potential of community engagement within current frameworks of urban policy (Davoudi and Healey, 1995; Mayer, 1994, 1995; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997; Atkinson and Cope, 1997) this has been criticised by others. Gaffikin and Morrisey (1992), for example, have commented upon the community option as a tool for the privatisation of poverty. This links to the broad claims about neo-liberal politics of self-help and the role of community in the restructuring of welfare (see Raco, 1998a; Kearns, 1992; Cochrane, 1993; Lovering, 1995). The empirical work suggests that there are significant constraints on the possibility of community initiatives given the limited autonomy the community and voluntary sector have to influence ways of working, or drive policy outcomes (Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Whilst norms and expectations about community potential may be shifting, the current institutional context places significant constraints on the possibilities for community politics. The complexity of community interests and modes of organising also limit the scope for urban policy to support a new politics of community. The study has demonstrated the blunt nature of urban policy and its interaction with local political processes. The use of more persuasive central government localism in South Tyneside whilst helping to shift the nature of policy processes to some extent, leaves open important questions about the extent to which community is an appropriate tool for delivering urban policy.

234

8.2 From Case Studies to Models

Within the literature review consideration was given to a number of models of urban politics which make explicit claims about the way in which third sector organisations are engaging in new relations of governance. The review sought to identify how the different models approach the study of third sector politics, the claims they make and the characterisations they draw. The research presented here has attempted to explore around these broad characterisations of change to examine in detail concrete processes on the ground. To assist this process various strands of urban political theory have been used to construct a conceptual framework. This provides a foundation upon which to clarify the changing nature of third sector politics and the construction of local institutional relations within the new governance. It also provides a basis from which to contribute to broader debates concerning the construction of urban policy and politics. The following discussion will seek to show how the models operate in relation to the empirical material presented above, and so assess their application in the analysis of contemporary urban politics. The contribution of each of the models is reviewed by reflecting upon the each of the features presented in the table below (Table 4).

Table 4 – Main Features of Community-Oriented Models of Urban Politics

FEATURES	PROGRESSIVE REGIMES	COMMUNITY NETWORKS	THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP
Rationale	Establish alternative progressive regime via city-wide political alliance	Tool of co-operation / negotiate uncomfortable institutional relations	Central government driven Economic governance- new forms of integration / co-ordination
Community membership	Community mobilisation/ Reactive social movements	Defined by self or others Varied and voluntaristic participation Hidden and informal identities and interests	Defined by formal agreement/ board membership Voluntaristic or imposed/ selected/ stable Community as junior partner/ confers legitimacy
Leadership	Politicos transform fragments into action-oriented networks	Strong leadership to manage tensions & mediate between community and public agencies Personalities drive networks	Reconsolidation of professional role Private sector leadership Regional government influence
Relations	Enclaves, disruptive, political fragments/ value based cleavages	Dynamic/ fluid boundaries Informal close personal relations/ dependency Mutual trust/ advantage co-operation Negotiation/ bargaining /anti- incorporation	Round tables structures Formal rather than meaningful Sectoral distinction Politics of negotiation/ compromise
Agendas	Utopian Diverse/divergent political goals and values	Based on shared beliefs /values/norms	Area-based agendas developed within framework/ priorities/ time-scale set by central government Struggles to redefine agendas
Power	Power to impede or disrupt Political disorder	Power-sharing opens up new circuits of power but depends on linkages between organisations Danger embed existing power relations/ support self-sustaining elite Community influence variable	Community junior partner/variable influence Depoliticisation/ rubber stamping/ danger of incorporation v' s widening of power base/ strategic community role/ / control /veto counteracting entrenched interests

236

Table 4 continued.

Features	PROGRESSIVE REGIME	COMMUNITY NETWORKS	THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP
Tensions	Individual v' s collective goals Democratic processes and structures v' s creation of sub-assemblies of agenda implementation Lack shared agendas/beliefs	Limited tensions	Arenas of conflict Nature/ role /process of community representation Organisational proliferation/ duplication of effort Clash cultures / norms/ working styles
Outcomes	Wild city/hyper-pluralism/street fighting NIMBYism Politics of turf/ enclave consciousness Reduced governing capacity Potential new practices and broader agendas	Open up governance systems Partnership representation Overcome paternalism via sensitivity to local needs	Open up decision-making Challenge governmental practices/ paternalism Synergy/ resources/ mutual transformation Sensitivity to local needs
Stability/ durability	Very unstable – problem of transforming into a powerful, stable city-wide regime	Instability Ebbs and flows of network activity	Community stewardship creates sustainability
Analytical focus	Nature of social movement, political response to social movement and possible new administrative practices and the inter-relations between these elements	How individual agendas and personal relations are transformed into policy networks	The role and interests of different actors and their inter-relations and the role and development of discourses and arenas

8.2 (i) Rationale

The models highlight various rationales for community organising and participation in local policy processes. Within progressive regimes the emphasis is upon citywide alliances which has resonance with the situation in South Tyneside where there has been an explicit attempt to establish new agendas and modes of organising at a borough-wide scale. This model also indicates, however, the problems around constructing collective identities and the need to address different scales and meanings of citizenship. The community body STRIDE has been actively engaged in these types of struggle, initially through a small group of community activists attempting to establish a new agenda. Whilst to some degree reactionary, community mobilisation has also been profoundly influenced by central government agencies trying to establish new governance regimes. In contrast, the EE has been characterised by a lack of grass-roots mobilisation. The rationale for community involvement has been driven by the requirements of bidding regimes, perhaps in a more overt fashion than in South Tyneside and mainly via the local authority. In this sense the EE allies more closely with the observations of the three-way partnership model, which notes the pressure for new structures of economic governance. In addition, this model reflects a more imposed and restricted sense of community involvement whereby representatives find themselves operating at the margins of the partnership, both with regard to formal and informal relations and processes.

Whilst central government agendas have been a central force in reconfiguring political forms in South Tyneside, this has evolved rather differently through the arms length forces of central government localism. Contained within this approach, which draws upon the support of local community activists, is an explicit challenge to local authority practices and traditional constructions of community. This has given a very different flavour to the reasons for, and nature of, community organising. Network building has been seen as an essential tool in seeking to establish a borough wide community agenda and establish a co-ordinated community voice. Whilst networking building is viewed as a tool of co-operation - this has resonance with the rhetoric of relationship building processes and structures in South Tyneside but not necessarily the practices.

8.2 (ii) Community Membership

The base of community membership in South Tyneside has stemmed from a group of core activists who recognised and sought to challenge the limited role permitted for the community and voluntary in policy processes in the borough. This has therefore embraced something of the reactive social movements identified within the progressive regime model. However this challenge only surfaced with the support of external organisations. Concerted efforts are now being made to expand this base of support and activism. Included within this

238

broader community membership are volunteers working within the local authority led system of community associations. Thus, South Tyneside exemplifies the varied and voluntaristic nature of community membership identified by the community network model. In contrast the East End study exemplifies the selection of community membership along restricted and narrow lines and supports the notion of community as legitimising device, as highlighted in the three-way partnership model. These very different bases of community represent very different expressions of community politics.

8.2 (iii) Leadership

Both case studies illustrate the complexities that surround leadership, both internally within the community sector and at the level of broader partnership arrangements. On paper the EEP is local authority led and STEP in South Tyneside has private sector leadership. The progressive regime model highlights the importance of political players in co-ordinating different elements into 'action-oriented networks' and the network model draws attention to the need for strong leadership to help manage institutional tensions and mediate with other agencies to help establish common ground. Yet, in practice, it may not be clear who is taking on the leadership role nor what this means. Formal political players in South Tyneside have been concerned with defending traditional roles and relations rather than attempting to unite different factions. In the EE politicians have played a key role in guiding action but this has been as important outside formal partnership processes as within. Also, with regard to these informal processes there was a feeling amongst some partnership members that agendas have very much been shaped by private sector individuals. This contrasts with the feelings of local councillors who felt that regional players had overshadowed them, in particular by the TEC.

South Tyneside illustrates to some extent the observation of the three-way partnership model that there is potential for a reconsolidation of the professional role. In this context the community professional appears to play the role of politico identified under the regime model by helping different parts of the membership coalesce, to a certain degree around a broad agenda. Thus community sector leadership seems to be biased towards paid professionals as noted in the three-way partnership literature. Thus, in contrast to South Tyneside, the EE community representatives have experienced much less in the way of professional support and seem much less sure that there is a community agenda to represent. However the role of the church as a community leader has also been noted.

As previously stated the research has raised some important questions about what leadership means in the contemporary context for both the private and public sector (see Peck, 1995). Whilst the network model emphasises the importance of individual personalities and the informal as well as formal relations in which they operate this must be

related to the particular sets of interests which they are pursuing or defending. In the current context the whole notion of leadership is revealed to be both complex and somewhat ambiguous.

8.2 (iv) Agendas

In South Tyneside agenda building was identified as a key activity of the community sector both internally and in their relations with other partners. Community network and three-way partnership models tend to assume that consensual agendas will emerge, albeit the latter recognising the potential conflicts can arise in this process. The progressive regime model is less certain about the emergence of consensual agendas, noting that potential difficulties in developing broad community alliances arise from potentially utopian agendas and the need to reconcile different values and beliefs. The characterisation of STRIDE as having a 'scatter-gun' approach reveals the encompassing of various, not necessarily compatible strands, within a single organisation. For example there is a tension between STRIDE developing as an agency for democratising economic governance and as an agency for delivering welfare projects and services. There is also a sense in which members felt that organisational aims were too far removed from where 'most people are at'. This is despite extensive time and effort being expended on the development of a shared framework of values and norms. As noted, integral to this process have been training days and workshops for STRIDE members encouraged and led by the director. Despite achieving to some extent shared agendas there remain difficulties in distilling this into specific projects or initiatives and connecting to broader policy processes.

In contrast, the EE demonstrates an absence of attempts to identify or build shared community agendas. Any sense of community agenda has arisen mainly around individual, church led projects or in protest over the superstore issue. Rather, as indicated by the three-way partnership model there is an area-based agenda that is being structured by central and local government agendas. However even within this there appears to be a tension between formal partnership agendas and those being played out informally between councillors and some private sector players. Within the formal partnership community agendas have not been perceived as important and, indeed, community representatives feel themselves unclear that there is any community agenda that they can represent. This links into broader questions about community relations and the operation of local power structures.

8.2 (v) Power and Relations

In both case studies the sense of 'enclaves' was important as reflected in parochial political agendas. This sense of identity was both an important way of activating local action but also acted as a barrier to establishing common agendas across wider geographical areas. These arguments are well rehearsed in the literature on progressive regimes which also notes that

cleavages arising from distinctive sets of values can result in the 'power to impede'. This is perhaps harder to translate to area focused understanding of communities, however one expression of this is the perception amongst community members that they hold values which are in some way distinctive from the other players. In STRIDE this was translated into a formal statement of values to guide organisational operation and demonstrate 'good practice' to the public and private sectors. Although in the EE this sense of a value base was much more diffuse, community players still regarded themselves as being the actors to be free from self-interest. In addition within this context was an understanding of community power as abstaining from political processes – hence demonstrating that an absence of agendas may be an important, though difficult to analyse, aspect of local politics (Lowe, 1986).

Within the progressive regime model different fragments were seen as disrupting local political processes. However in both cases, even where the community sector were in disagreement with dominant practices or decisions, they ultimately opted not to disrupt processes – for example by refusing to sign bid applications. In both cases disruptive action was avoided because of the potentially high (financial) costs to the area if they jeopardised central government funding. This highlights the importance of the financial motivations underpinning new institutional relations and the penalties associated with not acting collaboratively. In this context there are clearly strong reasons why pre-existing practices are not successfully challenged. According to the community network model, developing new circuits of power depends upon the linkages between organisations. However, the above discussion suggests that these linkages may simply represent new forms of legitimacy for the traditional practices and processes of political elites. Again this demonstrates the gap between potential and actual empowerment as noted in three-way partnership and community network literature.

The community network literature focuses on the importance of informal, often dynamic and individualised relations and of trust building. In both case studies the theme of trust building was important but was discussed mainly with regard to historically difficult relations or those being developed around new governance processes. In general it was much more difficult to access the private, informal and individualised relationships which form an integral element of local political processes. Hence, research must draw to a degree upon anecdotal evidence. The three-way partnership model picks up on the way in which formal relations are not necessarily meaningful. This inevitably raises a difficult issue for researchers wishing to understand the operation of local politics and penetrate beyond the surface representations of organisations and relationships. However simply noting the informal and hidden nature of relations as identified by the network model raises fundamental problems for the notion of more open and accessible governance systems. The reliance upon sectoral distinctions within the three-way partnership model as a way of understanding local political

241

relations, whilst useful methodologically was of limited scope for analysing the construction and pattern of sectoral interests.

8.2 (vi) Tensions

In general, the case studies have revealed a myriad of tensions at many levels within community sector politics and within new relations of governance. However the models vary in the attention which they give to this, with community networks having a much more limited concern with tensions than the other models. The three-way partnership model highlights the barriers caused by cultural differences that were felt to be an issue in both case study areas. In particular it was believed that neither the public nor private sector representatives had a good understanding of the community representative role as unpaid volunteers. This was exemplified by the lack of consideration given to arranging the time and location of meetings. However rather than different norms and working styles being seen as problematic some interviewees felt there needed to be more explicit recognition of the differences and so help different actors to make distinctive contributions to the policy process. In addition the three-way partnership model acknowledges the tensions that can exist around the process of community representation. As has been noted this has been a source of tension between the community sector and other partners and within the community sector in the South Tyneside context.

The progressive regime model highlights several tensions around community politics. One particular theme, as highlighted by STRIDE, is the difficulty of achieving a balance between establishing democratic processes and implementing new agendas. Another theme is that of establishing shared agendas and beliefs. In South Tyneside this has been noted as a problem and perhaps is unsurprising given the myriad of interest groups and geographical communities, separated by deep-rooted historical rivalries, that are encompassed within the STRIDE structure. One notable theme reflected in the progressive regime model is the tension for community representatives between acting in the interests of their own particular organisation and the overall agendas and interests of STRIDE. This relates to the importance within the third sector of maintaining organisational identity and concerns that this may be compromised by collaborative activity. This also links into the notion of organisational proliferation and rivalry, a theme identified within the three-way partnership model. STRIDE, for example, has found itself being perceived as a challenge to the local CVS, and subsequent action has sought to establish distinctive roles and identities. In providing an umbrella structure STRIDE has also brought together agencies with very similar remits, for example youth work, and debates have arisen over the duplication of effort with regard to particular activities.

8.2 (vii) Outcomes

As the progressive regime model suggests reconciling different agendas is a difficult task – as demonstrated in South Tyneside. However, in the EE the absence of community agendas leaves a gap in governance processes which compounds the marginalisation of community representatives. The lack of community mobilisation as an expression of power adds another dimension to this although so far it seems only to have helped render the community role one of legitimisation. Whilst STRIDE has focused on the establishment of shared agendas this has been disrupted by identity politics based upon deep-rooted political divisions that exist within the borough. Experience has shown that these identities and networks need to be addressed much more explicitly to achieve co-ordination. The attention to process is also highlighted by the focus on education and training and demonstrating best practice to other partners. However some members feel this has been to the detriment of gaining widespread grass-roots support amongst those wanting to see concrete benefits to local people. However in neither case is the 'street-fighting pluralism' noted in the progressive regime model, rather it has been suggested that the community sector in the case study areas have adopted co-operative, even passive roles. In both cases this was contrasted with the civil disturbances experienced in North Tyneside and the West End of Newcastle. However it was claimed in the EE that attempts to expose hidden agendas were met with open hostility.

Whilst both the community network and three-way partnership model note the potential for challenging traditional local government practices the research has shown that this is very difficult to achieve in practice. In particular the case studies highlight the defensive attitude of some actors – notably elected representatives -compounded by the institutional inertia that exists. This raises important questions in general about roles and relations within the new context of governance. For local government key questions are raised about how to reconcile the growing emphasis on participation with representative democracy. In South Tyneside and the EE councillors continue to make the case that they are the only elected and accountable community voice, with some sympathy from local authority officers. In this situation challenging paternalism has led to the creation of new policy structures, however the degree to which policy processes and governance practices are changing remains limited.

Whilst there may be scope for new governance structures to support more locally sensitive policies, area based priority setting remains politically difficult in a climate of scarce resources. Overall it may be argued that some aspects of governance may be opening up through networking – however it has also been shown that networking is often informal and hidden. This combined with the complexity of new institutional contexts raises some doubts about whether more transparent policy processes are likely to develop. In turn this suggests

that claims about more open governance need to demonstrate precisely how and under what circumstances this is occurring. The evidence would suggest thus far there are important constraints over the opening up of governance, perhaps reflected in the lack of new sets of negotiative politics which Mayer (1998) claims are part of the new system of local governance.

8.2 (viii) Durability

The three-way partnership model claims that community stewardship helps creates sustainability. However this does not help explain how this community stewardship operates nor how it is to be achieved. Drawing on the case studies many of the activists were retired, a significant number having taken early retirement for health reasons. Whilst these representatives were people with many years experience of volunteering or activism there were concerns about how to renew this base. Moreover some of the experienced activists talked about moving onto new projects or causes which they felt strongly about. For some this was coupled with a feeling that they had dedicated enough time and energy to one organisation with some treating it as a full-time job. This research has not explored in detail the individual motivations and paths which have led people to enter into volunteering or to act as community representatives - although clearly these are important issues which would impinge upon the understanding of achieving durability through community stewardship. In addition the time-limited nature of current funding regimes and short-term professional contracts casts further doubts over the whole notion of durability.

Perhaps more characteristic of the empirical findings is the dynamism and ebbs and flows identified in the community network model. However this also raises questions about the permanency of a community role - suggesting perhaps instead one which shifts and adapts over time. This has resonance with claims by Eisenschitz and Gough (1993) over the political function which community serves. This would suggest that an elevated role for the community sector in contemporary governance maybe a less than permanent trajectory. The progressive regime model is also sceptical about durability, claiming that the very nature of alliance-based politics renders it very difficult to sustain. This stems from the problems of establishing a core shared agenda and then having the political clout to translate this agenda into a stable citywide regime. The extent to which a lack of stability and durability featured in the community network and progressive regime models is seen as a problem remains an open question.

8.2 (ix) The Analytical Focus of the Models

Overall the models offer a range of insights into community politics within contemporary local governance, but also display some important limitations. One of the main strengths of the progressive regime model is that it focuses on the relationship between the nature of the community mobilisation, political responses and the possibility of new administrative practices. It thus provides a focus on a set of connections within governance relations, although these are only explored to a limited extent degree within the literature and are difficult to clarify in the case studies. The community network model highlights the importance of informal and hidden relationships and identities. Whilst the case studies did reveal some ambitious attempts at network building they also demonstrated the partiality and complexity of these processes and time and effort and support required to sustain network processes. Emerging from the EE case study was the lack of rationale or basis for the community sector to engage in citywide collaborative attempts. The network model develops the notion of dynamic relations and instability, which seems to be in contrast with the notion of longer term trust building and development of mutual agendas. This indicates perhaps internal inconsistencies within the model between relations of dependency and trust and the ebbs and flows of network activity. In general one of the key weaknesses of the network model is that is fails to address the tensions and conflict which are a central feature of community politics. The three-way partnership model is particularly useful for highlighting the formal governmental structures and influences that underpin new sectoral alliances. Some interviewees were keen to argue that underlying motivations for partnership working were insignificant – however not engaging with this dimension renders interpretation of concrete processes extremely difficult. The three-way partnership model has limitations that arise through its dependency upon sectoral distinctions. Whilst it is clear that different sets of interests operate within urban policy processes, the sectoral boundaries of public, private and community/ voluntary are much more diffuse and difficult to disentangle than this model would suggest. Overall the model restates the potential for widening participation and a greater degree of power sharing in urban policy processes despite recognising the barriers to achieving this. This rather anodyne and oft-rehearsed debate tends to form the basis for 'best practice' literature that often pays little attention to the underlying processes and patterns of power that exist.

8.2 (x) Reflections on the Value of the Models

Within the thesis different models of urban politics have been explored. The key claims and foci of networks, progressive regimes, and three-way partnership have been set out as a framework through which to set up an empirical enquiry into the operation of community politics. The models help identify salient issues surrounding the nature of contemporary

urban politics and the relations between different actors. In particular they help specify the nature of third sector involvement in new relations of governance and also the type of barriers to involvement. Whilst they are useful in indicating broad features of change and themes to guide empirical enquiry, they also display a number of weaknesses. Overall two significant limitations of the models are their limited ability to deal with the complexity of community politics as demonstrated through the case study material and their lack of explanatory power.

There is considerable overlap between some areas of the models, this arises partly through having shared foci but also because of the degree of conceptual elasticity which characterises the models. The tendency towards conceptual elasticity arises due to the imprecise nature of concepts which means that the different models tend to back into one another. This stems in part from a rather limited attempt to address the power relations which shape the way that various interest are able to engage in local policy processes. However in other areas the models do make distinctive contributions, in particular when considering the issue of identifiable sectoral interests. Regime theory and the progressive regime model recognise to some degree the complexity of political relations and acknowledge the mix of formal and informal relations in developing governing capacity. However concepts like three-way partnership seem to belie the complex factions and allegiances which are bagged together and assumed to represent a sectoral interest grouping. The research has shown that models of urban politics need to address the over-simplified assumptions that identifiable sectoral interest groupings exist. The case studies demonstrate the collapsing of sectoral distinctions when exploring the detail of local roles and relationships, as community appears as elected representatives, the church, community professionals or local business. Thus three-way partnership may be a convenient but not very accurate expression of new governance relations, given that it suggests a degree of sectoral distinction that is less than clear in practice. For example, in the EE it was concluded that councillors were sitting on three-sides of the partnership.

A further weakness of the models is an assumption of a new governance context in which institutional relations are undergoing significant changes. One of the case study findings is the continuing importance of old relations and practices, even where overlain by new modes of organising and different policy processes. This corresponds with comments by Mayer (1995) regarding institutional inertia. Mayer cites the NE as being a good example of a place with a rich institutional character but this not necessarily leading to new governance approaches being established. Thus questions are raised about the importance and source of the inertia. One way in the models demonstrate their limitations is in the lack of attention to how institutional inertia may operate and what impacts this has upon urban political forms and processes. A further theme which is demonstrated by the case studies is the detailed differences between places in the way that community politics is being played out. This

246

suggests the limitations of broad characterisations of community politics given the importance of local specificity.

Another weakness of the models is the limited attention to the detailed relations between the formal political systems and new modes of representation that is a central feature of governance mechanisms. The research has exposed the problem that relations of representation appear competitive and adversarial, so that rather than increasing the input of local communities needs and views into policy processes, much energy is expended on demonstrating the shortcomings of other representative forms. Underlying this problem are challenging questions about what it means to be a representative within current systems of urban governance. However any process or policy seeking to expand third sector engagement must still address the question of the many, and often conflicting communities. Similarly, as the three-way partnership and progressive regime literature demonstrate coalition-building may be divided by conflicting sets of values and the way that values are shaped on the ground may be heavily influenced by community professionals who are also dubbed community. Thus questions over whom the community is and the interests they represent are complex and tension-ridden, suggesting those theoretical models that only capture broad trajectories of change are likely to underplay the dynamics of community politics. The case studies demonstrate the central importance of political astuteness in the development of community sector engagement, yet the subtle processes, which may constitute political astuteness, are difficult to capture within conceptual models. A further limitation of the models is in taking on the local sediment, laid down through previous political activity, which profoundly affects the way in which current policies are evolving on the ground. In addition to these problems, the models provide little in the way of explanatory tools. Hence in parallel with Ward's (1997) critique of regime theory, the characterisations tend to divert attention away from the underlying causes of particular sets of relations. Thus there are questions about how to refine the models given their lack of explanatory power and lack of attention to why particular relations form in particular spatial temporal contexts. Recent work in regime theory is attempting to address these weaknesses (see Ward 1997).

8.3 Implications for Policy

One of the defining features of contemporary concerns with community and new forms of governance has been a presumption that new approaches present new opportunities for democratisation. Part of this has been a concern with community empowerment. The rhetoric of more democratic relations and community empowerment has been a central theme of recent government policy. The research has found that such rhetoric belies the current focus of urban policy and understates the weak construction of community. Even in South Tyneside where democratic values have been core in new modes of community

247

organising, developing this is in practice has been difficult. One problem is the various responsibilities that have been placed upon community and the pressure for tangible 'bricks and mortar' outputs. This combined with the nature of partnership relations has meant that it is difficult for community representatives to assert this democratising agenda within the broader partnership structure.

A second claim of urban policy is the need for greater levels of co-ordination, particularly given the fragmented governance context, to address some of the weaknesses of urban policy. Whilst the research has attempted to pick up this theme up through an exploration of co-ordination mechanisms these have been much less evident on the ground than might be anticipated given the policy rhetoric. The research has however revealed some of the difficulties that surround co-ordination within the community sector and attempts at developing broader partnership structures. In particular it has been shown that community co-ordination can reproduce some of the unrepresentativeness that has previously been a criticism of local authorities. Moreover, there are important questions over what is being co-ordinated, by whom and in whose interests. The increasing pressure for more co-ordination to address urban problems is not new, rather as Cochrane (1998) notes, it has been a long-standing critique of successive urban policy initiatives. Whilst the normative view is that improving co-ordination will help improve the efficacy of urban policy, this is by no means a straightforward relationship. Thus one of the implications of the research findings is the need for further reflection on the question of what is to be achieved through attempts at local co-ordination and how this relates to broader policy structures and governmental processes. This would require more detailed attention to the question of what co-ordination is needed over what issues and at what scale. As demonstrated, co-ordination is a complex and time-consuming task, which requires clear and achievable goals and an unravelling of how precisely greater co-ordination would achieve more effective urban policy. This necessarily leads into broader questions about what the role and aim of urban policy is.

In general the case studies highlight the extent to which urban policy operates as a blunt tool. Whilst central government rhetoric portrays community engagement as a common sense solution to policy efficiency and effectiveness this overlooks the importance of local specificity in shaping concrete outcomes. These different outcomes, the product of interaction between broad policy processes and the specific operation of local community politics, means that a general requirement for community engagement is met in a myriad of different ways. This would suggest the need for greater recognition of the locality factor in urban policy implementation and what this implies for the meaning of urban policy on the ground. The fragility of community mobilisation has, to some extent, been exposed through the case studies, suggesting the need for policy-makers to attend to the question of how to sustain a long-term community role. The pressure on communities to engage in a range of policy processes and the responsibilities this entails sits uneasily alongside the short-

termism of funding regimes and initiatives. As previously noted, the degree of commitment required by STRIDE members to support organisational development equates for some into a full-time unpaid job. Questions arise over how viable this level of involvement is over the longer-term and whether this suits to some extent an urban policy approach which seeks to retain the ambiguity of community and may therefore avoid support which would increase the permanency of community structures and roles. Despite this, in the context of South Tyneside there has been an increase in the number of paid professionals. These raises concerns about the relationship between professionals and volunteers and what roles and responsibilities are appropriate. Such concerns may well become more important if community structures take on an increasing number of complex welfare delivery services. Overall, the seemingly endless attractions of having a community label attached to every aspect of public policy must be treated with caution given for example the difficulties around agenda setting and lack of clarity over roles and relationships.

The insecurity surrounding the community role in contemporary governance gives rise to a particular expression of community politics. The nature of funding regimes seems to engender a sense of loyalty to locality, with the overriding priority being to 'get the money in' thus subduing attempts to challenge dominant processes or practices which may exclude community. This reinforces the perception that the community sector is likely to underplay problems or echo the mantra of New Labour that 'things are getting better'. Whilst this may be the case, the research has shown how difficult it is to identify, let alone unravel, some of the fundamental tensions. Additionally the vulnerable position of community organisations can make it difficult to openly address problems. For example in one of the case studies a project director commented that a community member had complained that they felt that 'things were falling apart'. The response to this was 'you might think these things but you can never say them'. This ethos makes it difficult to imagine how a more critically aware community approach might be allowed to develop, despite the supposed opening up of governance.

8.4 Reflections on the Research Process

Within the literature there is a growing concern with the need for concrete research into the role of third sector organisations in emerging systems of local governance (for example Stoker, 1997: 182). Additionally, regulationists have argued that there is a need for concrete research to explore the processes and practices of regulation (Goodwin and Painter, 1997). The study is theoretically driven by the broader framework of regulation theory and by different contemporary models of politics. In particular Chapter 3 reviews the claims within models of progressive regimes, networks and community or three-way partnership, which are especially pertinent to the study of community politics. One unifying theme across these

different theoretical perspectives is the need for more concrete research. In particular this research has set out to clarify the operation of third sector politics. Following from Valler et al (1998), there is a tendency within the literature to distil away from the specific detail of operation, exemplified in relation to community through characterisations of the changes as 'empowering' or 'disempowering'. Whilst analysis at this level helps to identify key themes and trajectories, it can tend to leave a gap at the detailed empirical level (although see Davoudi and Healey, 1995; Hastings and McArthur, 1995). Thus it has been argued that there is a need to uncover the 'complex mechanics' (Valler et al, 1998) of governance within which community politics are one element. This concern with operation drives a concern with how particular roles are being constituted within the new institutional arrangements. Additionally, the work of Goodwin et al (1993) highlights the importance of local contingency in the unfolding of urban political relations and processes.

The aim of the study has been to explore the fine-grain operation of community politics in the North-East. The research explores whether and in what ways new patterns of community politics are emerging through the new institutional frameworks of urban governance. It seeks to achieve this through an investigation based upon four key themes. First, an exploration of who the community sector are, and how the community interest is being constructed and defined and the implications which follow from this. A second theme driving the study is a concern with new modes of community representation and the mechanisms supporting this. Third, the research explores the different roles and relations emerging in and around community governance, for example how relations are developing through three-way partnership. The analysis provides insights into the nature of new institutional relations and processes of local governance. Additionally, it provides a basis upon which to assess claims that there is increased scope for community empowerment and the democratisation of local policy processes.

During the preliminary stages of the empirical work a conference was held on community networks in the NE. This seemed to provide a basis through which to explore co-ordination patterns in the NE. However, as the research progressed it became evident that mechanisms through which to study co-ordination were more ephemeral than anticipated. Research plans to study community co-ordination in Sheffield and the West End of Newcastle were curtailed by specific processes in both these cases. In the West End of Newcastle a shift between policy initiatives, from City Challenge to SRB, had created a number of tensions. There was also some debate over what City Challenge had achieved during its lifetime. In the case of Sheffield the organisation to be studied faced severe problems in it's operation and was unable to deliver funds to community projects. In both cases there was a recognition that community engagement was, for a number of reasons, lacking and consequently projects were facing external criticism. This reflects broader issues about when and where researchers are able to gain access, and the problem that

during periods of transition or when problems have been highlighted, research may be discouraged. This links to perceptions about when research may be felt to serve a useful function (see Imrie and Thomas, 1995). An important adjoiner to this is the role of community development professionals as 'gatekeepers' and their perceptions and exercise of power that can to large degree determine access. This raises important questions about the exercise of professional power represented 'as community' and under what circumstance research is deemed appropriate. Additionally, where access was agreed the question of what underlying motives prompted this decision was also significant. In both case studies there were identifiable motivations for allowing access, in the case of STRIDE there was a desire to promote a positive profile of the community and voluntary sector and their dedication and professionalism. In EE study there was perhaps a desire, although not explicit, to expose some of the partnership practices that deliberately marginalised community and voluntary sector involvement. Thus researching community politics is a sensitive task and participants in both cases were keen to stress that although there had been problems in the relationships with other sectors these problems were being overcome and relations were improving as common understandings were being developed.

An overarching problem in the research was the limited nature of community-based activity in some areas. Additionally the network literature has highlighted the informal and hidden nature of much third sector activity. This suggests some kind of gap between the expectations of urban policy and the nature of most community and voluntary sector activity. This raises important questions with regard to the restructuring of the welfare state and claims that we are shifting towards the creation of a shadow state. This ties in with claims by Mayer (1994, 1995) that government is embracing community and voluntary projects that may facilitate welfare provision or are focused on employment and training type issues. Thus the overall scope for urban policy to establish alternative forms of welfare provision maybe therefore be limited by the nature of most community and voluntary sector activity. This finding would support claims that current approaches may well favour the larger more formalised third sector organisations (Wolch 1992, Knight 1995). However at the moment varied types of community and voluntary representation are being pulled into local partnership arrangements.

8.5 Final Comments

To conclude, this research has found that the complexity of community politics - and the different relations and interests embraced within this - represent a fundamental challenge in thinking about a governance system in which increasing emphasis is being placed upon the third sector role. Despite an insistence upon changing structures and processes of governance in the literature and in the policy rhetoric, the research presents some clear

indications that alongside all the newness, much of the old continues to remain extremely important. The new institutional structures have not swept away old sets of relations and processes - rather they have been superimposed upon them. As a result any snapshot of urban politics reveals new directions and influences working sometimes with and sometimes against previous ones. Within this context, it is important to address the question of why we are seeking a new community role, what this role should be and how this can be achieved - for example through the broader institutional context. The research has indicated there are many grounds for being cautious about what we expect to achieve through the new community agenda, certainly in relation to urban policy. Thus far, urban policy has proved to be a blunt instrument for addressing the complexities and sensitivity of local political systems and community politics in particular. The research has stressed the degree of ambiguity which surrounds community - who the community are, what they do and in whose interests they act - or don't act. Even where these questions have been explored at the grass-roots level numerous tensions remain. Thus more explicit attention needs to be given to the actual nature of community politics and it's role within current governance frameworks, rather than simply restating the potential for scope for community empowerment. The emphasis upon collaboration and co-ordination also needs further unpacking to reveal the underlying assumptions about what this can achieve. Much of the debate remains at the level of broad, common sense understanding. The unpacking of community politics within concrete settings suggests some fundamental difficulties with the use of community as a tool of urban policy, attractive though it may seem. The control of central government over local agendas and processes may restrict, rather than encourage a re-casting of political relations, moreover in this context questions are raised over whether localism and local autonomy are helping to divert our gaze away from the realities of power relations. As one community activist remarked in any genuine partnership there are times when the gloves have to come off, perhaps it is time the gloves came off anyway.

APPENDIX

CHAPTER 1

1. In their analysis, Eisenschitz and Gough (1993) focus on the processes of local societalisation claiming that during periods of economic hardship the social, economic and political ties which labour and capital have to locality are both weakened and strengthened. Whilst Eisenschitz and Gough (1993) call for more class-based analysis to draw attention to this relation, critiques of class analysis highlight a tendency for reductionism and failure to accommodate other identities which are an important element within social relations.

2. Stacey (1969: 140) uses the concept of social institution to reflect 'recognised and established usages governing the relations between individuals or groups' (following Ginsberg). Stacey suggests this allies with Parsons definition of 'normative patterns which define or are felt to be proper, legitimate, or expected modes of action or of social relationship'.

CHAPTER 2

1. In particular a new generation of regulation theory seeks increased sensitivity to the state, political processes and the role of space (Jones 1997: 832). Of central interest are recent developments in regulation theory regarding urban political analysis.

2. The key text is Michel Aglietta's 'A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: the US Experience' first published in English in 1979 (Painter 1991: 23).

3. The mode of regulation is a core concept through which first generation regulation theory developed. It is however expressed in a number if different ways. For example Peck and Tickell (1992) refer the modes of social regulation to reflect the social nature of regulatory processes. However Jessop uses the term social mode of economic regulation since he argues Peck and Tickle's expression the social mode of regulation conflates the object of regulation-i.e. regulation of the economy in it's integral sense and mode of regulation of wider society in which a particular economic order dominates (see Jessop 1994a: 36).

4. Following Jessop (1994b) Fordism may be understood as a combination of some or all of these different elements.

5. The mode of societalisation refers to the way in which the state institutionalises and manages regulation. Following Harvey (1985) they attempt to ground abstract ideas about complex and variable regulatory practice using the notion of structured coherence (1993: 73). Structured coherence is concerned with the way social institutions and processes reproduce capitalism, focusing on the role of institutional forms and their durability. Harvey argues that particular sets of social relations tend toward partial and temporary coherence based upon an 'ensemble of cultural, economic, social and political norms as well as networks and institutions' (Goodwin et al 1993: 73). The state and local state are central in establishing and eroding these relations.

6. Despite the traditional welfare responsibilities of the local state, their autonomy has been an ongoing source of tension. During the 1970s grass-roots initiatives sought to make local government an arena for more participatory politics. By the late 1970s the New Urban Left had begun to implement decentralisation strategies and local economic initiatives (Stewart and Stoker, 1995) challenging the centralisation policies of the 1970s Labour administration. During the 1980s they provided a foundation for the development of new alliances between local authorities, local community and voluntary organisations, trade unions and other interest groups (Stoker, 1991). Whilst such movements had democratic connotations, decentralisation experiments also appealed to the Right, linking to consumerist concerns for effective and efficient service delivery (Hoggett and Hambleton, 1986). Tensions over the scope of local government were further exacerbated by a series of legislative acts under Thatcher, which curtailed discretionary powers (e.g. the Rates Act 1984). This, combined with the abolition of the GLC and metropolitan county councils from April 1986, and the Tory election victory of 1987 led to the collapse of many 'discrete experimental initiatives' marking the 'fall of the municipal left' (Harding and Garside, 1995: 170). Although centralisation processes were underway prior to 1979 and there was growing criticism of bureaucratic paternalism, the Thatcher government produced 'a major shift in the balance of central/local relations' (Hoggett and Hambleton, 1986: 12). Despite local campaigns the overall tendency has been towards increasing centralisation of power and authority. This re-orientation has involved profound changes in both national urban policy and local economic policy accompanied by major institutional changes. The process of centralising local government powers has intensified tensions between central and local government and brought to the fore fundamental questions about the nature of state activity (Duncan and Goodwin, 1988).

7. The concern with discourses and their importance in the construction of urban social movements (USM) has been developed through the work of Jenson (1990, 1993). As part of new developments within regulation theory Jenson seeks to build up

254

regulationist approaches to political analysis. For example, her work explores the shifting discourses around USM of nationalist movements within Canada. Following from Anderson, Jenson identifies the imaged nature of communities and the importance of identity through imagery. In this context she explores how a shared discourse constitutes a collective identity. However, instead of pursuing the USM theory concern with the processes which lead to the formation of new social movements, Jenson highlights 'the consequences of particular collective identities.

8. Mayer asserts KWS contributed to economic crisis.

9. One particular division noted by Mayer is between the newly included community and the old style community deemed peripheral to the new arrangements, highlighting both the differentiated nature of community and the specific terms of community involvement.

10. Other commentators concerned with the 'management of spatial co-ordination' have interpreted the emergent processes differently (Davoudi, 1994: 230). Healey, for example, also derives a normative perspective, albeit from a different framework and suggests that new forms of participatory management will arise based on argumentation. This will involve constructing new arenas for debate, new forms of policy discussion and argumentation.

11. According to Mayer, in the North East barriers include old-fashioned unions and strong KWS institutions.

CHAPTER 3

1. This draws on the work of Bakkshi (Jessop 1995:1621).

2. DoE (1995: 10) draw a distinction between the community and voluntary sector groups. Community groups are defined as those organisations in which a substantial element of the activity and control is by people residing or working in an area on a voluntary basis. Voluntary organisations are those groups whose activities are not-for-profit but are not a public body. They are more formal organisations that may or may not use voluntary labour.

CHAPTER 4

1. **Indicative Interview Schedules**

1.1 Core:

Individuals role/position
History of STRIDE and its development
Organisational structure
Organisational aims/objectives/principles/values
Representation and co-ordination

Key episodes
Relations with other local actors
Managing community co-ordination —what it means and how it works

1.2   STRIDE Members:

The main concern of these interviews is to assess the internal development of the STRIDE organisation in terms of - representation, network building and project development.

Individual Involvement
-what are your experiences of involvement with the community and voluntary sector locally?
-how and why did you become involved in Stride?
-what is your current commitment to the organisation (as a representative?)

What is the history of community and voluntary activity in your area?
-how has it been organised pre-stride, what have been it's main functions?
-what have been the main strengths and weaknesses?

Developing Stride locally
-what has local involvement been in the development of Stride?
-what were local attitudes towards it's setting up?
-what are current attitudes/feelings toward Stride by - local groups, councillors etc.
-what issues have been encountered in setting up the area forum?

The Area Forum
-how effectively is the area forum working?
-what stage is at in it's development?
-how effective a base is it for building networks, developing community and voluntary representation and developing projects?
-how is the group led?
-has it been able to bring in the non-traditional voices?
-what are the issues facing the AF (current debates
-what activities are on-going - experiences of appraisals/projects?

Relationship between Stride core and the AF?
-how is this shaping up?
-is a balance being achieved between local control and central co-ordination?
-is representation effective?
-does the Core understand the issues faced by the AF and visa versa?

Outcomes/ Evaluation
-what's the current situation
-what do you think has changed as a result of Stride?
-what has worked and what hasn't?
-is it facilitating the type of involvement which people want?
-what are the main strengths and weaknesses? (structure, or other barriers)

Individual Reflections
- on being a representative (in what capacity, how effectively has this worked, what have been the main problems?)
-on being a member
-of the role of Stride in the area and in ST as a whole?
-the future of Stride and the Area Fora? (viability and sustainability of the strutures set up)
-how important do you think Stride and the AF are to the future of third sector in ST

- what do you think are the main barriers which they face?
-current debates and key issues?

Public and Private Sector representatives:
-individuals history
-representative role
-history of sectoral involvement in local governance
-current role in governance –changing role? How and why?
-understanding of the third sector role/organisation
-level and type of interaction with third sector organisations
-attitude to third sector role
-overview of development of local relations –role in STEP
-effectiveness of local mechanisms
-key issues/ tensions

2. Participant Observation Record

June 1996:	STEP open meeting
July 1996 :	STRIDE Management Committee meeting
	STRIDE 2nd AGM
August-Sept 1996:	STRIDE offices
Sept 1996:	South Shields Area Forum
	Bolden to Whitburn Area Forum
	Jarrow Area Forum
	Hebburn Area Forum
	Borough Wide Area Forum
	Area Forum Quarterly Event
Nov 1996:	Winter Training Events
Jan 1997:	STRIDE offices
Feb 1997:	Training Event
March 1997:	Follow-up to training eventy
July 1997:	STRIDE 3rd AGM

REFERENCES

Alcock, P., Pearson, S. and Craig, G. (1996) "Citizenship, Empowerment and the Poor – Local Government Anti-Poverty Strategies" *Local Government Policy Making* Vol 22(4): 42-51

Amin, A. (1994) *Post-Fordism: A Reader* Oxford: Blackwells

Amin, A. and Thrift, N. (1995a) "Institutional Issues for the European regions: from Markets and Plans to Socio-economics and Powers of Association" *Economy and Society* 24 (1) 41-66

Amin, A. & Thrift, N. (1995b) Globalisation, Institutional Thickness and the Local Economy in Healey, P. et al (eds) *Managing Cities the New Urban Context*

Amin, A. and Tomaney, J. (1993) "Turning the Tide? The Impact of Urban and Regional Regeneration Initiatives in the North East England" in Fasenfest, D. *Community Economic Development: Policy Formation in the US and UK* Policy Studies Institute London: Macmillan

Arblaster, A. (1994) *Democracy* 2nd ed. Bucks: Open University Press

Atkinson, M. and Coleman, W. (1992) "Policy Networks, Policy Communities and the Problems of Governance" *Governance* 5 (2) 154-180

Atkinson, R & Cope, S (1997) "Community Participation and Urban Regeneration in Britain in Hoggett, P. (ed) *Contested Communities op cit.*

Atkinson, R and Moon, G (1994) *Urban Policy in Britain: The City, the State and the Market* London: Macmillan

Atkinson, R. and Cope, S. (1997) "Community Participation and Urban Regeneration in Britain" in Hoggett, P. (ed) *Contested Communities: Experiences, Struggles, Policies* Bristol: Policy Press

Audit Commission (1988) *The Competitive Council* HMSO: London
Bagguley, P., Mark lawson, J., Shapiro, D., Urry, J., Walby, S. and Warde, A. (1990) *Restructuring: Place, Class and Gender* London: Sage

Bailey, N. (1994) "Towards A Research Agenda for Public-Private Partnership in the 1990s" *Local Economy* Vol 8 (4): 292-306

Bailey, N. Barker, A. and MacDonald, K. (1995) *Partnership Agencies in British Urban Policy* London: UCL Press

Ball, R. and Stobart, J (1997) "Getting a fix on community identity: the catalyst of the Local Government Review" in Hoggett, P (ed.) *Contested Communities: Experiences, Struggles, Policies* Bristol: Policy Press

Barnes, M. and Walker, A. (1996) "Consumerism versus Empowerment: A Principled Approach to the Involvement of Older Service Users" *Policy and Politics* Vol 24 (4)

Barr, A. (1995) "Empowering Communities – Beyond Fashionable Rhetoric? Some Reflections on the Scottish Experience" *Community Development Journal* Vol 30 (2): 121-132

Bassett, K. (1996) "Partnerships, Business Elites and Urban Politics: New Forms of Governance in an English City?" *Urban Studies* 33 (3): 539-555

BBC 1 (1997) News Report, March

BBC2 'The State of the Region' – Special Report 19-11-96

Benwell Community Project (1978) *The Making of a Ruling Class: Two Centuries of Capital Development on Tyneside* Final Report Series No 6. Newcastle upon Tyne: Benwell CDP

Blackman,T. (1995) *Urban Policy in Practice* London: Routledge

Bonefeld, W. & Holloway, J. (1991) (eds) *Post- Fordism and Social Form: A Marxist Debate on the Post-Fordist State* London: Macmillan

Brent, J. (1997) *'Community without Unity'* Hoggett, P.(ed) *Contested Communities*

Bryman, A. (1989) *Research Methods and Organisation Studies* London: Unwin Hyman

Burrows, R. and Loader, B. (eds.) (1994) *Towards a Post-Fordist Welfare State?* London: Routledge

Butcher, H., Law, I.G., Leach, R. & Mullard, M. (1990) *Local Government and Thatcherism* London: Routledge

Butcher, H. (1998) "Contested Communities: Experience, Struggles, Policies" Review Section *Community Development Journal* Vol 33 (3) 276-77

Campbell, B. (1993) *Goliath: Britain's Dangerous Places* London: Meuthen

Campbell, B. (1995) "Neighbourhood from Hell" *The Guardian Weekend* July 1st

Campbell, M. (ed.) (1990) *Local Economic Policy* London: Cassell

Cater, J. and Jones, T. (1989) *Social Geography* London: Arnold

Catholic Bishops' Conference (1996) *The Common Good* London: Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Churchill, H, Everitt, A and Green, J (1997) *'Taken Away from Community: Older People and Sheltered Housing'* Hoggett, P. ed. op cit.

Clark, D. (1992) *We Do Not Want the Earth: The History of South Shields Labour Party* Bewick Press, Tyne and Wear.

Clarke, M. and Stewart, J. (1992) "Empowerment: A Theme for the 1990s" *Local Government Studies* Vol 18 (2): 18-26

Clavel, P. (1986) *The Progressive City: Planning and Participation 1969-1984* New Jersey: Reutgers University Press

Clavel, P. and Kraushaar, R. (1998) "On Being Unreasonable: Progressive Planning in Sheffield and Chicago" *International Planning Studies* Vol. 3 (2) 143-162

Cochrane, A. (1993) *Whatever Happened to Local Government?* Bucks: Open University Press

Cochrane, A. (1994) "Restructuring the Local Welfare State" in Burrows, R. and Loader, B. (eds) *Towards a Post-Fordist Welfare State?* London: Routledge

Cochrane, A. (1998) Debate Reflections on the Institutional Turn in Local Economic Development Conference University of Sheffield (Sept 19-20)

Cockburn, C. (1977) *The Local State* London: Pluto

Colenutt, B. and Cutten, A. (1994) "Community Empowerment in Vogue or Vain?" *Local Economy* Vol 9 (3): 236-250

Commission on Urban Priority Areas (1985) *Faith in the City: A Call for Action by Church and Nation* London: Church House Publishing

Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector (1996) *The Future of the Voluntary Sector* Social Policy Summary 9 York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Cooke, P. (1985) "Class Practices as Regional markers: A Contribution to Labour Geography" in Gregory, D. G., and Urry, J. (eds.) *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* London: Macmillan

Cooke, P. (1988) "Municipal Enterprise, Growth Coalitions and Social Justice" *Local Economy* Vol 3 (2): 191-199

Cooke, P. and Morgan, K. (1993) "The Network Paradigm: new departures in corporate and regional development" *Environment and Planning D* 11 543-564

Cox, K. (1997) "Governance, Urban Regime Analysis and the Politics of Local Economic Development" in Lauria, M. (ed.) *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory* London: Sage

Cox, K. and Mair, A. (1988) "Locality and Community and the Politics of Local Economic Development" *Annals of the Association of British Geographers* Vol 78 (2) 307-325

Cox, K. and Mair, A. (1989) "Urban Growth Machines and the Politics of Local Economic Development: Book Review Essay" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 13: 137-146

Cox, K. & Mair, A. (1991) "From Localised Social Structures to Localities as Agents" *Environment and Planning A* Vol 23: 197-213

260

Craig, G. (1989) "Community Work and the State" *Community Development Journal* Vol 24 (1): 3-18

Craig, G. and Mayo, M. (eds.) (1995) *Community Empowerment: A Reader in Participation and Development* London: Zed Books

Croft, S. and Beresford, P. (1992) "The Politics of Participation" *Critical Social Policy* 34 Vol 12(2) 20-44

Dalby, S. and Mackenzie, F. (1997) "Reconceptualising Local Community: Environment. Identity and Threat" *AREA* 29 (2): 99-108

Davoudi, S. (1995a) "Dilemmas of Urban Governance" Healey, P et al *Managing Cities the New Urban Context* Chichester: John Wiley

Davoudi, S. (1995b) "City Challenge: the three-way partnership" *Planning Practice and Research* Vol 10 3-4 333-344

Davoudi, S. & Healey, P. (1995) "City Challenge: Sustainable Process or Temporary Gesture?" *Environment and Planning C* Vol 13: 79-95

Davoudi, S. and Healey, P. (1995b) "City Challenge – A Sustainable Mechanism or Temporary Gesture?" in Hambleton, R. and Thomas, H. (1995) *Urban Policy Evaluation: Challenge and Change* London: Chapman

DeLeon, R.E. (1992) *Left Coast City: Progressive Regime Politics in San Francisco 1975-1991* Kansas: University Press of Kansas

DoE (1995) *Involving Communities in Urban and Rural Regeneration: A guide for practitioners* Middlesex: DoE

DETR (1998) *Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People*

Devine, F. (1995) "Qualitative Analysis" in Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Social Science* London: Macmillan Press

Dowding, K. (1994) "Policy Networks: Don't Stretch a Good Idea Too Far" in Dunleavy, P. and Stanger, J. (eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies* Vol 1 Belfast: The Political Studies Association of the UK

Driver, S. and Martell, L. (1997) "New Labour's Communitarianisms" *Critical Social Policy* Vol 17 (3): 27-46

Duffy, K. and Hutchinson, J. (1997) "Urban Policy and the Turn to Community" *Town Planning Review* Vol 68(3): 347-362

Duncan, S. and Goodwin, M. (1988) *The Local State and Uneven Development: Behind the Local Government Crisis* Cambridge: Polity Press

Dunleavy, P.J. (1996) *New Urban Governance and Community Power Structures* ESRC End of Award Report

Eisenschitz, A (1990) *Community* BASS Course Materials Middlesex University

Eisenschitz, A (1995) *Local Democracy and Community Economic Initiatives* Paper Presented to the IBG Conference

Eisenschitz, A. (1997) "The View from the Grassroots" in Pacione, M. (ed.) *Britain's Cities: Geographies of Division in Urban Britain* London: Routledge

Eisenschitz, A. and Gough, J, (1993) *The Politics of Local Economic Policy: The Problems and Possibilities of Local Initiative* London: Macmillan

Eisenschitz, A. and Gough, J. (1998) "Theorising the State in Local Economic Governance" *Regional Studies* Vol 32 (8): 759-768

Esser, J and Hirsch, J (1994) "The Crisis of Fordism and the Dimensions of a 'Post-Fordist' Regional and Urban Structure" Amin, A. (ed.) *Post-Fordism: A Reader* Oxford: Blackwell

Etzioni, A. (1993) *The Spirit of Community* New York: Touchstone

Evans, B. (1994) "Planning, Sustainability and the Chimera of Community" *Town and Country Planning* April: 106-108

Evening Chronicle (1996 - 1997)

FIST (Federation in South Tyneside) (1993) *The Missing Partner: Recommendations to Empower the Community Sector in South Tyneside*

Foot-Whyte, W. (1981) *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* 3rd. Edition London: University of Chicago Press

Furbey, R., Else, P., Farnell, R., Lawless, P., Lund, S., and Wishart, B. (1997) "Breaking with Tradition? The Church of England and Community Organising *Community Development Journal* Vol 32 (2): 141-150

Gaffikin, F. and Morrissey, M. (1990) "Community Enterprise in Northern Ireland: Privatising Poverty?" *Community Development Journal* Vol 25(3): 252-261

Gilchrist, A. (1995) *Community Development and Networking* London: CDF
Gilchrist, A. (1998) "A More Excellent Way: Developing Coalitions and Consensus through Informal Networking" *Community Development Journal* Vol 33 (2) 100-108

Gilchrist, A. and Taylor (1997) "Community Networking: Developing Strength through Diversity" in Hoggett, P. (ed) op cit

Gilroy, R. (1996) "Building Routes to Power: Lessons from Cruddas Park" *Local Economy* Vol 11 (3): 248-258

Goodwin, M. and Painter, J. (1996) "Local Governance, the Crises of Fordism and the Changing Geographies of Regulation." *Transactions IBG* 21 (4): 635-648

Goodwin, M. and Painter, J. (1997) "Concrete Research, Urban Regimes, and Regulation Theory" in Lauria, M. (ed.) *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* London: Sage

Goodwin, M. Duncan, S and Halford, S (1993) Regulation Theory, the Local State and the Transition of Urban Politics *Environment and Planning D Society and Space* Vol (11): 67-88

Gyford, J (1985) *The Politics of Local Socialism* London: Allen and Unwin

Hall, S. (1989) *The Voluntary Sector Under Attack?* London: Islington Voluntary Action Council

Hall, S. and Jacques, M. (1989) (eds) *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s* London: Lawrence and Wishart

Hambleton, R. (1978) *Policy Planning and Local Government* London: Hutchinson

Hambleton, R. and Hoggett, P. (1987) "The Democratisation of Public Services" in Hoggett, P. and Hambleton, R. (eds) *Decentralisation and Democracy: Localising Public Services* University of Bristol SAUS Occasional Paper 28

Hampton, W. (1991) *Local Government and Urban Politics* London: Longman 2nd Edition

Hampton, W. & Walkland, I. (1980) *Byker Community Development Project 1974-1978:* Newcastle Upon Tyne: Council for Voluntary Service

Hardy, D. (1991) *From New Towns to Green Politics* London: E & FN Spon

Harding, A. & Garside, P. (1995) "Urban and Economic Development" in Stewart, J & Stoker, J. *Local Government in the 1990s* Harlow: Longman

Harding, A. (1990) "Public-Private Partnerships in Urban Regeneration" in Campbell, M. (ed) op cit

Harding, A. (1991) "The Rise of Urban Growth Coalitions, UK Style?" *Environment and Planning C* Vol (9): 295-317

Harding, A. (1995) "Elite Theory and Growth Machines" in Judge, D., Stoker, G & Wolman, H.(eds.) *Theories of Urban Politics* London: Sage

Harding, A. (1996) "Is There a New Community Power and Why Should We Need One?" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Vol 20 (4) 637-655

Hart, C., Jones, K., and Bains, M. (1997) "Do the People want Power? The Social Responsibilities of Empowering Communities" in Hoggett, P. (ed) *Contested Communities* Bristol: Policy Press

Harvey, D (1985) *The Urbanisation of Capital* Baltimore

Harvey, D (1989) *The Urban Experience* Chapter 5 "The Place of Urban Politics in the Geography of Uneven Capitalist Development* Oxford: Blackwells

Harvey, D. (1989) "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism" in *Geografiska Annaler B* Vol 71: 3-17

Hastings, A and McArthur, A. (1995) "A Comparative Assessment of Government Approaches to Partnership with the Local Community" Hambleton, R. and Thomas, H. (eds) *Urban Policy Evaluation: Challenge and Change* London: Paul Chapman

Hastings, A., McArthur, A., and McGregor, A. (1996) *Less than Equal? Community Organisations and Estate Regeneration Partnerships* Bristol: Policy Press

Haughton, G. and While, A. (1998) "From Corporate City of Citizens City? Urban Leadership after Local Entrepreneurialism in Leeds" Paper presented to 'Reflections on the Institutional Turn in Local Economic Development' Department of Geography and Town and Regional Planning, University of Sheffield 9-10th September

Hay, C. & Jessop, B. (1995) "Introduction: Local Political Economy: Regulation and Governance." *Economy and Society* 24 (3): 303-306

Hay, C. (1995) "Re-stating the Problem of Regulation and Re-regulating the Local State." *Economy and Society* 24 (3): 387-407

Hay, C. (1995) "Structure and Agency." in Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. (eds) *Theory and Methods in Social Science* London: Macmillan

Healey, P. (1992) "From Shipyard to Housing Estate: The Transformation of the Urban Fabric." in Healey, P., Davoudi, S., O'Toole, M., Tavsanoglu, S., & Usher, D. (eds.) *Re-building the City: Property-led Urban Regeneration* London: E& FN Spon

Healey, P. (1995) "City Fathers, Mandarins and Neighbours: Crossing Old Divides in New Partnerships" Paper for the *Power Struggle in the City* Conference: Stockholm June 26-28

Healey, P. (1996) "Consensus-building across Difficult Divisions: New Approaches to Collaborative Strategy-making" *Planning Practice and Research* Vol 11 (2) 207-216

Healey, P. (1997) *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies* Hampshire: Macmillan

Healey, P. & Davoudi, S. (1995) "City Challenge: A Sustainable Process or Temporary Gesture?" *Environment and Planning C* Vol 13 79-95

Healey, P. and Davoudi, S. (1995) "City Challenge: Sustainable Process or Temporary Gesture?" *Environment and Planning C* Vol 13: 79-95

Healey, P., Cameron, S., Davoudi, S., Graham, S. and Madani-Pour, A. (1995) *Managing Cities: The New Urban Context* Chichester: Wiley

Held, D. (1987) *Models of Democracy* Oxford: Polity Press

Hetherington, P and Robinson, F. (1988) "Tyneside Life" in Robinson, F. (ed) *Post-Industrial Tyneside: An Economic and Social Survey of Tyneside in the 1980s* Newcastle Upon Tyne: Newcastle upon Tyne City Libraries and Art Galleries

Hoggett, P. (1987) "A Farewell to Mass Production? Decentralisation as an Emergent Private and Public Sector Paradigm" in Hoggett, P. and Hambleton, R. (eds) *Decentralisation and Democracy: Localising Public Services* Bristol: SAUS

Hoggett, P. (1995) "Does Local Government Want Local Democracy?" *Town and Country Planning* April: 107-109

Hoggett, P. (1997) "Contested Communities" in Hoggett, P (ed) *Contested Communities: Experiences, Struggles, Policies* Bristol: The Policy Press

Hoggett, P (1997) (ed.) *Contested Communities: Experiences, Struggles, Policies* Bristol: Policy Press

Hoggett, P. (1994) "The Politics of the Modernisation of the UK Welfare State" Burrows, R. and Loader, B. (eds) *Towards a Post-Fordist Welfare State?* London: Routledge

Hoggett, P. and Hambleton, R. (eds) (1986) *Decentralisation and Democracy: Localising Public Services* Bristol: SAUS Occasional Paper 28

Hudson, R. (1989) "Labour Market Changes and New Forms of Work in Old Industrial Regions: Maybe Flexibility for Some but not Flexible Accumulation" *Environment and Planning D* Vol 7: 5-30

Hutchinson, J. (1994) "The Practice of Partnership in Local Economic Development" *Local Government Studies* Vol 20 (3): 335-344

Jenkins, R. (1992) "Practice, Habitus and Field" in *Pierre Bourdieu* London: Routledge

Jenson, J (1990) "Representations in Crisis: The Roots of Canada's Permeable Fordism" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* xxiii:4: 653-683

Jenson, J. (1993) "Naming Nations: Making Nationalist Claims in Canadian Public Discourse" *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 30(3): 337-358

Jessop, B. (1990) "Regulation Theory in Retrospect and Prospect." *Economy and Society* 19 (2): 153-216

Jessop, B. (1994a) "The Transition to post-Fordism and the Schumpeterian Workfare State" Burrows, R and Loader, B. (eds.) *Towards a Post-Fordist Welfare State?* London: Routledge

Jessop, B. (1994b) "Post-Fordism and the State" Amin, A (ed) *Post-Fordism: A Reader* Oxford: Blackwell

Jessop, B. (1995) "The Regulation Approach, Governance and post-Fordism: Alternative Perspective on Economic and Political Change?" *Economy and Society* 24 (3): 307-333

Jessop, B. (1997) "A Neo-Gramscian Approach to the Regulation of Urban Regimes: Accumulation Strategies, Hegemonic Projects and Governance." in Lauria, M. (ed.) *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* London: Sage Publications.

John, P. and Cole, A. (1995) "Models of Decision-Making Networks in Britain and France" *Policy and Politics* Vol. 23 (4) 303-312

Jones, M.R. (1994) "Descending Levels of Abstraction: Regulation Theory to Training and Enterprise Councils" Paper presented to the Economic Geography Symposium University of London 16 September

Jones, M.R. (1997) "Spatial Selectivity of the State? The Regulationist Enigma and Local Struggles over Economic Governance." *Environment and Planning A* (29): 831-864

Jones, M.R. (1999) *New Institutional Spaces* London: Jessica Kingsley

Judge, D. (1995) "Pluralism" in Judge, D., Stoker, G., Wolman, H. (eds.) *Theories of Urban Politics* London: Sage

Judge, D., Stoker, G. & Wolman, H. (eds) (1995) *Theories of Urban Politics* London: Sage

Kearns, A. (1992) "Active Citizenship and Urban Governance" *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* Vol 17: 20-34

Kearns, A. (1995) "Active Citizenship and Local Governance: Political and Geographical Dimensions" *Political Geography* Vol 14(2): 155 –175

Keating, M. (1991) *Comparative Urban Politics: Power and the City in the United States, Canada, Britain and France* Aldershot: Edward Elgar

Kendall, J. and Knapp, M. (1995) " A Loose and Baggy Monster" Davies Smith, J., Hedley, R. and Rochester, C. (eds) *An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector* London: Routledge

King, D. (1995) "From the Urban Left to the New Right: Relations Between the Left and Local Government in Stewart, J. & Stoker, G. *Local Government in the 1990s*

Knight, B. (1993) *Voluntary Action* London: CENTRIS

Knight, B. (1995) *Voluntary Action and Community Development* Paper for Policy into Practice Seminar, Scottish Community Development Centre 22/02/95

Knight, B. (1995) *Voluntary Action and Community Development* Policy into Practice Seminar, Scottish Community Development Centre February

Knowles, M. and Griffiths, R. (1996) *The History of Hebburn* Tyne & Wear: Halfway Tree Publications

Labour Planning and Environment Group (1994) *Empowering Urban Communities* Pamphlet by the Labour Planning and Environment Group London

Lanigan, C. N. (1996) "Placing Identity in North East Regionalism" *Northern Economic Review* Summer

Lauria, M. (ed) (1997) *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* London: Sage

Lawless, P. et al (1998) "Community Based Initiative and State Urban Policy: The Church Urban Fund" *Regional Studies* Vol 32(2): 161-174

Lawless, P., Else, P., Farnell, R., Furbey, R., Lund, S. and Wishart, B. (1998) "Community Based Initiative and the State Urban Policy: The Church Urban Fund" *Regional Studies* Vol 32(2): 161-174

Leach, S., Stewart, J. and Walsh, K. (1994) *The Changing Organisation and Management of Local Government* London: Macmillan

Leach, S., Davies, H. and associates (1996) *Enabling or Disabling Local Government: Choices for the Future* Bucks: Open University Press

Lipietz, A. (1989) *Towards a New Economic Order* London: Polity Press

Logan, J. and Molotch, H. (1987) *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* Berkeley: University of California Press

Logan, J., Whaley, R. and Crowder, K. (1997) The Character and Consequences of Growth Regimes: An Assessment of 20 Years of Research *Urban Affairs Review* Vol 32 (5) 603-630

Lovering, J (1995) "Creating Discourses rather than Jobs: the Crisis in the Cities and the Transition Fantasies of Intellectuals and Policy-Makers." Healey, P. et al (eds.) *Managing Cities* Chichester: John Wiley & Sons

Lowe, S. (1986) *Urban Social Movements: The City After Castells* London: Macmillan

Lowndes, V., Nanton, P., McCabe, A., and Skelcher, C. (1997) "Networks, Partnerships and Urban Regeneration" *Local Economy* February 333-342

Lukes, S (1974) *Power: A Radical View* Hampshire: Macmillan

Medoff, P. and Sklar, H. (1994) *Streets of Hope: The Rise and Fall of An Urban Neighbourhood* Boston MA: South End Press

Mabbott, J. (1993) "The Role of Community Involvement" *Policy Studies* 14 (2): 27-35

MacDermott, T.P. (1976) "Irish Workers on Tyneside in the 19th Century" in McCord (ed) op cit

Mackie, T. & Marsh, D.(1995) "The Comparative Method" in Marsh, D & Stoker, G. (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Social Science* London: Macmillan

Mackintosh, M. (1992) "Partnership: Issues of Policy and Negotiation" *Local Economy* Vol 7 (3) 210-224

Marsh, D. and Rhodes, R. (1992) (eds.) *Policy Networks in British Government* Oxford: Clarendon Press

267

Marsh, D. and Stoker, G (eds) (1995) *Theory and Methods in Political Science* Hampshire: Macmillan

May, T. (1993) *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process* Buckingham: Open University Press

Mayer, M. (1994) "Post-Fordist City Politics" in A. Amin (ed.) *Post-Fordism: A Reader* Oxford: Blackwell

Mayer, M. (1995) "Urban Governance in the Post-Fordist City" in Healey et al (eds) *Managing Cities* Chichester: Wiley

Mayer, M. (1998) *Changing Structures of Local Governance and the Politics of Inclusion/ Exclusion.* Paper presented to Reflections on the Institutional Turn in Local Economic Development at University of Sheffield September 9-10

Mayo, M. (1997) "Partnerships for Regeneration and Community Development" *Critical Social Policy* 52 (3) 3-26

McCord, N. (1976) (ed) *Essays in Tyneside Labour History* Newcastle Upon Tyne: Newcastle Upon Tyne Polytechnic

McCulloch, A. (1997) "You've Fucked up the Estate and Now You're Carrying A Briefcase!" in Hoggett, P. op cit

McFarlane, R. (1993) "Community-Based Economic Development: The British Experience." in Fasenfest, D. (ed.) *Community Economic Development* London: Macmillan

McGrail, S. (1995) "Decentralisation: New Power or New Privilege?" *Community Development Journal* Vol 30 (2): 200-208

McKellar, S. (1987) "Scotswood Works! Steps Towards Local Economic Self-Management and the Building of a Social Economy" *Local Government Policy-Making* Vol 14 (1) 12-23

McNaughton, P. (1998) Lancaster Environment Group Findings. Seminar Sheffield University, Town and Regional Planning Department

Mess, H.A. (1928) *Industrial Tyneside: A Social Survey* London: Ernest Benn

Molotch, H. (1976) "The City as Growth Machine" *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (2): 309-355

Murdoch, J. (1995) "Actor-networks and the evolution of economic forms: combining description and explanation in theories of regulation, flexible specialization, and networks" *Environment and Planning A* Vol 27 731-757

Murdoch, J. (1997) "The Shifting Territory of Government: Some Insights from the Rural White Paper" *Area* 29: 109-118

Murdoch, J. and Abram, S. (1998) "Defining the Limits of Community Governance" *Journal of Rural Studies* Vol 14 (1) 41-50

Murtagh, B. (1998) "Evaluating the Community Impacts of Urban Policy" *Planning Practice and Research* Vol 13 (2) 129-138

Nevin, B. and Shiner, P. (1995) "Community Regeneration and Empowerment: A New Approach to Partnership" *Local Economy* Vol 9 (4): 308-322

Newby, H. (1980) *Introduction to Sociology Block 3, Comparison and Change; Unit 20 Community* Milton Keynes: The Open University Press

Newcastle City Council Economic Strategy 1994-7

Newcastle Upon Tyne East Area Partnership (1995) *The Regeneration of Shields Road District Centre and Newcastle East End*

Newton, K. (1976) *Second City Politics* Oxford: Clarendon Press

Oatley, N. (1995) "Competitive Urban Policy and the Regeneration Game" *Town Planning Review* Vol 66 (1): 1-14

O' Toole, M. & Usher D. (1992) Editorial in Healey, P. et al *Re-building the City* London: E & FN Spon

OFSTED (1994) *Aspects of Community Development in South Tyneside*

Pacione, M. (1992) "Citizenship, Partnership and the Popular Restructuring of UK Urban Space" *Urban Geography* Vol 13 (5): 405-421

Pahl, R.E (1975) *Whose City?* Chapter 13 "Urban Managerialism Reconsidered" Middlesex: Penguin

Painter, J. (1991) "Regulation Theory and Local Government" *Local Government Studies* Vol 17-18: 23-44

Painter, J. (1995a) "Regulation Theory, Post-Fordism and Urban Politics" in D. Judge and G. Stoker & Wolman, H. (eds) *Theories of Urban Politics* London: Sage

Painter, J. (1995b) *Politics, Geography and Political Geography: A Critical Perspective* London: Arnold

Painter, J (1997) "Regulation, Regime and Practice in Urban Politics" Lauria, M. (ed) *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* London: Sage

Painter, J. and Goodwin, M. (1995) "Local Governance and Concrete Research: Investigating the Uneven Development of Regulation." *Economy and Society* 24 (3): 334-356

Panet-Raymond, J. (1992) "Partnership: Myth or Reality?" *Community Development Journal* Vol 27 (2): 156-164

Peck, J & Tickell A. (1992a) "Accumulation, Regulation and the Geographies of post- Fordism missing links in regulationist research." *Progress in Human Geography* 16: 190-218

Peck, J and Tickell, A. (1992b) A Local Mode of Social Regulation? Regulation Theory, Thatcherism, and Uneven Development *Geoforum* Vol 23 (3): 347-363

Peck, J and Tickell, A. (1994) Searching for a New Institutional Fix: the After-Fordist Crisis and the Global - Local Disorder in Amin, A (ed) *Post-Fordism: A Reader* Oxford: Blackwells

Peck, J. and Tickell, A. (1994) "Too Many Partners...The Future for Regeneration Partnerships" *Local Economy* 9 (3): 251-265

Peck, J. and Tickell, A. (1995) "Business Goes Local: Dissecting the 'Business Agenda' in Manchester" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (19): 55-78

Peck, J. (1995) "Moving and Shaking: Business Elites, State Localism and Urban Privatism" *Progress in Human Geography* 19 (1): 16-46

Pickard, T. (1982) *Jarrow March* London: Allison & Busby

Pickvance, C.G. (1986) "Comparative Urban Analysis and Assumptions about Causality." in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 10 (2) 162-182

Planning (January 24th 1997: 1202).

Pratt, A. (1995) "Putting Critical Realism to Work: the Practical Implications for Geographical Research" *Progress in Human Geography* 19 (1): 61-74

Prior, D. et al (1995) *Citizenship: Rights, Community and Participation* London: Pitman

Raco, M. (1998a) "Assessing Institutional Thickness in the Local Context: a comparison of Cardiff and Sheffield" in *Environment and Planning A* Vol 30 975-996

Raco, M. (1998b) *Assessing Community Participation in the Politics of Local Economic Development- Partnerships and Urban Policy into the 21st Century* paper presented to RGS-IBG conference, Guildford 5-9th January

Robinson, F. (1988) (ed) *Post-Industrial Tyneside* City of Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle upon Tyne City Libraries and Art Galleries

Robinson, F. and Shaw, K. (1991) "Urban Regeneration and Community Involvement" *Local Economy* Vol 6(1): 61-71

Robson, B. (1994) "Urban Policy at the Cross-Roads" *Local Economy* 9: 216-23

Rose, N. (1996) "The Death of the Social? Re-figuring the Territory of Government" *Economy and Society* 25: 327-356

Rowe, D. (1976) "Population of 19th Century Tyneside" in McCord (ed) op cit

RTPI (1997) *The Role of Elected Members in Plan Making and Development Control Planning Services* London: RTPI

Sarre, P. (1987) "Realism in Practice" in *Area* 19 (1): 3-10

Sayer, A. (1989) "Postfordism in Question" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* Vol 13 (4): 666-693

Sayer, A.(1992) 2nd. Edition *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach* London: Routledge

Schwartzman, H.B. (1993) *Ethnography in Organisations* London: Sage

Shaw, K. (1988) "The Development of New Urban Corporatism: The politics of Urban Regeneration in the North-East of England" *Regional Studies* Vol 27 (3) 251-286

Silverman, D. (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction* London: Sage Publications

Sites, W. (1997) "The Limits of Urban Regime Theory: New York City under Koch, Dinlins and, Giuliani" *Urban Affairs Review* Vol 32 (4) 536-557

Skelcher, C., McCabe, A., Lowndes, V. and Nanton, P. (1996) *Community Networks in Urban Regeneration: It All Depends Who You Know* Bristol: The Policy Press

Smith, M. (1993) *Pressure, Power and Policy: State Autonomy and Policy Networks in Britain and the United States* London: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Spooner, S. (1980) *The Politics of Partnership* Planning Studies no.6 Polytechnic of Central London, School of Environment: Planning Unit

Stacey, M. (1969) "The Myth of Community Studies" *British Journal of Sociology* Vol 20 (2): 134-147

Stares,R. & Demarco, L. (1993) *Strengthening the Voluntary Sector in South Tyneside* Foundation for Community Leadership Development

STEP (1996) *South Tyneside Regeneration Strategy* STMBC

Stewart, A. (1994) *South Tyneside Voluntary Project: Proposal to Develop the Capacity of STVP*

Stewart, J & Stoker, G. (1995) *Cities in the 1990s* Harlow: Longman

Stewart, M. and Taylor, M. (1995) *Empowerment and Estate Regeneration* Bristol: Policy Press

Stoker, G (1989) "Creating a Local Government for a post-Fordist Society: The Thatcherite Project?" in J. Stewart and G. Stoker (eds.) *The Future of Local Government* London: Macmillan

Stoker, G (1990) "Regulation Theory, Local Government and the Transition from Fordism in King, D. & Pierre, J. (eds) *Challenges to Local Government* London: Sage

Stoker, G. (1991) *The Politics of Local Government* 2nd. Edition Hampshire: Macmillan

271

Stoker, G. (1995) "Regime Theory and Urban Politics" in Judge et al (eds.) op cit.

Stoker, G. (1997) "Local Political Participation" In Davies, H. et al *New Perspectives on Local Governance* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Stoker, G. and Mossberger, K. (1995) "The Post-Fordist Local State: The Dynamics of Its Development" in Stewart, J. and Stoker, G. (eds) *Local Government in the 1990s* Hampshire: Macmillan

Stoker, G. and Young, S. (1993) *Cities in the 1990s* Harlow: Longman

STRIDE (1995) *Action Plan 1995/6*

STRIDE (1995) *Annual Report 1994/5*

STRIDE (1995) *Where are We?*

STRIDE (1996) *Annual Report 1995/6*

Szreter, S. (1999) "A New Political Economy for New Labour: The Importance of Social Capital" *Renewal* Vol 7 (1): 30-43

Taylor, G. (1995) "Marxism" in Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. *Theory and Methods in Social Science* London: Macmillan

Taylor, M. (1995) "Community Work and the State: The Changing Context of UK Practice" in Craig, G. and Mayo, M. (eds.) *Community Empowerment: A Reader in Participation and Development*

Taylor, M. (1996) "Between Public and Private: Accountability in Voluntary Organisations" in *Policy and Politics* Vol 24 (1): 57-72

Taylor, M. (1997) "The Impact of Local Government Changes on the Voluntary and Community Sectors" in Davies, H. et al *New Perspectives on Local Governance* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Taylor, M. (1998) "Combating the Social Exclusion of Housing Estates" *Housing Studies* Vol 13 (6): 819-832

Taylor, M. and Hoggett, P. (1994) "Trusting in Networks? The Third Sector and Welfare Change" in Perri 6 and Vidal, I. (eds.) *Delivering Welfare: Repositioning Non-profit and Co-operative action in Western European Welfare States* Barcelona: CIES

Thake, S. and Staubach, R. (1993) *Investing in People: Rescuing Communities from the Margin* York: JRF

Thompson, E.P (1980) *The Making of the English Working Class* London: Penguin

Valler, D. et al (1998) *Explanation and Evaluation in Local Governance and Local Business Representation* TRP Occasional Paper 136 University of Sheffield

Wahlberg, M. and Geddes, M. (1995) "Taking the Initiative on Local Democracy" *Local Government Policy Making* Vol 21 (5): 9-16

Ward, K. (1996) "Re-reading Urban Regime Theory: a Sympathetic Critique" *Geoforum* Vol 27 (4) 427-438

Wheeler, R. (1996) "Empowerment and Citizenship" *Local Government Policy Making* Vol 22 (4)

Wilkinson, E. (1939) *The Town that Was Murdered: The Life Story of Jarrow* London: Victor Gollancz

Williams, R. (1976) *Keywords* London: Fontana/ Croom Helm

Wolch, J.R. (1989) "The Shadow State: Transformations in the Voluntary Sector" in J. Wolch and M. Dear (eds) *The Power of Geography: How Territory Shapes Social Life* London: Unwin Hyman

Wolch, J.R. (1990) *The Shadow State: Government and Voluntary Sector in Transition* New York: The Foundation Center

Wolcott, H.F. (1995) *The Art of Fieldwork* London: Altamira Press

Yeung, H. W. (1997) "Critical Realism and Realist Research in Human Geography: A Method or Philosophy in Search of a Method?" *Progress in Human Geography* 21(1): 51-74

Yin, R.K. (1994) 2nd. Edition *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* London: Sage