

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY
GROUPS IN AREA-BASED
REGENERATION POLICY:
NEED, SOCIAL CAPITAL AND
PARTNERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The role that local community sectors play in area-based regeneration policy raises important issues for social policy. First, community groups are playing an increasingly important role in delivering services to local people, thereby complementing and, in some cases, replacing statutory services. Second, the participatory nature of community groups is increasingly associated with the development of what has come to be termed 'social capital' and the promotion of volunteering as an antidote to poverty and social exclusion. Third, community groups are increasingly involved in multi-agency partnerships that are designed to bring a holistic and integrated approach to anti-poverty work at the local level. These three roles and associated theoretical frameworks underpin the empirical work on which the thesis is based.

This thesis has two main aims. First, to explore the assumptions that underpin these three roles for community groups in deprived areas and to examine empirically how community groups operate in such localities. Second, to consider the impact of area-based regeneration policy on the way that local community sectors operate.

To examine these issues two case study areas in the City of Bradford, West Yorkshire, were the subject of in-depth fieldwork. The two localities were in receipt of Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Funding and represented different kinds of urban areas. One is an inner city area with a high proportion of ethnic minorities living in owner occupied housing tenure and the other is made up of three peripheral housing estates with a high proportion of white residents living in social housing. The fieldwork included in-depth investigation of sixty four community groups. In depth interviews were conducted with a total of 50 individuals involved in these groups. Interviews were also conducted with 20 residents who were not actively involved in volunteering for local community groups.

This thesis raises implications for the contribution that the community sector can make to area-based regeneration policy. In addition, the study raises questions regarding the ways in which the role of the community sector is linked to wider social, political and economic trends. Ultimately there is a need for policy makers to be more aware of the limitations of the local community sector as a route to solving social problems. This thesis provides a theoretical and empirical basis for such questions to be more fruitfully explored in future.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFR	Action For Residents
CCP	Comprehensive Community Programme
CDP	Community Development Project
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
DTLR	Department of Transport, Local government and the Regions
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EASG	Estates Advice Services Group
EFILWC	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
FYP	For Young People
GOR	Government Office for the Regions
IAS	Inner Area Studies
IMD2000	Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000
IOR	Inter-organisational relations
LETS	Local Exchange and Trading Scheme
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
NCSS	National Council for Social Service
NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
NLCB	National Lottery Charities Board
PAT	Policy Action Team
RCA	Royds Community Association
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit

SRB	Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TFG	Together For Girdlington
UDC	Urban Development Corporations

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INTRODUCTION

The summer of 2001 may in future be remembered for the spate of disturbances in Northern towns and cities of England which sparked debate in the House of Commons about law and order and the likely solutions to the problems of Britain's inner cities. The Home Secretary, David Blunkett was unequivocal in his condemnation of the events in one of these cities:

'I believe that the response of the whole House will be to make it absolutely clear that we cannot and will not tolerate the wanton destruction and violence that we have witnessed over the last few days. The message must be unequivocal and unwavering: whatever the debate about alienation and disaffection, attacking the police, destroying the well-being of the local community and playing into the hands of organised groups will simply not be tolerated' (David Blunkett, 2001a).

The juxtaposition of this statement to the House of Commons debate that took place six years earlier in the aftermath of civil disturbances in the same city, is relevant to the arguments developed in this thesis. In 1995 the government spokesperson identified the role that local people should play in delivering solutions to the problems that had manifested themselves in three nights of rioting.

'The history of [this city] demonstrates a commendable, effective and above all successful approach to the integration of different communities... It is not the record of a city suffering from major tensions within and between its communities. It would be a great shame if that record was to be in any way challenged by the actions of a few irresponsible and selfish individuals..... The number of groups active in [this city] illustrate [its] record...These groups are all working locally, and the knowledge, concern and information needed to produce solutions will come from them' (Nicholas Baker,1995).

That such solutions have failed to materialise was most graphically illustrated in the events of July 2001. Despite an apparent commitment to regenerate this area, and to support local community groups, little seems to have changed for those who believe the petrol bomb provides the most effective means of voicing discontent.

For the Home Secretary in 2001, the solutions to these problems continue to lie primarily with restoring law and order through partnerships between police and local residents. Alongside this, reference is made to summer schemes involving local community groups and other agencies to occupy young people, and to policy reviews that promise to deliver responses for all the cities and towns affected by civil disturbances. In his closing statement, the Home Secretary made it clear that he felt that regeneration policy, alongside community involvement, was the key to change:

‘Make no mistake, though: the issues of regeneration, avoiding alienation and tackling some of the greatest social scourges of our time are not ones solely for areas where there are inter-racial or ethnic tensions. They also exist on the white housing estates such as those that I represent. We must balance the two if the message is to be clear that we care about all, regardless of race, colour or creed. If we do that, we will stop those who deliberately stir up hatred and use those factors to light the flames that we saw on Saturday... That is a task for all of us’
(David Blunkett, 2001b).

These statements suggest that little has changed for many people living in deprived urban areas. The messages remain the same - that local people have a responsibility to be involved in solutions to social problems that manifest themselves at the local level. Whilst the government will provide resources, it is local people who have to be committed to change.

This thesis is about the contribution that community groups¹ make to the regeneration of deprived areas. At a time when the efforts of volunteers working in local community activity are increasingly central to area-based initiatives to tackle social exclusion it is timely and important to reconsider the role and function of community groups in deprived areas.

¹ The definitions used in the thesis are provided on pages 10-12 below.

THE MAIN ARGUMENTS

The main aims of this thesis were originally conceived as two-fold:

- To study in more detail the volunteering opportunities open to those social groups under-represented in national surveys of volunteering - namely lower income groups and ethnic minorities (chapter one). A focus on low income groups and ethnic minorities contributes to an on-going attempt to broaden understanding regarding volunteering among social groups traditionally found to be least likely to volunteer. In addition, consideration is given to reasons why people might be reluctant to volunteer, and the barriers to volunteering experienced by non-participants (chapter six).
- To focus the study on community based activity as an example of a distinctive sub-sector of the voluntary sector, where volunteering among lower income groups and ethnic minorities might be found to be more prevalent.

Thus, the thesis seeks to combine issues relevant to the community sector and volunteering against a background concerned with social policy debates that focus on poverty, social exclusion and the contribution that 'the community' is expected to make in delivering appropriate solutions.

The relative importance of 'the community' in social policy differs across policy areas. In Britain, for example, there has been a greater emphasis on the role of the voluntary sector in some areas of provision, such as housing, than in others, such as social security. Here, it is urban policy that is used to explore the role of the community sector within a social policy context. Specifically, area-based regeneration policy in the form of the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund (SRB) provides the immediate policy context. This is itself an historically specific choice, resting as it does on the premise that regeneration policy has developed some of the most complex state-local relations through community development work, strategies for community involvement and mechanisms for new local governance.

In many ways this is a contradiction in itself - that the needs of those most deprived could (or should) be met by those found to be least likely to volunteer, and that the least powerful groups in society should (or could) engage in co-operation with the state to deliver and implement social policy.

It will be argued that definitions and theories of the voluntary sector frequently seek to identify the aims and objectives of voluntary activity, rather than to explain the position of such activity in relation to other spheres of social life. Consequently, understanding the role of the voluntary and community sectors requires us to consider the way in which these interact with informal, private and public sectors. The aim is to reveal some of the contradictory forces within which the community sector operates. More directly, it is argued that the community sector can be associated with three main functions, each of which is underpinned by particular assumptions. These may be described as follows:

- The community sector is able to respond to local needs through the provision of services and a campaigning function based on the identification of needs within localities served.
- The community sector can assist in the development of social capital in deprived areas by providing opportunities for people to volunteer.
- The community sector is increasingly expected to play a role in new local governance structures and provides the networks through which local residents can access public policy processes.

These functions are analysed with reference to particular theories: theories of need and the provision of services; social capital and volunteering; and inter-organisational relations and working with the state. Through the analysis of these three discreet areas the role of the community sector is shown to be fragmented, divided and contradictory.

The assumptions and expectations of the local community sector made by politicians is shown to differ from the expectations of those working within the sector, as well as the local residents on whom community groups rely for their membership and user base. As a result, the increasingly widespread growth of 'community-led' social policy is called into question.

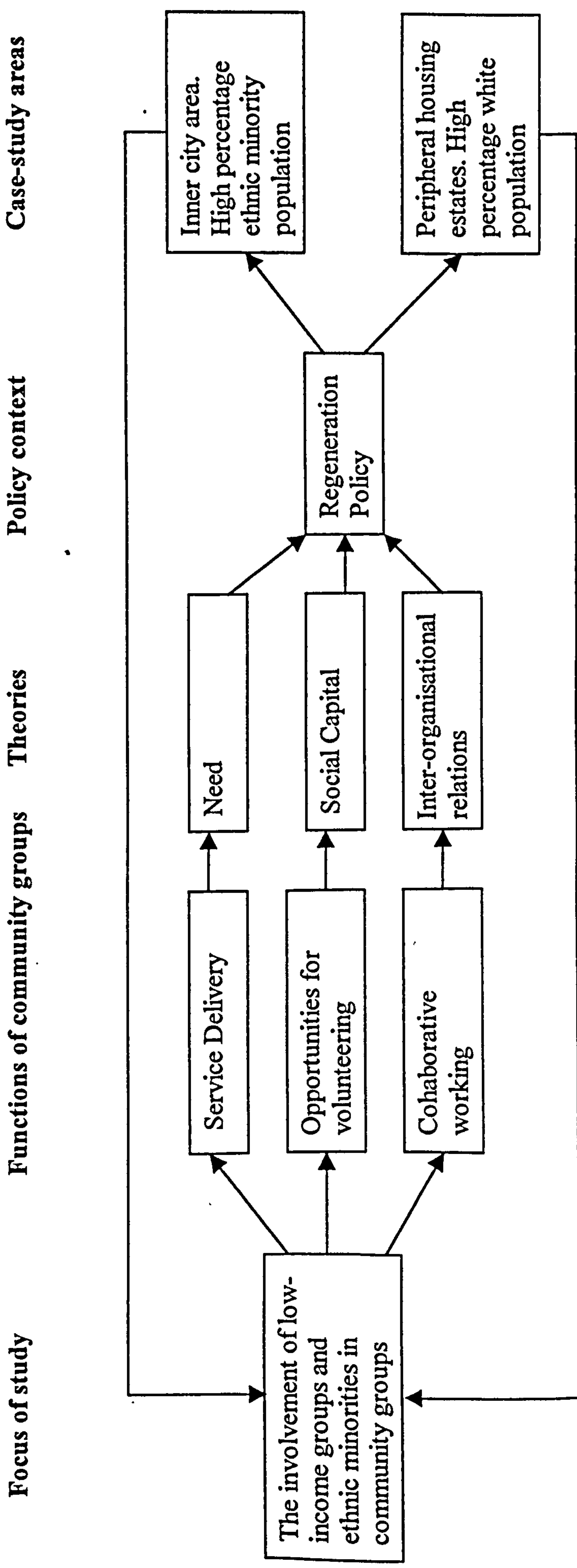
The research design encapsulates characteristics associated with the original aims of the thesis: namely to study patterns of volunteering among low income and ethnic minority groups by focussing on the activities of the community sector. Figure one, overleaf, shows the overall thesis design and how all these elements are incorporated.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER CONTENTS

Chapter one returns to the contexts that frame the study. The aim is two-fold: First to identify features of the community sector that can be discerned from earlier research. Second, to present those contextual frameworks that assist in understanding more clearly the position of the community sector in relation to other aspects of social life. In chapter one it is argued that it is inadequate to conceive of a 'community sector' without reference to the social space within which community groups operate. Thus, any definition of the community sector must pay attention to the blurred boundaries between the activities of individual organisations and the private, public, informal and mainstream voluntary sectors. Consequently, any attempt to empirically study community activities must be aware of the social, political, cultural and policy context within which they operate. Chapter one reiterates the importance of the three functions of community groups identified above, and describes the key features of the latest government proposals regarding volunteering and regeneration policy that provide the political context to the research.

Chapter two explores the historical context to these developments and draws together the histories of community activity and regeneration policy. It is argued that the three functions of community sector activity that underpin the study have their roots in the past. The delivery of services by community groups in deprived areas has been a primary function since the middle ages (Davis Smith, 1995) and although the types of activity associated with community organisations has changed over time, there is a clear relationship between the development of service delivery functions and the relative level of state intervention in welfare for the poor. Community groups have also played a role in the development of opportunities for people to volunteer and to contribute to a collective sense of 'community' through participation. This function has changed in terms of its emphasis over time. In the 1960s and 1970s the activities of community groups were associated with protest and more radical approaches to welfare provision.

Figure 1
The thesis design



In its modern conceptualisation, participation (or volunteering) in community group activity has been incorporated into urban policy programmes as a means to promote 'social capital' and create resident empowerment. The participatory thrust of contemporary urban policy has also created opportunities for local community groups to become involved in collaboration through partnerships and multi-agency working. These developments are explored alongside an analysis of the development of urban policy and the way in which the role of 'the community' has been interpreted through time.

In chapter three, the three main functions of community groups - service delivery, volunteering and collaborative working - are linked to conceptual frameworks that provide the theoretical context to the study. The *service delivery* functions of community groups are examined in relation to *theories of need*, to argue that a series of issues affect the ways in which services are developed which go beyond any objective identification of local needs. The development of *volunteering* opportunities is explored with reference to *theories of social capital*. It is argued that the existence of a community sector should not be equated with the development of social capital. Rather, the context within which volunteering occurs is as important as the fact that it exists in determining the relationship between resident participation in local community activity and the generation of social capital. *Theories of inter-organisational relations* are used to examine the claim that pre-existing networks provide the basis from which *new local governance* structures - and in particular partnerships that include 'the community' - can be developed. It is argued that these theories draw attention to the way in which partnership working and inter-organisational relations are underpinned by a basic organisational objective of autonomy that may affect the ways in which community groups perceive involvement in multi-agency partnerships. Chapter three concludes by developing a series of explicit research questions designed to test the assumptions and expectations with which the community sector is increasingly associated.

Chapter four describes how these research questions were operationalised through a multi-stage area-based case-study research design. The two case-study localities are described as a background to the analysis of the community sector in chapters five, six and seven. Using the data collected over a six month period in these two localities, the analysis chapters return to the three main themes of the thesis.

Chapter five explores the evidence regarding the responsiveness of local community groups to local needs. Chapter six explores opportunities for volunteering and the generation of social capital and chapter seven describes the inter-organisational relations in each locality. In each of these chapters the focus of the analysis is community groups and local residents. A subsequent chapter (eight) draws the threads of these findings together in relation to two key aspects of regeneration policy that underpin the drive to turn around 'socially excluded' neighbourhoods, that is the notion of sustainable regeneration and integrated policy making. The concluding chapter rehearses the main arguments and returns to the central contention of this discussion - that the community sector operates in a social system that creates both opportunities and constraints for its development and operation. It is not necessarily the specific implementation of regeneration policy that creates these tensions, but the position of the community sector in relation to residents and the state in general. Consequently, the findings may have resonances in relation to the drive for community-led social policy more widely.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The contribution that this study makes builds on previous studies in both the voluntary sector and in regeneration areas. However, in contrast to these studies, this work focusses explicitly on community groups as the main unit of analysis thereby allowing for an in-depth exploration of a neglected area of voluntary sector research. The community sector is generally under-theorised and this work contributes to an understanding of the role that community groups play that goes beyond analyses that have focussed solely on a description of their activities.

A focus on the community sector in deprived areas contributes to our understanding of the way in which poverty, race and social exclusion are experienced by real people, linked to a theoretical framework that allows us to test some of the major assumptions that have been made regarding the benefits of community sector activity in recent years. It has long been acknowledged that social research has often failed to include ethnic minority groups into research designs. This work consequently contributes to an understanding of the patterns of community group activity that develop among ethnic minority groups.

Furthermore, this study is able to explore different levels of analysis - the individual, the group and the relations between organisations and external agencies. It will be argued in chapter one that it is only through an understanding of the relationships between these levels that fuller knowledge is gained regarding the role of the community sector in deprived areas.

This study is relevant in the context of debates about social exclusion and how people and places work together to deal with a range of social and economic problems. As Amin *et al.* (1999) have suggested, these developments are occurring far in advance of any supporting research evidence, and consequently it is judged to be both timely and important that aspects of the community sector's role is re-appraised. The study is timely in the context of New Labour's 'third way' approach to welfare where the 'hand up, not a hand out' rhetoric of policy makers supports the development of 'mutual aid' and 'self help' as antidotes to poverty.

The findings overall suggest that critical aspects of community sector involvement in deprived area regeneration are socially constructed. Therefore it is possible to generate a theory of the community sector based on a macro-level analysis of the position of the sector in relation to other spheres of social life, that explain some of the differential patterns that have been found in previous studies. Thus, although the 'local' is fragmented, differentiated and subject to conditions that vary - lending weight to the claim that locally-based solutions may be a sensible response to local problems - the local is also linked to other spheres of social life, and it is these links that create opportunities and constraints for community groups.

This thesis contends that there is a place for research that explicitly acknowledges the local community sector as an important, albeit fragmented and dispersed, part of the voluntary sector. More importantly there is an increasing need for social policy to understand more fully the demands being placed on the local community sector, and to develop theoretical understanding of the tensions and opportunities the community sector faces. This is in contrast to the simplistic model of the relationship between community activity, social cohesion and area-based regeneration that underpin the political statements with which this discussion began.

DEFINING THE KEY TERMS

The need for clarity in terminology is central to understanding the way in which the ideas in this study have developed. The following terms are used throughout the thesis to distinguish between the confusing array of overlapping terms that are used in much contemporary literature. The definitions used are not intended to imply any particular ideological or political position, but are intended to guide the reader in understanding what the terms used are intended to infer.

Locality and community

This thesis uses the term locality to refer to a geographical location within which we might expect to find a multiplicity of ‘communities of interests’ (see below). Where the term ‘community’ is used by others without any clear reference to the meaning in which it used, ‘quotation’ marks are used to indicate this.

The community sector and the voluntary sector

The voluntary sector is a broad term used in the British context to describe all the activities and organisations operating outside the public and private sectors. Attempts to define and classify the voluntary sector are numerous and diverse (see for example Kendall and Knapp, 1995) but essentially they share a view of the voluntary sector that is non-governmental; non-profit making and formal. In order to distinguish between the community sector and the voluntary sector, the latter is used to refer to the activities of mainstream organisations, usually operating at a spatial level larger than a specific locality or neighbourhood. Thus, the term voluntary sector does not include the ‘community sector’ unless stated.

The community sector is conceptualised in this thesis as a distinct sphere of activity that is both part of, yet distinct from, the mainstream voluntary sector. The term ‘community sector’ can be applied to the general collective of all community group activity, or it can be specifically tied to a locality. At a higher level of abstraction the term community sector can be used to refer to trends or issues that affect community groups generally - perhaps at a national or regional level. Both uses of the term are used here.

Community groups

The definition of community group used in this study refers to all those organisations whose aims and objectives were related to the locality or neighbourhood. This definition is wider than some used in other studies. Marshall (1995) defines community groups as voluntary organisations in which the beneficiaries include the volunteers. Whilst this was the case in most organisations included in the study, the importance of paid workers as managers of organisations and the role of management committee volunteers meant that not all volunteers were beneficiaries and not all groups were run solely by volunteers.

The term community group employed in this study refers to any organisation working within a locality whose purpose is to serve the interests of people living locally. As such, community groups may serve specific 'communities of interest' or serve all the people living in a particular place. The notion of 'community of interest' is useful for describing the way in which people identify with others on the basis of shared social characteristics, rather than spatial proximity. The ways in which community group activities reflect differences between communities of interest and how they define their role in relation to serving these different interests is explored in chapter five. The terms community group and community organisation are used interchangeably and do not reflect any particular characteristics of the group or organisation in question.

Community activity, participation and volunteering

The distinction between community activity, participation and volunteering is particularly confusing in the context of regeneration policy research where any attempt to define the different aspects of these three forms of activity is uncommon. In this study, a clear distinction is made between these terms, as follows.

Individuals involved in running and organising activities in community groups are volunteers. The definition used by national surveys of volunteering embrace the way in which volunteering was defined in this study as:

'[a]ny activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives, or to benefit the environment' (Davis Smith, 1998:14).

Volunteering is not, therefore, equated with the involvement of individual residents in consultation mechanisms that are often included in definitions of 'community involvement'. The forms that community involvement may take are varied, and participating in community groups can be conceptualised as forming one aspect of overall community involvement. The concept of 'participation' similarly embraces a wide range of mechanisms that can include volunteering, but can also be directed towards more individualised forms of involvement.

Aspects of these definitions are discussed further in subsequent chapters. Their inclusion at this stage is simply intended to offer the reader a guide to the ways in which contentious terms are generally used throughout the forthcoming discussion. With this in mind, it is pertinent to return to the contexts within which this thesis is framed in more detail. These are explored in chapter one.

CHAPTER ONE

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SOCIAL POLICY: THE CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

The context within which the community sector in Britain is understood forms the basis for this opening chapter. The discussion begins by describing features of volunteering and the community sector in Britain. Subsequently it is argued that the role of the community sector can be conceptualised with reference to the position that it holds in relation to other spheres of social life - a position that can generate both opportunities and constraints for community groups. This abstraction can be concretized by examining the way in which community groups are associated with three particular functions - service delivery, participation and local decision-making. These functions can be linked to wider social and political debates: the tension between the 'local and global'; the development of 'civil society'; and 'new local governance'. A view emerges of a series of overlapping debates regarding the role of non-governmental bodies in social life, many of which are worthy of further study in their own right. For our purposes they provide a useful context within which it is possible to locate political and ideological assumptions that underpin expectations of the community sector in deprived areas. The chapter ends by considering the current policy context. It is argued that government plans are reinforcing and enhancing the role that community groups and local people are expected to play in neighbourhood regeneration programmes, despite a paucity of evidence regarding the claims made that this will create the kinds of long term change that people living in deprived areas of England² deserve.

First, however, it is necessary to consider some of the existing evidence regarding volunteering and the community sector that earlier studies have revealed.

² The geographic reach of policy differs from that of more generalised statements about the community sector. References to 'regeneration policy' consequently refer to arrangements for England, rather than to Britain or the UK.

VOLUNTEERING AMONG LOW INCOME AND ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

The first context underpinning our understanding of community activity in deprived areas regards the relatively low levels of volunteering that have been found to occur among low income groups and ethnic minorities. National Surveys of Volunteering provide the most complete quantitative evidence of volunteering in Britain that can be compared over time. Three national surveys have been undertaken: in 1981 (Field and Hedges, 1987); in 1991 (Lynn and Davis Smith, 1992); and in 1997 (Davis Smith, 1998). These studies reveal the socio-economic characteristics of volunteers alongside some analysis of the kinds of activities that volunteers are involved in.

These surveys have consistently found that lower income groups are least likely to volunteer, and that people from ethnic minorities are similarly less likely to volunteer. The most recent survey (1997) found that those from the lowest income groups were two and a half times less likely to be involved in volunteering than those in the highest income groups, and that white respondents were more likely to volunteer (49 percent) compared with Black and Asian groups (41 percent) and 'other' ethnic groups (36 percent) (Davis Smith, 1998). White people were found to be more likely to be involved as 'regular' volunteers (30 percent compared with 23 percent for Black and Asian groups), although in terms of time commitment, Black volunteers were found to contribute equal numbers of hours per week as their white counterparts.

The survey also identified volunteering within 'local community groups' as a specific category. Davis Smith (1998) reports that 14 percent of current volunteers were involved in this category of activity, compared with 9 percent in 1991. Volunteering in local community groups and religious activity were the only two categories to see an increase since 1991. The socio-economic characteristics associated with volunteering in local groups included the following:

- Women were found to be slightly more likely (15 percent) than men (13 percent) to volunteer.
- Under 35 year olds were least likely to volunteer (10 percent) whilst middle age groups (over 45 year olds) were most likely to volunteer in this form of activity.

- Those with incomes below £6,000 per annum were least likely to participate whilst those with incomes between £6,000 and £14,999 were most likely to volunteer in this field.

Thus, the national survey suggests local community groups reflect similar patterns of volunteering as the voluntary sector generally with: lower income groups least likely to volunteer; young people least likely to volunteer; and similar proportions of men and women volunteering. However, the report does not offer any further details on the fields of activity ethnic minority groups are involved in. The report acknowledges the limitations of the data in terms of low numbers of respondents from black and minority ethnic groups (Davis Smith, 1998). National survey data is therefore limited in its capacity to explain patterns of activity and opportunities for volunteering within the community sector.

Similarly, there is a general lack of qualitative research that has considered volunteering within the community sector specifically. Some qualitative studies are useful for contextualising aspects of the volunteering debate - such as Bhasin (1997) on volunteering within ethnic minority groups, and Scott *et al.* (2000) on aspects of volunteering in different kinds of voluntary organisation. Other types of qualitative research with regard to volunteering include: studies of motivations to volunteer (Bales, 1996; Knapp *et al.*, 1995; Thomas and Finch, 1990); volunteering among unemployed people (MacDonald, 1996); the benefits of volunteering among women (Bagilhole, 1996); and volunteering in community care (Knapp *et al.*, 1996).

Little of this work has explicitly developed a position regarding the role of volunteering in the community sector. Consequently, there is a tendency to view volunteering as if it is an activity that has a homogenous expression regardless of the context within which it occurs. Horton-Smith (1994) has identified the paucity of research that has related contextual variables, such as organisational form and territory, to aspects of volunteering. Thus, it can be argued that the context within which volunteering occurs is crucial for understanding how and why some social groups remain excluded from such opportunities.

It has been argued, for example, that black and minority ethnic groups have been forced to create their own organisations because the white voluntary sector has consistently ignored their needs. These studies argued that research based on formal 'white' voluntary organisations would miss black and ethnic minority volunteering since this was more likely to occur in informal activities (Advance, 1988; Hedley and Rampersand, 1992). Thus, any exploration of volunteering among particular social groups needs to be aware of the contexts within which that activity takes place.

That some social groups remain excluded from voluntary activity is of concern to the government. Policy statements regarding volunteering clearly state the government's intention to create more opportunities for voluntary activity and to encourage more people to be involved. The Active Community Unit³ (ACU) (2000) identifies three objectives associated with increasing voluntary activity: to deliver quality services through more volunteers; to achieve more active, engaged communities, involving more people, that are able to provide mutual support and other social and economic benefits; and to contribute to the personal development, self-esteem, and well being of volunteers themselves. Thus, the policy context within which more volunteering is deemed a positive contribution to social life are clearly stated. In particular, the ACU is keen to stress the importance of volunteering in the context of social exclusion and regeneration policy, as follows:

'In particular, revival of deprived areas stands more chance of success if local people are involved in working together to solve their own problems, join self-help groups, or get involved locally in sporting, recreational or artistic activity' (ACU, 2000:8).

However, the government's aim of increasing the numbers of volunteers, and linking this to the revival of deprived areas, needs to be understood in the context of a limited pool of willing volunteers from which to draw. All the evidence points to a lack of voluntary activity within those social groups that remain the target of government campaigns to increase the numbers of people playing active voluntary roles.

³ The ACU operates within the Home Office and is charged with responsibility for promoting volunteering and community involvement and with supporting the development of active communities.

COMMUNITY GROUPS IN BRITAIN

The community sector is one context within which volunteering takes place. However, there is a paucity of knowledge regarding the community sector at a national level, and a fragmented picture of the community sector from locality based studies. Thus, the claims made by the ACU regarding the benefits of volunteering are based on limited evidence.

Existing evidence does not provide any definitive guide to the size of the community sector in Britain. In part this reflects a lack of consistency over what kinds of organisations might be included in such an endeavour. Rochester (1998) has estimated that there could be as many as one million community sector organisations in Britain, although there is no reference provided as to the source for this claim. Perri 6 and Fieldgrass (1992) could find no reliable statistics on 'community sector' organisations and therefore ignored the 'small' groups operating at a local level.

Our knowledge of the size and function of the community sector is limited to locality-based studies that have sought to identify all types of voluntary activity occurring within specific places. Few of these offer any statistical evidence regarding the size of the local community sector. The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC) funded a cross-national study of community groups between 1987 and 1992 in seven European Union countries. Across all the countries, approximately three local community organisations were found per one thousand of the population (Chanan, 1993). Similar measures of the number of organisations, per one thousand of the population, are suggested by the ACU as a means of identifying the growth of community activity in future years. It is likely, therefore, that greater attention will be paid in the future to the quantitative aspects of the community sector as government targets are set in place.

Two explanations for the relative paucity of data regarding the size and scope of the community sector in Britain can be offered. First, it has been argued that the dominance of economic-based measures to assess the significance of the voluntary sector lends itself to an emphasis on large organisations that have high levels of financial and paid staff resources (Rochester, 1998). Furthermore, Rochester argues that the changing nature of social welfare provision has reinforced the model of the 'voluntary agency' as the dominant one in an emerging voluntary sector 'industry'.

Thus, one set of explanations for the lack of research focussing on the community sector suggests that policy makers and academics are more concerned with larger organisations whose role in the provision of welfare is more dominant.

However, a second explanation for the relative paucity of national data relates to the way in which the study of community groups lends itself to particular research designs. Thus, some studies have worked with small numbers of community groups to undertake in-depth work (Butcher *et al.*, 1980) whilst others have tended to research the community sector as part of a larger locality-based study of voluntary organisations, or mutual aid (Abrams *et al.*, 1981; Knight, 1993; Knight and Hayes, 1981; Reynolds *et al.*, 1994). These studies share a tendency to study the voluntary and community sectors outside any policy context.

In contrast, other types of research concentrate on the policy context in which community groups are one of a number of dimensions being explored, for example in the regeneration policy literature where organised community sector activities are perceived as one element of an overall emphasis on 'community involvement' (Hart *et al.*, 1997; Holmes, 1992; Macfarlane, 1993; McGregor *et al.*, 1992; Power, 1994). More recently, attention has turned to the perceptions of 'community' and how these affect notions of social solidarity in deprived areas (Andersen *et al.*, 1999; Cattell and Evans, 1999; Forrest and Kearns, 1999; Silburn *et al.*, 1999; Wood and Vamplew, 1999). However, there is a general lack of critical reflection on the way that community activity is manifested within localities. Furthermore, there is a tendency for these studies to subsume community group activity within wider studies of local voluntary sectors or specific policy frameworks. This denies the increasingly important role that such organisations are being expected to play in the delivery and implementation of social policy objectives, as subsequent parts of this discussion will show.

This is not to say that the community sector operates in isolation from other spheres of social life. In fact, it can be argued that the role of the community sector in social and political life can only be understood in relation to the expectations and assumptions that derive from other sectors of society. It is to these conceptual frameworks that the discussion now turns.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY SECTOR IN SOCIAL POLICY

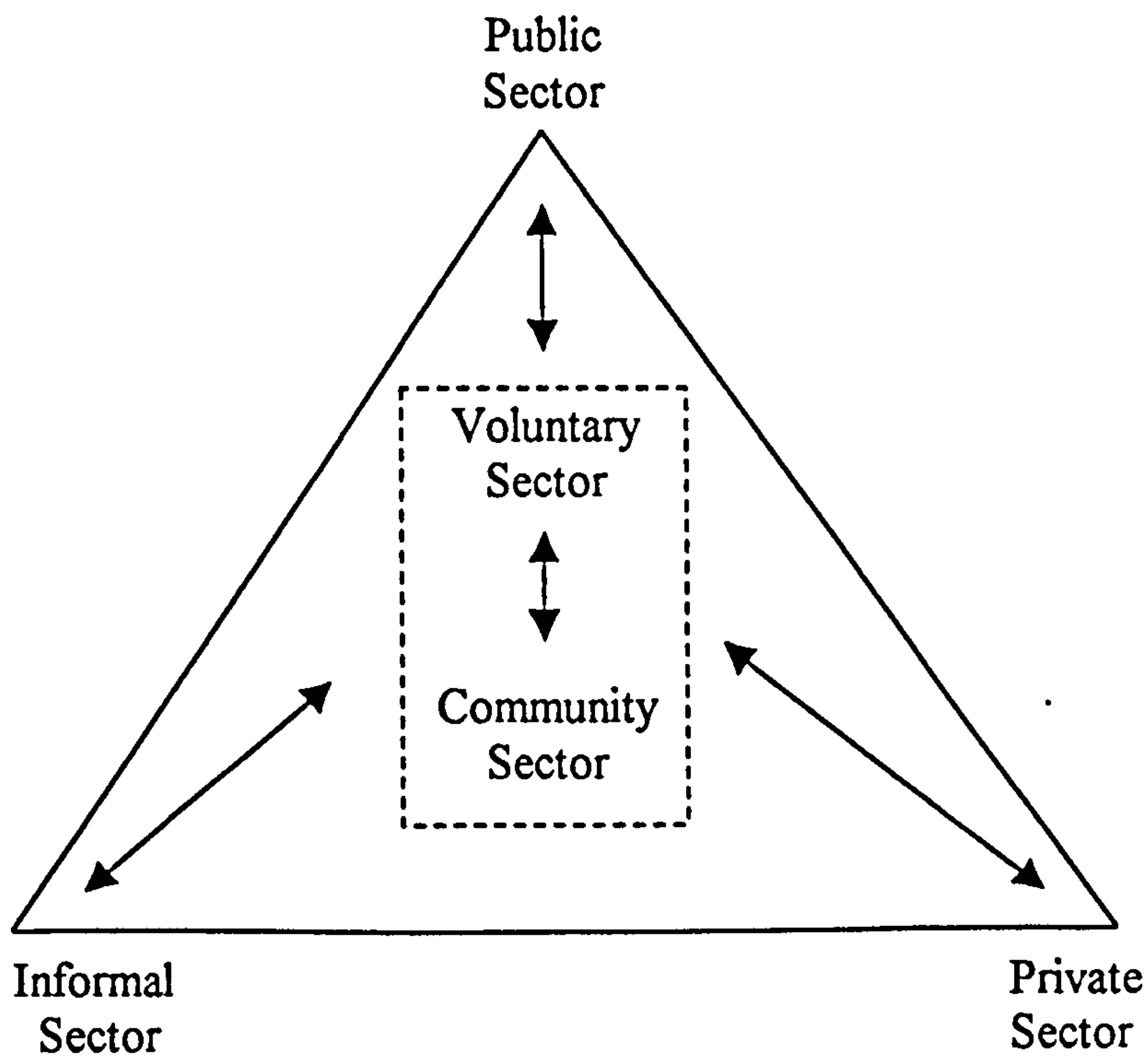
As contemporary public policy raises the profile and expectations of local community activity, it is timely and important for social policy to develop theoretical understanding of the community sector as an object of study in its own right. In doing so, it is necessary to locate the position of the community sector in relation to other aspects of social life - the public, private, voluntary and informal sectors being the most commonly used labels in terms of social welfare provision and social policy development.

Many studies of the voluntary and community sectors begin by defining or classifying organisations and their activities. The voluntary sector in particular has been the subject of intense debate regarding 'definition' and 'classification' that has resulted in a bewildering array of alternative typologies (see for example Kendall and Knapp, 1995; Salamon and Anheier, 1992). This diversity in classifications reflects Johnson's (1981) view that definitions of the voluntary sector will depend on the purpose for which they are being used - in other words they are a methodological tool rather than a theoretical one. In contrast, it is also possible to examine the community sector in terms of its relationship with other spheres of social life.

For the purposes of this introduction, Evers' (1991) model of the voluntary sector space, used by the Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector (1996), reflects the positive and active role that voluntary organisations play that goes further than simply filling gaps left by other sectors (see Figure 1.1 overleaf). The Commission argued that this model reflected the dynamic and interactive role the voluntary sector plays in society. It is also useful in the context of a 'mixed economy of welfare' because it reflects the difficulty of placing concrete boundaries around the activities taking place in each sector (see also Paton, 1991).

Figure 1.1

The community sector in social space



Evers' model has been amended slightly to include the voluntary and community sectors in the central space, allowing the relationship between these two sectors to also be portrayed.

A number of commentators have pointed to the benefits of thinking about the voluntary and community sectors in this way. Marshall (1996) argues that the sectors are 'evolutionary social phenomena that develop (and change their nature) in interaction with each other' (Marshall, 1996:54). Consequently he argues that 'we do not have an adequate conception of the voluntary sector in relation to other social sectors' (Marshall, 1996:46). In fact, attention has been paid to researching issues that lie at these boundaries. Within the voluntary sector literature, increasing interest regarding the state-voluntary sector boundary has raised questions relating to efficiency, accountability, legitimacy and evaluation (see for example Billis and Harris, 1996), thus reflecting Scott *et al.*'s claim that

'voluntary agencies are not solitary organisational islands; they operate within a broader "ecology" of resources, legislation, policy and organisational relationships' (Scott *et al.*, 2000:50).

The relationship between the informal sector and the state has also been the subject of research agendas that have focussed on the way in which informal self-help strategies can provide 'coping' mechanisms in deprived neighbourhoods (Burns and Taylor, 1998; Williams and Windebank, 1999). The boundary between the informal sector and the voluntary and community sectors can be particularly blurred in relation to community group activity and volunteering. Marshall (1995) points to the way in which informal care shares the altruistic nature of volunteering but lacks the formal aspects of community or voluntary group organisation. Furthermore, the boundary between the public and private sectors has been widely theorised in relation to welfare provision generally. Less attention however, has been given to the community sector and its relationships with these other sectors.

The idea of the community sector operating within a social space that overlaps aspects of the voluntary, informal, public and private sectors implies some kind of relationship between the community sector and these other spheres of social life. This relationship can be characterised as one of mutual dependency (for example those theories that emphasise the necessary civil society function of participation in associations); one of oppression (for example those theories that emphasise the way in which the state defines the role of the sector); or one of dominance (for example those theories that argue for an increased and dominant role for locality based welfare provision). In fact, it is more useful to think of these relationships as tension ridden and negotiated. The sector may 'win' in some areas but 'lose' in others. The push-pull effect of government policy, combined with the requirements of the people community groups serve indicate a series of tensions that are rarely explored empirically.

This approach to conceptualising the position of the community sector has much in common with social network approaches to the study of 'community'. In particular, the work of Wellman (1979, 1988, Wellman *et al.*, 2000) draws attention to the way in which network approaches help to 'locate people in small-scale social structures, and links them to large-scale institutions' (Wellman, 2000:131). Similarly Bulmer (1989) identifies 'intermediary structures' to show the function that community institutions play in connecting the individual to wider society. This connecting function is reminiscent of earlier attempts to emphasise the role that 'mediating structures' could play in implementing policy goals (Berger and Neuhaus, 1977).

By moving away from classifications and definitions that rely upon descriptive aspects of what community groups do (Marshall, 1995) or where they operate (Alcock, 1996) it is possible to imagine a more dynamic and flexible community sector whose operations and organisational forms are affected by activities and influences that are not always generated from within the community sector itself.

Despite adopting a generalised approach to thinking about the relationship between the community sector and other sectors of welfare provision, it is possible to discern at least three functions most commonly associated with community groups: service delivery, participation, and involvement in local decision making. The next section describes these functions in more detail, arguing that each has become increasingly politicised as government policy has found solace in the 'community' as both a site for policy intervention and a source of legitimation.

THE MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

Most commentaries that refer to the community sector list the attributes, functions and organisational forms of groups in ways that can obscure both the underlying principles these characteristics represent, and lead to a lack of clarity regarding the relationship between different aspects of such characteristics.

A recent example can be found in the 'seven criteria' for community groups developed by the national umbrella body for community organisations in Britain, Community Matters (2000). The list of criteria they present in order to raise the profile of community groups suggests these can be, or provide, the following:

- A voice to represent issues of local concern
- An independent and politically neutral organisation
- A service provider for local people
- An initiator of projects to meet locally defined needs
- A builder of partnerships with other local organisations and groups
- A strong local network of people and organisations
- A means to engage local people to become active in their communities

These 'lists' can be deconstructed into three particular functions: the role of community groups as service providers; the participatory opportunities offered by community groups; and the role of community groups in local decision making.

Community groups and service delivery

The provision of services to local people is a key function of community groups. Chanan (1992) defines local community action as

‘any collective, public .. effort involving the unpaid participation of inhabitants which addresses the perceived needs of people living in that locality’ (Chanan, 1992:3).

Locally provided services may take the form of ‘self-help’ and ‘mutual aid’; organised service delivery through groups that have paid workers reporting to management committees; or more highly developed organisational forms as exemplified by ‘community development ‘organisations’ (see for example Thake, 1995). Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that community groups can adopt different strategies to respond to local needs: they can use resources to tackle problems directly by providing services and/or use resources to influence others to improve provision (Butcher *et al.*, 1980; Duggan and Ronayne, 1991). Thus, the way in which services are provided by community groups, and the kinds of organisational forms that develop within localities to serve these needs differs, but the underlying principle that the community sector is beneficial because it offers local responses to locally defined needs remains a key characteristic of community sector activity.

The link between community group activity and responsiveness to local needs is well rehearsed in the literature. Galtung (1980) argues that collective self-reliance: prioritises local needs rather than assumed needs; assures ongoing local control by users; can make the most of local resources through local knowledge; and is compatible with local conditions, thus allowing diverse activities to emerge. Taylor (1997) perceives this diversity as important because it allows the voluntary and community sectors to respond to the greatest range of need across diverse ‘communities’ and allows the widest range of resources to be brought to bear on meeting need. Others identify the role of local groups in meeting the needs of excluded and ‘hard to reach’ groups (Brown *et al.*, 2000; Thake, 1995).

Thus, service provision by community groups is closely identified with the needs of marginalised groups and strategies to combat poverty. For some commentators community based activity is an inevitable response to poverty-related problems and should consequently be supported and nurtured by the state. Power (1994) argues that the more extreme the problems, the more likely it is that shared initiative will be used to overcome them: 'therefore in marginal areas, attempts at community initiative and collective problem-solving are more common than in more stable, successful areas' (Power, 1994:39). Similarly Mulgan and Landry (1998) associate mutual aid activities with 'time rich and money poor' areas or sections of society, where high unemployment and economic malaise provide incentives for people to fill gaps in provision.

For Milofsky (1988) community organisations are essential for 'the distribution of collective goods to groups and to localities which have never succeeded in accumulating much political capital for themselves' (Milofsky, 1988:17). Local economic development in the form of Local Exchange Trading Schemes (LETS) and credit unions are often cited examples of the kinds of 'innovative' solutions to local problems that can work at a local level (Macfarlane, 1997; Mulgan and Landry, 1998). Gregory (1998) identifies the role that community groups play in service delivery within a 'mixed economy' of welfare provision on social housing estates. As such, community groups are perceived as part of the 'problem' of un-coordinated responses to the needs of people living on estates. Yet at the same time, community groups are perceived as part of the solution through the establishment of new groups and involvement in local partnerships (Gregory, 1998).

Most commentators see these kinds of locally based strategies as 'complementary' to national social policy (Chanan and Vos, 1990; Donnison, 1991; Macfarlane, 1997). This 'complementary' approach to the service delivery functions of community groups has, in part, developed from the assumption that local activity is limited in its capacity to solve the underlying structural causes of poverty and deprivation (Cockburn, 1977; Donnison, 1993; Emmanuel, 1993; Hudson, 1994; Willmott, 1986). In addition to the limited ability of community groups to act upon economic problems whose roots are seen to lie elsewhere, criticisms have also been levied at the overall distributional capacity of community activity.

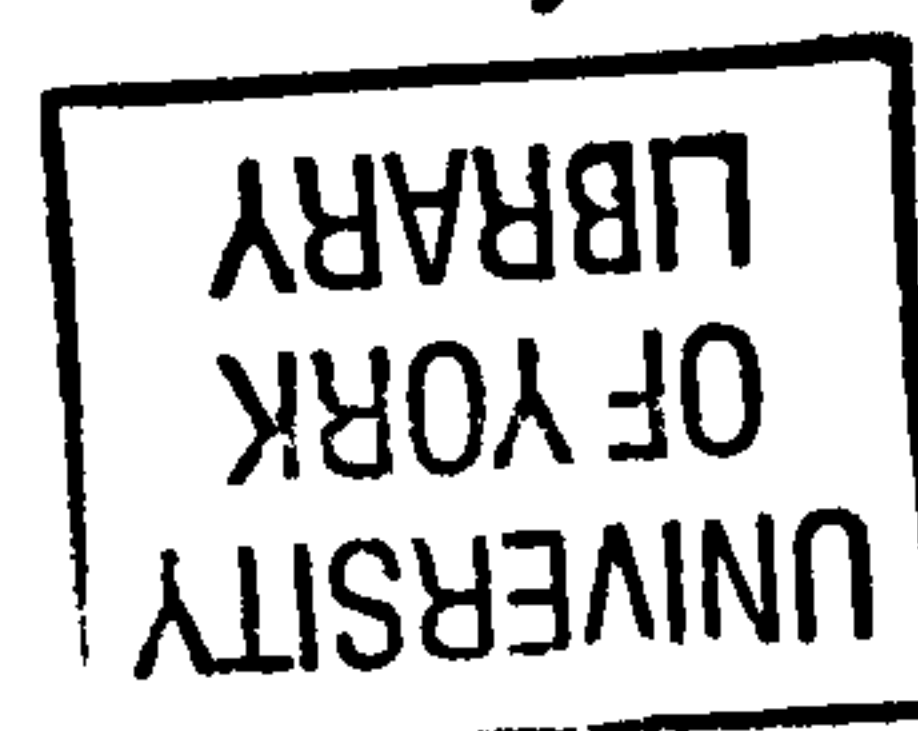
This has led to assertions that the campaigning role of community activity might bring benefits to the locality in terms of additional statutory provision, but this might be at the cost of other localities and therefore does not affect overall levels of resource allocation (Cochrane, 1986; Cockburn, 1977; Saunders, 1979). More recently, it has been argued that locally based economic activity offers little prospect for any alternative to the mainstream:

‘The constraints of localised economic regeneration efforts raise the prospect that what is being created are, in effect, ‘ghetto economies’, which can do little more than ensure the short-term re-circulation of grant funding and the limited disposable income of local people’ (Amin *et al.*, 1999:16).

Despite these criticisms of the capacity of local activity to affect the underlying causes of poverty, there remains an attachment to the salience of locally provided responses to social problems. For some, the future of welfare provision lies in extending the role of voluntary and community sectors. Hirst’s (1998) model of ‘associative democracy’ is a widely cited example of a model of welfare that presumes that voluntary and community organisations offer the kind of plurality of self-governing organisations, lying outside the state, that can meet basic needs in the future. Similar calls for an extension of voluntary welfare provision were made in the early 1980s (Gladstone, 1979; Hadley and Hatch, 1981), leading to a critical debate regarding the role of the voluntary sector in welfare provision (Brenton, 1985).

In the 1990s, the service delivery function of community groups is rarely questioned to the same extent. Although there are criticisms about the relationship between local activity and wider social change, the principle that collectively provided responses to social problems should be encouraged remains on the political agenda. Today, research is more likely to defend the community sector’s role in service delivery and seek ways to enable its development (Fearnley and McInroy, 1999; Taylor, 1997; Thake, 1995).

Issues relating to these service delivery functions consequently raise questions regarding the relationship between community groups and the state/public sector and between community groups and the informal sector.



In relation to the state, Leat (1995a) has shown how social policies can influence demand for community group services - for example by creating new layers of poverty as the implementation of the Social Fund did. Alternatively the state can directly fund service delivery functions, although with contradictory results for community groups, for example state directed funding can constrain community group's capacity to respond to local needs by setting the 'dominant' agenda regarding definitions of social problems.

As users and consumers of services, local residents similarly play an important role in maintaining community groups. It is resident needs that community groups are purported to represent. Duggan and Ronayne (1991) argue that community groups offer users flexibility and breadth of provision, although it may be that tensions arise between the requirements of the state as primary funder and residents about the definition of needs that community groups represent and mediate.

Thus, in the context of fragmented and diverse communities within localities, it may be pertinent to address questions of how and why some needs come to be met by community groups rather than others. As Chanan (1992) points out 'the local community sector is important in all localities, but it is likely to take a different shape according to the prevalence of particular problems or preferences in each place' (Chanan, 1992:138). Furthermore, there remains a gap in the literature regarding what kinds of organisational forms are able to develop the kinds of diverse responses to need that many commentators refer to.

Community groups and participation

At the level of macro-social theory the benefits deriving from community activity are often couched in terms of 'civil society', through the opportunities for participation and volunteering they provide. Through independent community and voluntary organisations it is held that citizens can participate in activities that allow for dissent from official orthodoxy when necessary, and contribute to 'healthy democracy' (Chanan and Vos, 1990; Knight *et al.*, 1998).

The historical importance of these forms of 'voluntary association' in liberal democracies is exemplified in the writings of de Tocqueville during the nineteenth century:

'Among laws controlling human societies there is one more precise and clearer, it seems to me, than all the others. If men are to remain civilised or to become civilised, the art of association must develop and improve among them at the same speed as quality of condition spreads' (de Tocqueville, 1850:517).

This celebration of community association in the nineteenth century has been reinvigorated in the decades since the establishment of the welfare state. Berger and Neuhaus (1977) saw the intermediary functions of community activity as a means of

'reducing the anomic precariousness of individual existence in isolation from society and the threat of alienation to the public order' (Berger and Neuhaus, 1977:3).

More recently, claims for this 'intermediary' role for voluntary and community organisations has been clearly, if somewhat grandiosely, stated in the voluntary sector literature:

'The voluntary [and community] sector comprises those mediating institutions through which individuals can share in and contribute to, meaningful association, the cultural stock of the nation, the material and psychological commonweal, and political action' (Marshall, 1996:58).

There are two related aspects to these claims that require some explanation. At one level, there is a general claim that voluntary and community association contributes to the totality of social life as expressed in claims regarding the importance of participation as a badge of citizenship (Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector, 1996); or the relationship between freedom of association and democracy (Beveridge, 1948). Thus, there is an assumption that community groups form part of an associational life that generally enhances democracy.

The participation of individuals in community groups manifests itself as 'volunteering'. By providing opportunities for volunteering, it is argued that community groups can contribute to the development of 'meaningful civil society where individuals and groups are neither economically nor socially excluded' (Knight *et al.*, 1998) whilst also assisting in the 'rebuilding' of 'communities' (Knight, 1998).

However, whilst volunteers are seen to be particularly important to community organisations (Taylor, 1997), the evidence presented above suggests that the availability of volunteers varies according to income and ethnicity, and thus it may be premature to assume that a pool of willing volunteers exists to rebuild communities or participate in a socially inclusive civil society.

Increasingly, the term 'social capital' is used to refer to the kinds of networks and reciprocal relations that are assumed to develop between individuals involved in 'associational life' (see for example Putnam, 1995a). The ways in which community groups live up to expectations regarding the development of 'social capital' in the context of deprivation and social exclusion are therefore of contemporary relevance. King and Wickham-Jones (1999) have argued that the Labour government's concern with social exclusion is 'easily' understood in terms of theories of social capital. They argue that policies such as New Deal for Communities and the establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) are underpinned by a renewed vigour in the emphasis placed by politicians on the importance of social capital for economic and social improvements for poorer sections of society. These expectations for 'social capital' have also been expressed many times in political speeches by Tony Blair:

'We have always said that human capital is the core of the new economy. But increasingly it is also social capital that matters too - the capacity to get things done, to co-operate, the magic ingredient that makes all the difference. Too often in the past government programmes damage social capital - sending in the experts but ignoring community organisations, investing in bricks and mortar but not in people. In the future we need to invest in social capital as surely as we invest in skills and buildings. The voluntary sector is .. showing the way, making the links between rebuilding communities and rebuilding economic opportunity' (Blair, 1999).

This commitment to the principle of volunteering as the basis for developing social capital, and as an anti-dote to social exclusion has been followed up in government policy. The Prime Minister has called for a 'step change' in volunteering that has been translated into a target for 'one million more people being active in their communities' by 2004 (Treasury, 2000). A range of initiatives have consequently been launched by the ACU at a national level, including national media campaigns and increased funding for voluntary organisations. For those on low incomes, the government's plans for increased volunteering are targeted through the New Deal for Communities and the promise of funding for small community groups. The government's strategy for increasing the numbers of people volunteering are clearly related to those social theories that have emphasised the importance of voluntary activity in maintaining and developing 'civil society' more generally. In deprived areas, the government's strategies are linked to regeneration policy specifically and the more explicit aims of developing capacity within the community sector to contribute to economic and social change at the local level.

The claims made with regard to opportunities for involvement in community groups are also related to specific welfare debates. In particular, the claims that community groups typically have flat structures and/or encourage participation by their users (Burns and Taylor, 1998; Chanan, 1999; Leat, 1995b; Marshall, 1996; Mulgan and Landry, 1995; Taylor, 1997) consolidates the view that they can be more responsive to local needs. The participation by users in community groups has consequently been associated historically with the perceived lack of responsiveness and user participation in statutory services. Thus, attention is drawn to the relationship between assumptions about the capacity of community groups to offer opportunities for volunteering and user participation that, in part, contribute to a more widespread assumption that such groups have a contribution to make to both maintaining civil society, through developing social capital, and to offering a voice for users, through participatory structures.

The urban policy issue turns on the way in which building social capital and 'empowered' residents can underpin the development of organisational capacity that can sustain regeneration projects after the initial funding injection has ended. Concepts of social capital and empowerment have also been invoked to support the development of groups so that people can learn to 'help themselves'.

Thus, volunteering in community groups is one way in which people can develop social capital which, in turn, it is believed, will enhance the organisation's capacity and improve the quality of local life. Where service delivery can be associated with responding to material poverty in terms of the delivery of services in response to local needs, the volunteering and participatory aspects of community group activity correspond to wider notions of 'social exclusion' that encapsulate both material deprivation and the inability of poorer sections of society to participate fully in social and political life (Geddes, 1997).

The contribution that community groups can make to developing social capital through volunteering remains under-researched. This thesis develops a critical response to the claims made in favour of social capital as a contribution to the on-going debate.

Community groups and collaborative working

The relationship between community groups and local decision making has changed over time, and reflects particular concerns regarding the role of the state in relation to community group activity. During the 1970s and early 1980s there is clear emphasis in radical community work literature on the role of community activity as a mechanism to promote alternatives to unresponsive state provided welfare (see for example Mayo, 1980). Locally based politics offered potential to transcend traditional class divisions (Castells, 1978, 1983) and to extend representative democracy by redefining politics as 'a process which stretches from the daily experience of ordinary life to wider decisions about resource allocation' (Cochrane, 1986:53).

However, as the relationship between welfare and the state began to shift through the 1980s and 1990s, so too did the claims regarding local community activity and its place in the 'mixed economy of welfare'. More positive relations have been fostered between the state and the community sector as the former has sought to encourage the involvement of 'the community' in local decision-making.

Consequently, the rhetoric of 'partnership' and 'collaboration', associated with new local governance, has come to pervade the community sector. From compacts with central government to the recently announced local strategic partnerships there is clearly a role for community organisations being developed.

Generally, these trends are being received positively. Pacione (1992) has argued that partnerships and decentralisation offers community groups the chance to compete and influence decisions in economic and political spheres. Others have identified the need for more state support to enable the community sector to contribute to these developments (Chanan, 1990, 1992, 1999; Duggan and Ronayne, 1991; Emmanuel, 1993; Taylor, 2000a).

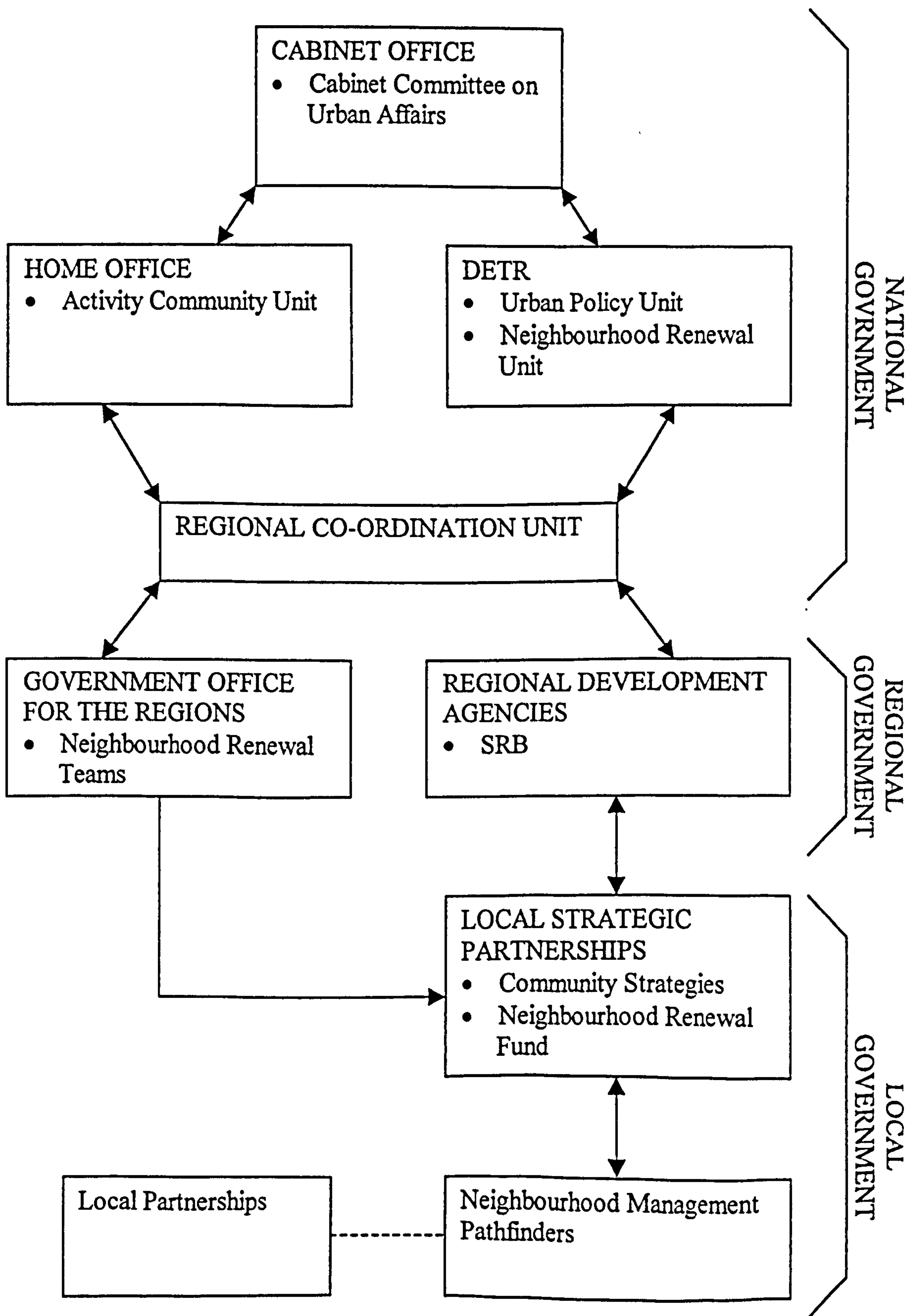
Debates about 'partnership' and new local governance move policy implementation theories on from the dichotomy of 'bottom-up' versus 'top-down' approaches and the role of community organisations within these (see Willmott, 1989). Instead, focus has been switched to the relative power of the 'community' to influence partnerships and decision making. Generally, the regeneration research agenda in terms of the 'community' has been framed in a policy context - the key argument being that the failure of area-based policy in the past contributed to the view that the 'community' had to be involved if policy was to succeed in the future.

However, there is evidence that the shift towards greater 'community involvement' is also reflecting more general trends in governance. Healey (1998) argues that new local governance represents the replacement of traditional models of welfare statism, based on hierarchy and bureaucracy, with 'partnerships' and 'collaboration'. Rose (1996) has argued that this signals an assertion of 'community' over 'social' as the primary site for state intervention, as the effect of globalisation and critiques of state welfare have contributed to a 'complex re-configuration of the territory of government'. The current agenda for the modernisation of local government has been associated with 'communitarian' perspectives (Ross and Osborne, 1999) that Rose (1996) describes as an 'anti-political' motif which is itself evidence of a mutation in thinking whereby 'community' is seen as 'the space in which powers and responsibilities previously allocated to politicians might be relocated'.

The government's latest proposals for 'joined-up' policy making in deprived areas reflects the way in which the local is now locked into a series of inter-agency partnerships that stretch from 'communities' through to the highest levels of central government (see Figure 1.2 overleaf). These arrangements reflect the complexity that Rose (1996) has identified and raise questions about the role of the community sector in relation to these overlapping constituencies of power.

Figure 1.2

Layers of governance in regeneration policy (Jan 2000)



The layers of government represented in Figure 1.2 (previous page) have been further complicated in the re-organisation of government that has taken place since the June 2001 election. The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) has become the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR). The DTLR retains responsibility for regeneration policy at national government level and three new units have been established to deal with the main policies and programmes. These three units are composed of: the 'Regional Policy and Regeneration Unit' which is responsible for policies with regional impact and those delivered through Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), including the SRB programme; the 'Neighbourhood Renewal Unit' which is responsible for the implementation of the Action Plan for Neighbourhood Renewal and the New Deal for Communities programme; and the 'Urban Unit' which is responsible for the development of town and city scale developments and the delivery of specific proposals contained within the Urban White Paper *'Our Towns and Cities'* (DETR, 2000a).

DTLR has lost its control over the RDAs, which are henceforth sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), although individual departments retain responsibility for their programmes - hence DTLR continues to be responsible for the implementation of regeneration policy. However, with little direct control over the RDAs the extent to which DTLR can influence regional policy may be curtailed in future. Furthermore, responsibility for Regional Co-ordination Units and Government Offices for the Regions (GORs) are now part of Cabinet Office - increasing this department's control over regional affairs.

At the local level there are no changes, although the lines of accountability that operate from regional level up to national level are increasingly complex and involve three major departments: DTLR, DTI and Cabinet Office. How far this complexity will affect local decision-making remains to be seen, but the implication that a series of powerful government departments will be involved in decision-making suggests that issues of accountability will be more difficult to identify in future.

All these changes rest upon a belief in 'joined-up' policy making and the capacity of sub-committees and co-ordination units to adopt cross-departmental decision-making practices that have, in the past, proved illusive.

It might be argued that such changes are of little relevance to community groups operating in deprived areas. The reality, however, is that co-ordination at a national level continues to rest upon the ability of RDAs and local authorities to present and promote a co-ordinated approach to regeneration policy that includes a 'community' voice.

This thesis argues that patterns of local networks and inter-organisational working within and between community groups underpin new local governance. Increasingly, evidence suggests that it is the networks within localities that generate capacity for involvement in 'partnerships' (Skelcher *et al.*, 1996). Others have identified the importance of community groups as the intermediary institutional forms between individuals and access to the public policy process (Verba *et al.*, 1995). Thus, the role of community groups in local governance goes beyond simply representing local views at the level of partnership. Instead, community groups can be re-conceptualised as part of a local social system, embedded in the social relationships and tensions that symbolise 'community'.

New local governance also corresponds with aspects of the debate regarding 'social exclusion'. Geddes (1997) argues that

'partnership at the local level may be seen to reflect the need for spatially targeted, multi-dimensional and multi-agency strategies for excluded communities, including the involvement of excluded groups themselves' (Geddes, 1997:11).

Geddes also draws attention to the way in which greater involvement by community groups in decision-making processes is based upon their 'intimate knowledge of the needs of specific communities' (Geddes, 1997:49).

Thus, collaborative working, new local governance structures and community group involvement in decision-making can be seen to encompass assumptions regarding aspects of participation and the identification of social need that complete our trilogy of community group functions.

This section has argued that the three functions most commonly associated with community group activities at a local level can be placed within a social and political context where complex debates are played out at the level of the locality. These include: the relevance of the 'local' in a 'global' economy; debates regarding the 'democratic deficit' and how far voluntary associationalism can contribute to an invigorated democracy; and how far decision-making can be passed down to the local level. These questions operate at a level of abstraction far removed from the day-to-day workings of community groups in local areas. Nonetheless, debates about need, social capital and inter-organisational relations can be seen to be linked to much wider social and political trends.

To complete this discussion of the contexts within which community groups in deprived areas operate, the chapter ends with an overview of the current regeneration policy context and how the Labour government perceives local community activity.

REGENERATION POLICY AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

In 1997 when the plan for the research was conceived, the SRB was the major regeneration policy strategy in place in England. The stated objective of SRB is to

'enhance the quality of life of local people in areas of need by reducing the gap between deprived and other areas, and between different groups' (DETR, 2000b: 16.02.2001).

Despite the commitment to 'areas of need' the mechanisms for attracting SRB monies are not necessarily leading to the most deprived areas receiving funds. The SRB is a competitive bidding programme - places compete with each other to obtain government funding. Although the basis of the bids has to be some identification of need, the successful bids are those that can demonstrate future success. Thus, SRB is not necessarily targeted at the most deprived areas - a good bid is likely to be successful despite relative levels of need.

The two key features of the SRB programme that have remained in place since its establishment in 1994 are an emphasis on 'partnership' as the mechanism for planning, delivery and implementation of policy at a local level; and evidence of 'community involvement' as a prerequisite for funding.

'Community involvement' in SRB means that local people should be involved in the preparation and implementation of bids (DETR, 1998). Poor evaluations of 'community involvement' through the 1990s has led to an increased emphasis on this aspect of the regeneration process in recent years. The bidding guidance for round five of the SRB stated the requirements for community involvement clearly:

'In submitting bids, partnerships should.. indicate how local communities have been involved in the development of the bid; how the partnership will ensure the local community will have a say in decisions; what the role of the local community will be in the implementation of the bid; and what arrangements will be put in place to fund local community projects' (DETR, 1998:1).

The commitment that regeneration policy has shown towards the principles of partnership and community involvement in deprived areas thus provided an initial justification for using this policy as a context to examining the community sector. Over the intervening period the government's commitment to partnership and community involvement has been extended. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the latest government initiatives for deprived areas, emanating from the work of the SEU's (1998) report *'Bringing Britain Together'*. The strategies currently being pursued by the government in 'neighbourhood renewal' reflect the high profile given to the community sector in attempts to overcome poverty and social exclusion.

The government's National Strategy Action Plan for Neighbourhood Renewal drew on the work of eighteen Policy Action Teams (PATs), established in the aftermath of the SEU's 1998 report, to consider various aspects of policy development from employment and housing to neighbourhood management and community self help. Between 1998 and 2000 these teams produced 569 recommendations, of which 491 have been included in the National Strategy Action Plan (SEU, 2001).

Furthermore, in June 2000 the SEU published *'Minority Ethnic Issues in Social Exclusion and Neighbourhood Renewal'* which brought together the 85 PAT recommendations that related specifically to ethnic minority issues, of which 72 have also been implemented in the action plan.

This national strategy rests upon creating an integrated and cross departmental approach to tackling social exclusion in the most deprived areas of England. As such it represents 'the future' in terms of targeted anti-poverty strategies in England (SEU, 2001).

It comes as no surprise to find that the key management strategy underpinning the action plan is 'partnership' working. A central role is given to communities themselves in the management of programmes and in the development of local renewal strategies. The action plan goes much further than earlier regeneration schemes in terms of establishing the mechanisms for partnership working, and seeking to link these to regional and national government. All local authorities will be expected to produce a 'community strategy' based on widespread consultation. The strategy therefore presumes that decision-making must be based on locally defined priorities:

'We will only achieve real, sustainable change if local people are in the driving seat from the start, tailoring strategies to local needs' (DETR, 2000c: 16.11.2000).

'Local Strategic Partnerships' (LSP) based at local authority level are to involve all stakeholders in the process of establishing the community strategies. In eighty eight of the most deprived local authority areas the LSPs will be supported by 'Neighbourhood Renewal Funds' to support local capacity building as a route to involvement by local people. Alongside these developments, the government has invited bids for fifteen 'Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders' from eighty three local authority areas that include two or more of the most deprived wards in England, excluding areas with New Deal for Communities funding (DETR, 2001).

The importance of community activity to the strategy for renewal was clearly stated by the PAT report on 'community self-help' (PAT 9):

'It can reasonably be said that community self-help.. underpins [all the other seventeen reports]. Without effective self help it is unlikely that any other measures of community regeneration, however well resourced, will provide long term solutions to long term problems' (PAT 9, 1999:1).

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CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of inter-related histories that provide the context to the contemporary role of community groups in area-based regeneration. The first concerns the history of community-based activity which, in much of the post-1945 period has been closely related to developments in the voluntary sector more widely. These two related histories are combined here with a history of urban policy and its concern with area-based initiatives as the appropriate location for state-directed policy for the city. These historical accounts are underpinned by wider social and political reforms associated with the development of welfare, and in particular, with ideological shifts regarding the relationship between the voluntary and community sectors and the state.

Unlike more theoretical attempts to contextualise the development of welfare policy (for example Hasson and Ley, 1997; Pierson, 1991), this is essentially a descriptive account of developments in urban policy and the community sector. However, it is underpinned by an argument that contemporary issues in urban policy and community involvement have their roots in the past and need to be understood with reference to social, political and economic change.

The chapter is broadly chronological in structure, although some cross-period referencing is included where this is relevant. The discussion begins with a brief review of voluntary sector and urban policy developments pre-welfare state. This is followed by a brief review of policy developments in the immediate post-war period (to the 1960s). The major part of the discussion looks at developments in both the voluntary and community sectors and urban policy from the late 1960s to the mid-1990s. It is argued that urban policy in the 1990s brought area-based regeneration and community groups together as attempts to reverse urban decline took a new direction.

DEVELOPMENTS PRE-1945

The community and voluntary sectors

The pre-1945 period reveals the way in which the fortunes of community based organisations have been tied to developments in state welfare since at least the nineteenth century. In particular the fate that befell working class mutual societies provides a powerful example of how far the state has been able to manipulate the activities of community groups.

The friendly societies and co-operative movements of the nineteenth century were associated with Northern working class districts and the provision of sickness, medical and funeral insurance (Clarke, 1990; Green, 1998). The friendly society movement has been described as ‘perhaps the most important working class movement’ of the Victorian age, with membership in 1872 estimated at 4 million people (Davis Smith, 1995:30).

These friendly societies, and the mutual aid function they represented, was perceived as both a threat and an opportunity by governments at the time. On the one hand friendly societies and co-operatives were seen to develop providence among the poor as well as demonstrating that the ‘respectable’ poor could help themselves (Kendall and Knapp, 1996). In addition, the state saw friendly societies and mutual aid as a means of maintaining a minimal welfare burden by actively encouraging their formation. By promoting the principle of ‘less eligibility’, the Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) was effectively hoping to force working people to take out insurance for themselves. Davis Smith (1995) comments that ‘the growth of friendly society membership during the second half of the [nineteenth] century suggests that the aim was achieved to some extent’ (Davis Smith, 1995:33). However, there is also evidence that the establishment of large working class societies was also perceived as a threat by the state. Davis Smith (1995:32) argues that there was concern that the societies were a cover for ‘seditious activity in the wake of revolutions in France’ and that they provided a means for working class rebellion to be incited.

This dual notion of ‘threat and opportunity’ arising from community based activity is one that continues throughout the twentieth century as community activity seeks to campaign against the state whilst simultaneously being funded by the state (Twelvetrees, 1996). In the period before 1945, however, the friendly societies were to suffer at the hands of state welfare expansion.

As the state expanded its role in the provision of social assistance, the working class mutual aid movement was marginalised (Davis Smith, 1995). The Old Age Pension Act of 1908 and the National Insurance Act, 1911, took aspects of the friendly societies work into state control. Although the 1930s saw hunger marches and mass demonstrations by unemployed working class men, alternative forms of self help and community based activity on a large scale were not to re-emerge until the 1960s, as a reaction against the development of centralised welfare services.

Meanwhile the voluntary sector continued to provide core welfare services such as education and hospitals. Mass unemployment through the 1930s also saw voluntary organisations providing short-term relief on a large scale to unemployed men and their families. Thus, the voluntary sector's role in the provision of welfare services was central in the laissez-faire pre-welfare state regime. Beatrice Webb argued that the inter-war period saw the voluntary sector and the state operating like parallel bars - with the roles and functions of each clearly delineated (Brenton, 1985). However, the developments post-1945 were to lead the voluntary sector into new roles, and also to change the focus of community activity towards a more radical position.

Urban policy

There is no sense in the available literature that urban policy in the pre-1945 period was interested in either local community activity or the voluntary sector, although two aspects of state directed regional policy in this period are relevant to this discussion. First, the start of slum clearance programmes and the development of new suburban housing estates began to see the kinds of relocation policies that were later blamed, in part, for the social problems that manifested themselves in inner city areas. This is the first example of the way in which urban policy can have unintended consequences for social and economic life and are a precursor to the kinds of criticisms levied at urban policy pursued in the 1980s.

Second, the spatial dimensions of poverty began to inform regional policy as governments found it increasingly difficult to ignore the regional disparities in prosperity between the South and the Midlands, and the North, Wales and Scotland (Burton, 1995).

The emerging 'special areas' of the inter-war period were designed to stimulate regional economies whilst a Royal Commission was established to examine the causes of uneven development and recommend appropriate government action (Burton, 1995). The area-based focus of urban policy has continued throughout the twentieth century - albeit in more targeted forms.

1945 TO 1969: STATE CENTRALISATION AND THE REFORMED VOLUNTARY SECTOR

In the context of a social democratic welfare state based on centralised planning of the economy and welfare provision, it was not surprising that the community sector and the voluntary sector struggled to develop new roles. Beatrice Webb argued that the voluntary sector was henceforth perceived as part of the welfare ladder - extending and complementing state welfare provision rather than acting independently (Brenton, 1985). In the urban policy field, the central tenets of state planning also influenced policy making - although a new social dimension to the need for social control in urban areas unfolded as issues related to immigration began to emerge.

Marginalising the role of the community and voluntary sectors

The literature is clear that the role of friendly societies and mutual aid suffered the ultimate blow in the post-1945 period as state provided social assistance was introduced (Deakin, 1995; Taylor, 1995a). This was despite the views of William Beveridge who argued that the friendly societies could, and should, remain central to the social assistance programme (Beveridge, 1948). It has been suggested that there were ideological reactions against the community and voluntary sectors that railed against their inclusion in post-war welfare reforms. The philanthropic and charitable motive of voluntary action did not sit well with the Labour party of 1945 (Brenton, 1985) and the commitment to central planning marginalised the co-operative movement, which was to remain in the shadows until the 1970s (Taylor, 1995a).

More attention has been paid to the changing fortunes of the voluntary sector in the post-war period. The tendency has been to concentrate on the reduced role of voluntary provision as state welfare expanded (Knight, 1993). Certainly, the loss of delivery functions in health and education did signal a demise for some voluntary organisations (Taylor,

However, others have pointed to the resilience of the voluntary sector in the face of change. Roof's (1957) audit of voluntary sector activity found a proliferation of work in maternity and child welfare services as well as mental health services and services for the blind. Residential services for the elderly and domiciliary care was also provided by the voluntary sector in the immediate post-war period (Taylor, 1995a). Brenton (1985) has argued that these complimentary roles may not have emerged had the voluntary sector remained a central provider of key services in health and education. Furthermore, Brenton draws attention to the way that the voluntary sector began to develop an independent 'watch-dog' role over state welfare provision that was to gain in importance in the 1960s as the centralised welfare statism characterising the immediate post-war period began to be questioned.

Urban policy and the threat of urban unrest

In the urban policy field centralised welfare planning can also be discerned. Whilst the north-south divide had stimulated government action in the pre-war period around economic stimulation, the post war period saw a more rational social planning approach being implemented in housing and planning policy. The New Towns programme sought to decentralise populations to suburban locations in response to problems of inner-city overcrowding and urban sprawl (Burton, 1995; Lawless, 1979; McKay and Cox, 1979). This process of out-migration caused its own problems as the younger, better-off and more skilled population left poorer and less skilled people behind. This human migration was accompanied by a tendency for public and private investment to be located outside major cities which contributed to rising unemployment in inner urban areas (Lawless, 1979).

Race and immigration also played their part in the restructuring of space within urban areas. Burton (1995) argues that the discrimination and hostility faced by an increasing immigrant population led to a degree of spatial concentration which in turn fuelled white anxiety. The 'race riots' in Nottingham and Notting Hill in 1958 raised the profile of black immigration nationally and, as Solomos (1989) has argued, led to national debates regarding the need for more stringent immigration controls and the 'problems' associated with black settlement. Hence it has been argued that this period saw 'the discussion of social problems with an urban dimension [begin] to take on a highly racialised character' (Burton, 1995:46). This issue was to have particular salience in the development of urban policy in the late 1960s.

These opening sections reveal the way in which the voluntary sector has traditionally been associated with an ability to change and develop in relation to state welfare regimes. The fortunes of the community sector were not so positive, suggesting that these forms of activity are more vulnerable to external influences. The period to 1969 did not see any particular links being forged between urban policy and community or voluntary sector activity. This was to change dramatically towards the end of the 1960s as the re-discovery of poverty brought with it a new policy focus on poor neighbourhoods and localities.

THE 1960S AND 1970S: THE GROWTH OF THE COMMUNITY SECTOR AND ANTI-POVERTY INITIATIVES

There were a number of developments throughout the 1960s and 1970s that can contribute to our understanding of the way that expectations and assumptions regarding the role of the community sector in deprived areas have come to be framed. In part these stem from the separation of the voluntary and community sectors from the 1960s onwards. Whilst the voluntary sector has been characterised as politically weak with a low profile in the context of popular expansion of state welfare (Kendall and Knapp, 1996) mutual aid and community groups flourished as new funding opportunities emerged and new types of community organisations based on radical responses to welfare developed (Brenton, 1985; Knight, 1993; Taylor, 1995a).

A distinction can be made between those aspects of community sector developments that can be described as 'spontaneous' and those that were sponsored by the state. Although in reality these distinctions are somewhat false, since it is probable that both styles of development existed side by side, separating them provides a means of analysing the ways in which ambiguities surrounding the role of the community sector in deprived areas are historically situated.

Spontaneous community sector developments

The community sector movement that developed during the 1960s and 1970s was partly a response to deficiencies in state welfare provision, and the growth of tenants organisations, claimants unions, advice centres and playgroups reflected the perceived failure of state provision by setting up their own services (Brenton, 1985; Deakin, 1995; Kendall and Knapp, 1996).

Providing advice and information was seen as a means of enabling people to access rights and benefits that were not easily obtained in unresponsive state bureaucracies (Hain, 1976a; Taylor, 1995a). At the same time localised protest groups and campaigns around housing and road developments contributed to a backlash against centralised planning procedures that were to change later in the decade (Hain, 1976a; Kendall and Knapp, 1996). This spontaneously formed community sector activity performed both service delivery functions and campaigning functions, a duality that continues to be associated with the community sector (see for example Duggan and Ronayne, 1991; Emmanuel, 1993).

The new style of voluntary activity that was developing around self-help, mutual aid and protest functions was somewhat removed from the philanthropic, charitable voluntary organisations that had previously dominated the voluntary sector. The new groups were characterised by a more radical approach to welfare and the inclusion of self-determination and client control over group management as well as a responsiveness to 'new' needs. These three characteristics have remained central to common-sense understandings of the community sector. In addition, they represented a more politicised view of the problems that people were facing in terms of poverty, unresponsive state services and the notion of 'passive welfare recipient' that dominated state provision at the time. Consequently, some of these forms of action began to lend the community sector a credibility with those on the left of politics, and their politicised action offered disillusioned Labour party activists an alternative means of pursuing politically motivated objectives (Taylor, 1995a; Worpole, 1981).

This is not to suggest that all forms of community sector activity were politically motivated. In fact, the period saw groups developing both radical and consensual approaches towards the state. The radical aspects of community activity have been associated with the protest and conflict mechanisms adopted by the poor in the 1970s - such as sit-ins, rent strikes and squatting. The consensual approach to community action was focussed on bargaining and negotiating with local authorities to achieve change (Gyford, 1976). In part these mechanisms reflected the way that state sponsored community work similarly operated along competing trajectories, both conflicting against and working with the state (Craig, 1989; Mayo, 1980; Popple, 1995).

More importantly they begin to reflect the ambiguity that besets the community sector in terms of its role in relation to the state - should it work with the state to achieve reform or should it act against the state for more radical ends? One of the issues that emerges from the forthcoming discussion is that the community sector has been brought closer to the requirements of state-directed consensus based decision-making - and it has done so in order to survive.

Spontaneous community sector activity remains part of the romanticised mythology that surrounds life in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s. The radicalism and politicised nature of some of this activity may have disappeared in terms of localised action, but it remains salient in the context of consumer protest and environmental movements that have shifted the debate away from the local and into the arena of the global. Whilst these spontaneous forms of local protest provided the passion and the glory, they were underpinned by a series of state-sponsored reforms that legitimised the role of local community action and participation in decision-making. Two aspects of this state-sponsored activity are considered below, although it is with developments in urban policy that the main part of the discussion rests.

State-sponsored community action

Participatory mechanisms in public services

Alongside criticisms of welfare which provided the impetus for the development of alternative forms of voluntary activity, a series of debates were also emerging around the participation of people in decision-making more generally. Gyford (1976) argued that people's awareness of their remoteness from decision-making structures was driven by the growth in secondary education; the mass media; the establishment of large institutional units and the emergence of issues that cut across traditional class boundaries. State responses to these criticisms included the implementation and support of 'participatory' mechanisms which cut across a range of social policy areas, for example in planning (Skeffington, 1969), and social services (Seebohm, 1968).

The consultative process that underpinned this participatory thrust in social policy remains important in the context of individualised approaches to participation, that is those mechanisms that appeal to individual residents to participate in public meetings or neighbourhood forums.

Unsurprisingly, radical activists criticised developments such as ‘Neighbourhood Councils’ for containing local political organisation and community action, seeing them as a management tool rather than as a political one (Hain 1976b). Similarly, types of umbrella forums were increasingly used by local authorities as a means of giving residents opportunities to participate. However, most localities lacked the kinds of organisational structures necessary to establish umbrella forums which left people without any means of accessing decision-making in new initiatives. Batley (1975) describes the way that ‘Neighbourhood Schemes’ postponed the involvement of local people to the delivery stage, rather than have them involved at the planning stage, because no local forums existed for authorities to use to access local people. It is somewhat ironic that thirty years later governments and local authorities are still searching for the most effective mechanisms through which to involve local residents in decision-making. The criticisms and problems identified in contemporary ‘partnership’ working are not so far removed from these early debates regarding the stage at which people should be involved, and what kinds of decisions they should be involved in making.

The urban programme

Most historical narratives of urban policy in Britain begin with the establishment of the Urban Programme and the Community Development Projects (CDPs) in the late 1960s. It is certainly the case that the antecedents of area-based anti-poverty initiatives are to be found in this period, and consequently they provide the historical context to today’s regeneration policy.

From the 1960s onwards, the community sector’s role in urban policy has been shaped by the definitions of poverty that underpin urban policy developments. In the late 1960s, place-based urban policy developed in the context of the ‘rediscovery’ of poverty alongside pathological approaches⁴ to poverty alleviation (Alcock, 1997; Burton, 1995; Lawless, 1988; Solesbury, 1993). Furthermore, evidence began to show that deprivation was spatially concentrated and associated with inner city areas where poor quality housing, pollution and inadequate services combined to create ‘pockets of deprivation’ (Alcock, 1997).

⁴ This notion of poverty focuses on the inadequacies of individuals such as apathy and inadequate upbringing and assumes these can be solved at the individual level.

This is a powerful discourse which has continued to influence the ways in which urban policy seeks to target definable geographical locations that can prove themselves to be 'in need'. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s a series of projects were launched which took the locality as their focus and aimed to address individual failings through targeted measures (Gyford, 1976).

These responses also need to be seen in the context of prevailing ideas regarding the welfare state. Atkinson (1999) has argued that a dominant general discourse summed up in the notion of 'Keynesian Social-Democratic' consensus, operated to legitimise state intervention to secure full employment and a universalist welfare state. Thus, political belief was that poverty had largely been abolished and there was consequently no justification for the implementation of widespread programmes to address poverty - what was needed was a targeted approach to address pathological poverty. The involvement of local residents in community development projects is therefore seen as part of a new optimism on the part of governments who saw the possibility of 'curing' poverty by enlisting the poor and minority groups (Knight, 1993).

At the same time, this period saw the continuation of urban policy initiatives that have been linked with the threat of unrest and issues around race. The racialisation of British politics (Solomos, 1989) through the 1950s and 1960s saw politicians from both major parties express concern regarding the 'settlement' of immigrants in British cities which fuelled concern over 'pockets of deprivation' inhabited by immigrant populations (Atkinson, 1999; Burton, 1995). The announcement of the Urban Programme in 1968 by Harold Wilson came on the back of Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech and ever since commentators have linked the two occurrences together, despite politicians denying that the two events were related (Atkinson, 1999; Atkinson and Moon, 1994a; Loney, 1983). Although there has been some criticism of this simplistic view on the grounds that the Urban Programme did not actually support ethnic minority groups to any great extent (Burton, 1995; Loney, 1983) the relationship between fear of unrest and urban policy programme development is one that is frequently made. It has been argued that citizen involvement and participation were included in some of the CDPs as a response to fears of urban unrest (CDP, 1977), which fuelled later criticisms that state sponsored participation merely allowed politicians a means of co-opting dissent.

Thus, the emerging anti-poverty initiatives reflected the dual concern to arrest the worst excesses of poverty, whilst at the same time containing the threat of social unrest.

Urban Aid (one of the strands of funding within the Urban Programme) and the CDPs were both launched at this time, and have been consistently cited as prime examples of the way that urban policy affected the development of community sector activity. It is through these initiatives that the fortunes of the community sector begin to be more closely associated with urban policy in Britain.

Urban Aid offered grants to 'any appropriate scheme aimed at neighbourhood based action to work with local people to combat poverty' (Alcock, 1997:240). Projects such as community centres, play schemes and remedial education were run by local authorities and local community groups. Urban Aid therefore established a role for local groups in the delivery of services as part of an anti-poverty thrust. Whilst Urban Aid was criticised for funding more established forms of activity, such as playgroups, rather than alternative forms of provision (Holman and Hamilton, 1973), its overall impact through the 1970s and 1980s was perceived positively by most commentators. In particular, Urban Aid has been associated with the funding of service delivery organisations (Batley, 1975; Lawless, 1979; Loney, 1983; McKay and Cox, 1979), thereby contributing to the growth of a range of activities in local neighbourhoods that may otherwise have remained beyond the reach of local residents.

In contrast, the CDPs have been associated with a more politicised approach to community action. Twelve localities were targeted by the CDPs in an attempt to provide a community based, holistic approach to poverty alleviation (see Loney, 1983). Some CDP areas were characterised by a radical community work approach that concentrated on community action as a means of raising local consciousness, and relating community activity to the activities of the wider labour movement (NCDP, 1974). The latter reflected the growing concern of community workers that action at a wider level was required, to join the neighbourhood to those organisations most likely to further the interests of the working classes (Corkey and Craig, 1978). Other CDP areas adopted consensus and pluralist methods which sought to build small scale initiatives to encourage the capacity of local residents to express their own needs and feelings (Kraushaar and Loney 1980; Lawless, 1979).

In reality the two methods were not used in isolation, but the radical-consensus models of community work serve to highlight the way in which collective action at the local level was ambiguous in terms of its role regarding both the state and local people. The CDPs have been credited with the development of community action groups to tackle some of the problems that residents faced, such as tenants associations that could challenge housing departments, and also the development of welfare rights services to ensure people were gaining access to benefits to which they were entitled (Bradshaw, 1975).

Thus, state-sponsored urban policy in the 1960s and 1970s contributed to the growth of both campaigning organisations and service delivery groups at a local level. Where the government defined the nature of poverty in terms of individual pathology, they had established policy responses consistent with seeking to change behaviour at a local level and therefore the direct involvement of local people was crucial for success. However, whilst the relatively benign Urban Aid funding was to continue until the early 1990s, the CDPs were wound up by the end of the 1970s - unsurprising given their increasingly anti-government and radical stance (Loney, 1983).

Before their eventual demise, however, the CDPs had also been charged with responsibility for developing 'action research' projects to explore the development of the initiatives. The CDP reports developed a critique of the pathological view of poverty that contributed to the changing urban policy context in the mid-1970s. Along with the state sponsored Inner Area Studies (IAS) the CDP reports argued that poverty was caused by structural factors such as poor housing, low wages and unemployment - not by individual failure (CDP, 1977; Lawless, 1988; Solesbury, 1993).

As these economic explanations for poverty became more widely accepted, urban policy took a new direction. The 1977 White Paper *'Policy for the Inner Cities'* (Department of the Environment, 1977) reflected the way that structural aspects of poverty had become conventional wisdom (Lawless, 1988; Solesbury, 1993). The White Paper argued that out-migration from inner cities left a vulnerable and dependent population behind, and that economic decline underpinned the resulting deprivation (Deakin and Edwards, 1993). It was believed that halting economic decline by encouraging inward investment, would reduce out-migration and improve the living standards of those who remained (Burton, 1995).

The 1977 White Paper redefined the role that local people would play in the implementation of urban policy. Where the CDPs had worked directly with local people to develop alternative responses to state failure, the 1977 act reflected the dominant orthodox model of participation that had emerged in planning policy - power was retained by local authorities and local people were informed of decisions and asked for their views (Lawless, 1979; NCSS, 1979).

The 1977 White Paper did accord some status to the mainstream voluntary sector in state-directed partnership programmes in a limited number of areas (Atkinson and Moon, 1994a; Colenutt and Cutten, 1994a; Stewart, 1994). However, this was not matched by any recognition of local people as legitimate partners in the process (Mayo, 1980). Consequently it has been argued that where local consultation did occur, residents were critical of voluntary organisations that set themselves up as the 'voice of the people' when the reality was a paternalistic attitude on the part of some people running projects who were unaccountable to local residents (Brenton, 1985). Once again, the lessons from the past appear not to have been learned as issues of representation and legitimacy continue to haunt partnerships in their contemporary manifestation.

In effect, the White Paper prioritised economic issues at the expense of social ones. Instead of focussing attention on individuals, the emphasis shifted towards economic revitalisation. However, these were not the only economic-based issues that had emerged from the CDP reports which had also emphasised the need for equality in the distribution of resources to poor areas and poor people (CDP, 1977). The CDP reports identified the need for both social policy and economic policy to underpin anti-poverty initiatives. That the 1977 White Paper focussed on the latter is not surprising given the fiscal crisis that saw the Labour government seek to reduce public expenditure (Dearlove and Saunders, 1991; Hill, 1993).

Furthermore, the way that the White Paper relegated local communities to a backseat in decision-making and active involvement in anti-poverty initiatives provides the first indication that the role of the community in such measures is partly determined by the way that causes of poverty are defined. The decline of the social in urban policy was matched by a reducing interest in the direct involvement of the people who lived in deprived areas in dealing with social problems.

An increasing emphasis on policy co-ordination also reduced the role of local people in urban projects. The CDP analysis of deprivation alongside a growing number of schemes led to calls for improved co-ordination of policy as early as 1972. The establishment of the Urban Deprivation Unit (1972) and the launch of the IAS's (1972) reflected government concern to address the lack of co-ordination, and a growing awareness of the interconnected nature of urban problems (CDP, 1977; McKay and Cox, 1979). This trend continued with the Comprehensive Community Programme (CCP), launched in 1974 as a means of developing local authority wide programmes using existing resources, but without any community involvement in decision-making (Lawless 1979; McKay and Cox 1979).

Thus, during the 1960s and 1970s 'community involvement' was central to poverty alleviation strategies based on pathological definitions and the delivery of services. It was less central to the achievement of objectives that sought inter-agency collaboration or economic growth. Furthermore, an increasing recognition of the role of the voluntary sector in urban policy did not necessarily coincide with the wishes of local people.

By the mid-1970s the protest and confrontational aspects of community activity were seen to be in decline. It was argued that organisations were more concerned with day-to-day problems than with class struggle (Hain, 1976a). Three main criticisms of state-sponsored participation and community activity were seen to underpin this shift away from working class protest. First, it was argued that funding arrangements led to a loss of independence for organisations that reduced their capacity to protest (Hain, 1976a). Second, community work was seen to operate as a social control mechanism, even in its radical forms (Baine, 1975; Cockburn, 1977; Hain, 1976a). Finally, a series of arguments began to emerge regarding the way in which 'participation' deflected attention away from the 'real' problems of the working class (CDP, 1977; Piven and Cloward, 1971). The reality of these critiques in people's lives is reflected by Corkey and Craig (1978) who show the way in which resident associations that had participated in area-based schemes continued to see rents and unemployment rise whilst many homes remained unimproved.

The activists and community workers operating in this radical field were increasingly concerned with the extent to which an emphasis on local problems diverted attention away from wider, structural issues regarding the position of the working class (Leonard, 1975;

Mayo, 1979). This concern was reflected by those who argued that community action might be successful at vetoing some proposals, but that its ability to achieve overall gains in resource distribution would be limited (Gyford, 1976).

Calls for participatory democracy based on self-managed communities (Gyford, 1976; Hain, 1976a) can be traced to this concern that co-option by the state undermined potential for grass roots, working class struggle. However, the radical agenda underpinning these critiques of state-sponsored participation suffered two major challenges during the latter part of the decade.

First, challenges to the 'working class' emphasis of these debates emerged as both Black and women's groups criticised the way in which these ignored the discrimination of women and ethnic minorities (Dominelli, 1990; Green and Chapman, 1990). Second, political challenges emerged in the face of the New Right and its neo-liberal attitude towards the welfare state which came to turn anti-welfare state activists into defenders of social justice.

By the end of the 1970s the range of criticisms to which the welfare state was subject were nothing if not comprehensive. Deriving from both sides of the political spectrum were economic critiques of welfare (O'Connor, 1973) and the welfare state was accused of being ineffective, immoral and unresponsive (Gladstone, 1979). This growing dissatisfaction with public services was reflected in the promotion of alternative ideologies of welfare which sought to introduce more pluralism and choice into provision, to reduce dependency on the state, and to promote efficiency (Taylor and Lansley, 1992). More radical alternatives, based on challenging the welfare state, were also promoted by socialist public sector workers who were increasingly aware of the problematic, yet opportunistic, position they held as both workers for the state and clients of the state (London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, 1979).

Alternative visions for reforming the welfare state were proposed by 'welfare pluralism' that called for greater responsibility to be passed to the voluntary sector (Gladstone, 1979; Hadley and Hatch, 1981). These were criticised for failing to recognise the limitations of the voluntary sector, and of de-politicising welfare without exploring the possibility of reforming existing state provision (Brenton, 1985; Johnson, 1987; Webb and Wistow, 1987).

The New Right meanwhile, were advocating a greater role for the market as the key mechanism for extending choice and controlling expenditure on public welfare. Whilst the incoming Conservative government shared the welfare pluralist view that the voluntary sector had a larger role to play in welfare provision, the free market became the primary mechanism for the reorganisation of the welfare state over the next twenty years. This ideological shift regarding the role of state welfare was to have major repercussions for voluntary and community sector developments as well as urban policy.

THE 1980S AND 1990S: TRANSITION AND CHANGE

The community and voluntary sectors - transition and division

The new social policy that emerged during the 1980s was based on a mixed economy approach to welfare where the state became only one of several agents in the delivery of services (Deakin, 1994; Glennester, 1995; Johnson, 1998). State sponsored participation and voluntary activity developed in this context across a range of welfare fields in the 1980s and 1990s. From special employment programmes to community care, the voluntary sector was once again placed in the role of key service provider. Some of these developments were to have positive effects on community groups that benefited from increased funding opportunities. Other developments were to prove less profitable as contract funding led to new challenges for the sector as a whole (Deakin, 1996; Knight, 1993; Lewis, 1996; Taylor, 1995a).

The main funding opportunities for locally based organisations in the early 1980s identified in the literature came from the special employment programme and local authority support for particular types of groups. The Special Employment Programmes (particularly the Community Programme) of the early 1980s drew large numbers of voluntary sector organisations into arrangements with the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) to offer training to unemployed people. The impact on local organisations was at once positive and negative. Benefits to community groups came in the form of increased funding, who were able, for the first time in many cases, to fund staff and premises (Taylor, 1995a). The Community Programme was a particularly important source of funding for the voluntary sector through the 1980s - by 1988 the MSC provided 20 percent of all government funding to the sector, and 72 percent of this was attributable to the Community Programme (Deakin, 1995:58).

However, critics of the programme argued that the voluntary sector had been 'used' by government to implement controversial policy. It was argued that many groups altered their aims and objectives away from social welfare in order to access funding, and eventually found themselves supporting a programme with clear political bias and little evidence of positive outcomes for the unemployed people involved (Addy and Scott, 1988).

Local government, also, used the voluntary sector in ways that were perceived more positively by commentators who argued that left wing local authorities funded voluntary organisations as part of the backlash against the centralising tendencies of Thatcherism. It has been argued that the struggles of the 1970s led to a view of 'community' as an important site for class struggle (Castells, 1983; Cochrane, 1986) and that consequently the left began to articulate a vision of grassroots activism aimed at establishing local socialism by developing alliances with disadvantaged groups and the voluntary sector organisations that purported to represent them (Boddy and Fudge, 1984; Gyford, 1985). Gyford (1985) argued that the aim was to build

'a new coalition which could simultaneously attempt to reunite divided communities while also creating a broader political constituency for the Labour Party than that represented by its traditional supporters alone' (Gyford, 1985:84).

This 'municipal socialism' was matched by increased funding to 'politically acceptable' voluntary organisations. Most commentators are positive about the benefits that the voluntary and community sectors derived from these developments in local authorities (Kendall and Knapp, 1995; Taylor, 1995a). The kinds of groups that benefited from these tensions were those seen to have a 'natural' alliance with the left such as women's groups, claimants unions and tenants associations.

However, it is possible that the mythical proportions that this relationship has gained in contemporary analyses belies a more pragmatic truth, since evidence emerged that the resources actually going to these groups were relatively small and that the main beneficiaries of local authority funding were mainstream voluntary organisations (see Taylor and Lansley, 1992).

As the decade progressed local authorities found it increasingly difficult to maintain these levels of spending on the voluntary and community sectors, as local authority reform and funding cuts were implemented by national government. By the early 1990s the voluntary and community sectors were beginning to suffer from severe financial constraints, particularly as the grant aid they relied on so heavily for core funding was cut (Mabbott, 1992).

This funding restraint on the part of local authorities from the mid-1980s onwards was matched by opportunities for voluntary sector expansion in the latter part of the decade. The development of quasi-markets, privatisation and the contract culture in the Conservative's third term of office redefined the role of the state in welfare provision, and marked a new era in voluntary-state relations as the opportunity to compete for service delivery contracts created a new wave of funding opportunities for the sector (Deakin, 1995). However, the benefits of expanding the role of the voluntary sector as service provider in the 1980s were not felt by all kinds of organisations. On the whole larger organisations that could adopt the necessary bureaucratic and administrative burdens that were associated with the contract culture tended to take up the new opportunities. In turn, these developments led to changing emphasis within the voluntary sector, as the language of managerialism was adopted by organisations that recognised they needed to prove themselves worthy of their role in service delivery, against a welfare delivery philosophy driven by efficiency and effectiveness (Deakin, 1995).

The growing literature devoted to the management and organisation of the voluntary sector reflects the concerns of many in a climate of increased professionalism and managerialism (Billis and Harris, 1996; Leat, 1988). These developments were not seen positively by those who argued that the voluntary sector was losing its independence and becoming part of a 'shadow state' (Wolch, 1990). Similarly the voluntary sector was perceived as a 'cheap option' for a government intent on reducing the burden of public expenditure (Clarke, 1991). The contract culture also led to increasing divisions between community and voluntary organisations. One of the major outcomes of the development of a contract culture in welfare service delivery was the separation of voluntary organisations that pursued service delivery as an arm of the state (Taylor, 1995a) and smaller organisations that were not equipped to do so.

The extent to which the provision of statutory mainstream services was seen to create a different kind of voluntary sector organisation was reflected in Knight's (1993) call for the two parts of the sector to be split, and in Bemrose and MacKeith's (1996) claim that the role of mainstream service provision should be distinguished from 'traditional' sector functions such as the promotion of self-help and user involvement.

Thus, in the 1990s there is less evidence that the issues facing large voluntary organisations are the same as those affecting smaller, community-based groups. Taylor (1995a) makes the point when she describes the challenges faced by each: voluntary service delivery organisations face the challenge of competition and professionalism whilst community organisations face the challenge of survival.

The key developments in social policy that are generally associated with the voluntary and community sectors during the 1980s and 1990s offered mixed blessings. For the community sector, the special employment programmes and new local socialism afforded some new funding opportunities, but these were not to last. As the major thrust of welfare delivery reforms took hold it was the mainstream voluntary sector that benefited, whilst smaller organisations suffered from cuts in local authority expenditure.

Furthermore, these trends towards a closer relationship between the voluntary sector and the state were matched by a reduction in the protest and confrontation tactics adopted by community groups. The vigorous attack on the welfare state pursued, at least rhetorically, by the Conservative government in the 1980s, was resisted by many of those who had supported the anti-welfare state campaigns in the 1970s. Community work in particular was associated with a defensive opposition as welfare cutbacks and poverty began to affect their client groups. In the face of economic liberalism the anti-welfare state movement had no choice but to defend that which it had sought to change (Mayo, 1980).

Despite this somewhat pessimistic view of the community sector, there was evidence that new types of community based activity were emerging during the 1980s based on mutual aid and self help. Against the backdrop of worsening economic conditions and rising unemployment and poverty community organisations began to develop around economic revitalisation and employment (Knevitt, 1986; McGregor and McArthur, 1990).

Whilst the community businesses were criticised for offering low paid unskilled work concentrated on estates, the development of mutual aid in the form of LETS and credit unions was perceived more positively (Stewart and Taylor, 1995). These developments are reminiscent of mutual-aid strategies in the pre-welfare state era, where responses to laissez-faire attitudes in state welfare led to the development of autonomous organisations to support the poor.

In fact, there was an ideological thrust to New Right thinking that supported wholeheartedly this kind of indigenous development. Part of the New Right agenda focussed on encouraging the individual, the family and the community to take more responsibility for welfare through informal support and voluntary action (Taylor, 1995a). Furthermore, New Right thinking also embraced volunteering and self help as means through which 'active' citizens could discharge their responsibilities and social duties (Croft and Beresford, 1996). This ideological support for voluntary action was formulated through revised notions of citizenship and undermined the concept of participatory democracy that had been associated with more radical aspects of community activity in the 1970s. Thus, the development of local mutual aid activities in deprived localities chimed well with the self-help ideology of New Right liberalism.

Despite these developments in the community sector, and the apparently positive view that the government promoted regarding voluntary activity and mutual aid, the urban policy arena remained firmly controlled by central government agendas, and local residents were denied a role in the physical and economic re-development programmes that dominated regeneration policy in the 1980s.

Urban policy in the 1980s: community ignored?

The Conservative government's approach to urban policy in the 1980s was inconsistent and differentially applied in particular areas of welfare policy. In the field of housing policy a series of initiatives opened up opportunities for 'tenant involvement'. The Estate Action Programme (1985) was designed to improve run-down estates and highlighted the importance of tenant involvement for successful schemes. The 1988 Housing Act was responsible for the creation of Housing Action Trusts, tenants choice and voluntary transfers which gave some credence to tenant involvement in decision-making (Hastings *et al.*, 1996).

Yet in other areas of urban policy in the 1980s the role of local residents was ignored, particularly those developments that were underpinned by a belief in private sector entrepreneurialism as the route to city revitalisation (Atkinson and Moon, 1994b; Parkinson, 1989; Solesbury, 1993; Stewart, 1994). Urban Development Grants, the Urban Regeneration Grant, City Grant and the Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) all embraced the private sector as the key player in urban regeneration. Similarly Enterprise Zones (1980) offered incentives, through deregulation, to firms to establish themselves in particular areas, and fitted neatly with the generally laissez-faire approach of the Conservative party at the time (Lawless, 1988). The key point about these policies was their emphasis on private sector development to create positive 'trickle down' effects to local areas. In fact, the 'trickle-down' effect that was anticipated from these high profile redevelopment projects failed to materialise (Cameron and Doling, 1994) and was one of the reasons given for the turn around in regeneration policy in the 1990s. Furthermore, the UDCs in particular, were criticised for failing to engage local people in decision-making and for spending little on social or community programmes (Imrie and Thomas, 1993).

Alongside the belief in economic revitalisation based on trickle down economics, the Conservative government was also keen to co-ordinate policy. The introduction of City Action Teams in 1985 were reminiscent of the CCPs in the 1970s. The integration and collaboration these schemes represented were to play an important role in the framing of urban policy in the 1990s, and arguably form the background against which contemporary partnership and co-ordinated approaches developed. However, in the 1980s, as in the 1970s, there was no role for the community in the emerging multi-sectoral partnerships.

It was clear that economic development issues dominated policy at the expense of social projects. Solesbury (1987) made the distinction between welfare impulses of policy (community enterprise, housing investment, poverty and policing) and development impulses (deregulation, enterprise and economic growth). Lawless (1988) argued that the latter had dominated the 1980s whilst issues of equity, deprivation and poverty were neglected. Furthermore, these policies actually contributed to the worsening relative position of economically inactive people living in the localities where flagship developments took place.

A view emerges regarding the link between community involvement and particular definitions of the urban problem. In the 1960s, the poverty alleviation thrust of policy assumed an important role for local people, in whom it was believed the solutions lay. By the mid-1970s the shift to economic driven urban policy meant that 'the community' was not seen as a legitimate partner in the solution of urban problems. Similarly the top-down centralised thrust of 1980s development programmes did not view local people as part of the decision-making process, although local people did forge a role for themselves as protesters against unpopular developments (see for example Imrie and Thomas, 1993) - a feature reminiscent of the planning debates of the 1960s.

These broad trends in urban policy were supplemented by more 'community-friendly' policies that have been associated with the threat of urban unrest. The issue of urban unrest as a precursor to urban policy initiatives came to the fore in the mid-1980s. It was argued that the Inner City Task Forces (1987) were established in response to the threat of disorder (Deakin and Edwards, 1993). Although the government denied the link between the two events, the fact that race and ethnicity were given priority in the selection of areas has fuelled suspicion that the Task Forces were indeed a reaction to the 'riots' that had occurred in cities across Britain in the mid-1980s (Burton, 1995). Similarly those areas that experienced the worst rioting on council estates in 1991 were successful in the first round of City Challenge bids - most notably on Tyneside (Cameron and Doling, 1994). The Task Forces were more heavily concentrated in particular neighbourhoods than the flagship regeneration programmes of the UDC. They focussed on co-ordinating policy and involving local people as a means of achieving change. Once again we see participation and inclusion where problems are perceived to be created by people and particular social groups.

These major reforms in urban policy occurred alongside the continuation of the Urban Programme which offered 'by far the biggest central government resource for inner city voluntary groups' (Kendall and Knapp, 1996:147). Whilst major urban resources were directed to physical and capital projects, the Urban Programme remained an important source of funding for social projects (Brenton, 1985; Burton, 1995). Although criticisms were levied at the way in which local authorities used Urban Programme funding to fill gaps in mainstream provision (Brenton, 1985), it continued to be compared favourably with the shift toward contract funding in other areas of welfare (Taylor, 1995a).

Thus, there is widespread recognition of the role that the Urban Programme played in social projects and voluntary sector funding until its eventual demise in 1992. The abolition of the Urban Programme was one of the outcomes of a government sponsored reassessment of urban policy in the early 1990s. The Urban Programme was seen to stifle innovation and reinforce a culture of dependency by local authorities who could use the funding to substitute for main programme expenditure (Audit Commission, 1989; Oatley, 1998). Organisations that had relied on this funding for many years were horrified at the news it was to end and were concerned that alternative funding opportunities would not emerge (Taylor, 1995a). It could be argued that similar levels of support for local groups are now available through the National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB) whose demise would no doubt be greeted with similar levels of horror by community organisations.

Urban policy during the 1980s offered small amounts of money through the Urban Programme whilst concentrating efforts on large scale redevelopments that had little positive effect on local populations. It was the impact of ten years neglect of people and places that was to form the background to major reforms in urban policy in the 1990s, and it is worth considering the position some places found themselves in towards the end of the 1980s before exploring more recent urban policy developments.

The rise of poverty and social exclusion

Widespread cutbacks in welfare across a range of social policy fields worsened the position of the poorest in Britain (Hudson and Williams, 1989; Mack and Lansley, 1985; Oppenheim, 1990). In turn, housing policy initiated in the 1980 Housing Act impacted on the quality of housing remaining in the public sector, which became the sector of last resort and consequently associated with social exclusion and deprivation. Concerns about the geographical concentration of the poorest sections of society was back on the agenda, spurred by a growing conviction that the poor were spatially concentrated in inner city areas of older industrial centres, and public sector housing estates on the periphery of those cities (Donnison 1993; Forrest and Murie, 1991; Robson, 1988).

This rise in poverty and disadvantage led some to argue that an underclass was emerging in Britain (Murray, 1990). The underclass debate, which focussed on the individual and family as sources of poverty, has resonances with the pathological explanations of poverty that gave rise to the original Urban Programme. In the 1980s, the government response was not to embark upon anti-poverty initiatives, but to pursue an economic strategy that it believed would see the benefits of wealth creation 'trickle down' to the poor.

The failure of flagship UDCs to create this trickle down effect led to increasing wealth inequalities described as 'islands of private affluence amongst seas of public poverty' (Parkinson and Evans, 1990:82). In Birmingham it was argued that inner city investment did not bring the benefits to residents of social housing that investment in education and housing would have done (Loftman and Nevin, 1992). In Newcastle the jobs created in high tech industries were not available to local residents who lacked appropriate skills (Cameron, 1992). Consequently it was argued that property led regeneration had led to the emergence of 'two-speed' cities where the renewal of the urban core, alongside areas of relative and absolute poverty, simply created increased marginalisation for those who lived there (Thake and Staubach, 1993).

There was a sense in which criticisms of urban policy reflected a new mood regarding the efficacy of top down centralised responses that by-passed local government and local people. Many argued that property led regeneration failed to tackle the multi-faceted nature of urban problems, and that consequently multiple responses to multiple problems were needed. These calls were made by those working in the field of urban studies (Turok, 1992) and community development (Donnison, 1993; Fordham, 1993). Others argued that no trickle down effect had materialised (Robson, 1988) and that job creation was of no use to those unable to participate in the workforce (Haughton and Roberts, 1990).

Thus, there was widespread acknowledgement that these regeneration programmes had failed - and one of the main reasons cited for their failure was the lack of resident involvement in decision-making (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Nevin and Shiner, 1995a). The scene was set for the community sector and local residents to play a more central role in regeneration policy in the 1990s, to which we now turn.

The Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund - the community returns

In the early 1990s regeneration policy and community activity came together once again through new central government initiatives which explicitly required evidence of 'community involvement' for funding to be awarded. In England, City Challenge (1991) was the first of these schemes to be launched, although a similar approach to comprehensive area-based regeneration had been launched in Scotland in 1988 (Scottish Office, 1988).

City Challenge was seen as a significant break with 1980s urban policy by many commentators (Burton and O'Toole, 1993; Stoker and Young, 1993), although it has also been argued that the changes bore similarity to urban policy in the 1970s (Burton, 1997). In a nutshell City Challenge sought an 'holistic' approach to area regeneration using a partnership model of implementation that was to include the local community in order to establish 'sustainable' regeneration. In 1994 City Challenge was incorporated into the new SRB. SRB brought together twenty existing programmes under the control of ten new GORs in an attempt to improve flexibility and co-ordination across funding regimes that had become complex and difficult to administer (Audit Commission, 1991).

The assumptions underpinning the development of SRB consequently owe much to the area-based regeneration models that developed through City Challenge. Both schemes sought to address two of the central problems that policy makers have faced in dealing with the repercussions of urban decline since the 1960s: that concentrations of poverty remained untouched by earlier schemes (McArthur, 1993; Nevin and Shiner, 1995b); and the multi-faceted nature of social problems that manifest themselves at the local level. In seeking to respond to both of these issues, the SRB/City Challenge model of area-based regeneration policy has adopted specific responses that can be seen to shape the role that local residents and local community sector's are expected to play in deprived areas.

The SRB/City Challenge model seeks to encourage a more long-term planned route to regeneration as a means of addressing the failure of previous schemes to deal with concentrations of poverty. In doing so, schemes have targeted resources more directly to counter the criticism that previous initiatives had spread money too thinly (Burton, 1995).

They have also sought to develop a more long term approach to the solution of social problems by shifting the focus away from project based funding to five and seven year strategies (Davoudi and Healey, 1995).

For the longer term, SRB also focusses on the notion of 'sustainability' or long term viability of area-based regeneration as the route to lasting change (Fordham, 1995). Through a process of community development empowered individuals and community groups are now expected to sustain long term development once time-limited strategies come to an end (Fordham, 1995; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Macfarlane, 1993a; Skelcher *et al.*, 1996).

In order to respond to calls for more integrated approaches to the solution of social problems at a local level, the SRB/City Challenge model embraced the notion of 'partnership' as a means of managing multi-agency working (De Groot, 1992; Mabbott, 1993). The partnership model of policy implementation and delivery brought local authorities back into the centre of regeneration policy after being sidelined for much of the 1980s (Burton, 1995; De Groot, 1992; Macfarlane, 1993b; Macfarlane and Mabbott, 1993). The idea of multi-agency, co-ordinated responses to urban problems was not new. Calls for more integrated approaches to poverty and urban policy had been on the agenda throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The new feature in the SRB/City Challenge model was the recognition and explicit commitment to 'community involvement' in these local partnerships.

Partnerships are intended to maximise resources by bringing agencies together and to ensure some consensus over planned projects (Hastings, 1996; Mackintosh, 1992; Stewart, 1994). No specific model of partnership is prescribed by the policy (De Groot, 1992) beyond basic requirements that they should include a range of relevant interests including local 'community' representatives.

Partnerships are therefore central to understanding how local residents and community groups are brought into area-based regeneration schemes. Not only do the partnerships decide how to allocate the regeneration funding, they are charged with responsibility for defining the problems to be addressed. In this way, it is hoped, partnerships will be able to respond to locally defined needs, by including a relevant range of agencies and local people in planning, preparing and executing regeneration programmes (De Groot, 1992).

The inclusion of local people in these processes is also believed to contribute to the long term viability of regeneration programmes. The argument is based on the notion that if people are involved in deciding what should be done there is more chance that they will take ownership of changes and look after projects long term (Fordham, 1995; Hastings *et al.*, 1996).

To a greater extent the urban policy that emerged in the early 1990s was a response to the overwhelming evidence that policies pursued throughout the 1980s had failed to halt urban decline (Audit Commission, 1989; CBI, 1988; Darwin, 1988; Imrie and Thomas, 1993; Lawless, 1991; National Audit Office, 1990; Public Accounts Committee, 1989). Furthermore, the property slump at the end of the 1980s made property-led regeneration less viable than in the past (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Oatley, 1998; Turok, 1992). Whilst the model of regeneration policy that emerged has been described as a significant break with the past (Burton and O'Toole, 1993; Stoker and Young, 1993), it has also been identified with a continuation of a neo-liberal agenda that has emphasised competition between places as the means of allocating scarce resources, and consequently with the need for creativity and entrepreneurialism in designing successful bids (Oatley, 1998). At the local level, the development of partnerships and multi-agency working were explicitly designed to bring the public and private sectors together - to maximise the resources and knowledge brought to bear on social problems whose solutions had remained impervious to decades of targeted funding (Mackintosh, 1992).

Whilst the rationale for bringing together expertise from the public and private sectors is clear, the rationale for greater community involvement is less obvious. Oatley's (1998) analysis of urban policy in this period makes little mention of the role played by community involvement in either City Challenge or SRB beyond reference to the legitimacy that local residents could bring to partnership working. Others have argued that the community was a necessary addition to the policy process because earlier schemes had failed precisely because they had not engaged local residents (Taylor, 1995; Davoudi and Healey, 1995).

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Whilst the rationale for bringing together expertise from the public and private sectors is clear, the rationale for greater community involvement is less obvious. Oatley's (1998) analysis of urban policy in this period makes little mention of the role played by community involvement in either City Challenge or SRB beyond reference to the legitimacy that local residents could bring to partnership working. Others have argued that the community was a necessary addition to the policy process because earlier schemes had failed precisely because they had not engaged local residents (Taylor, 1995; Davoudi and Healey, 1995).

Unsurprisingly, therefore the 'community involvement' aspects of City Challenge and SRB inspired a series of reports evaluating resident participation in the scheme (Macfarlane, 1993; Macfarlane and Mabbott, 1993). Others engaged in debates regarding the 'best' way to ensure 'meaningful participation' by residents was a reality (Chanan, 1992; Miller, 1997; Thake and Staubach, 1993). Similarly, the 'partnership' model and its limitations was the subject of various empirical studies (Hastings, 1996; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; McArthur, 1995).

These studies have all contributed to our understanding of the way that partnerships and community involvement have been experienced at the local level, yet the community sector itself is lost as the focus of attention has shifted towards those management structures that purport to give local people a role in regenerating deprived areas. In reality, the assumptions upon which area-based regeneration policy has come to be built can have important implications for local community sector's. The final part of this discussion reviews how the role of the community sector is framed within the SRB model of area-based regeneration policy as an introduction to theoretical models introduced in chapter three.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY SECTOR IN URBAN POLICY - A REVIEW

Drawing on evidence presented throughout this chapter, it is now possible to identify the way in which the functions of the community sector described in chapter one - service delivery; providing opportunities for volunteering; and collaborative working - correspond with major elements of the area-based regeneration policy agenda.

First it has been shown that one of the functions of community groups that has been a consistent trend over time has been to deliver services to the locality. This delivery function has developed in the context of changing perceptions of the role of state welfare, but has also been supported through state-sponsored mechanisms for the involvement of community groups in implementing and delivering policy. In the pre-welfare state it was argued that laissez-faire attitudes towards welfare for the poor partly explained the development of mutual aid functions around social assistance. In the 1980s this theme was repeated as local groups formed around debt alleviation and job creation strategies. In the 1960s organisations began to develop around services that were not offered by state welfare based on a more radical position.

In the 1990s these forms of localised activity have been supported through urban policy that seeks sustainability and the development of organisational forms that are capable of identifying local needs and maintaining regeneration after the major funding source has ended.

Assumptions underpinning the idea that community based organisations are better placed to assist in the identification of local needs and the delivery of services to address these suggest a degree of tension regarding which services to deliver. The needs identified by local people may not be those that community groups can obtain funding for. Further, the strategic aims of regeneration schemes may conflict with the kinds of activities that have developed in particular places, thereby raising a series of questions regarding the role that community groups play in the identification of needs and the delivery of services to address these.

Second, community groups have also played a role in providing participatory mechanisms for local people. In the pre-welfare state, the friendly societies and co-operative movements offered people the opportunity to participate in common endeavours to combat poverty. In the 1960s this participatory aspect of community activity gained renewed emphasis as emergent organisational forms were associated with user participation and 'flat' management structures which contrasted with centralised welfare state bureaucracy. In the 1980s the notion of self-help and mutual aid received renewed attention as part of both a neo-liberal agenda and as a means of empowering local people against welfare cutbacks and reforms. In the 1990s this participatory agenda has contributed to a growing concern that changing localities permanently will require sustainable programmes and the development of organisations to achieve this.

The assumptions that are allied to community group capacity to generate opportunities for local participation and volunteering have increasingly been linked to the social regeneration of localities that rests upon the development of 'social capital' as a route to social cohesion (Forrest and Kearns, 1999). It was argued in chapter one that these aspects of community sector activity are increasingly identified by politicians as central to the renewal of deprived areas.

Although they are not explicitly stated in the SRB regeneration policy agenda, there is little doubt that the development of viable and sustainable regeneration programmes rests upon building the kinds of sustainable organisational forms that the community sector might be associated with. The ways in which community groups develop opportunities of volunteering and participation by local people is consequently of importance in the current policy context and raises questions regarding the extent to which these groups can contribute to the generation of social capital in deprived areas.

Third, there is an emerging role for local community groups in new local governance. As the politics of partnership takes centre stage in community sector-state relations, the political edge to protest and challenge has been marginalised. The issues of representativeness and participatory democracy have become conflated in a new model of decision-making that seeks consensus over conflict. From the 1960s onwards the search for methods through which to engage local people has embraced mechanisms such as neighbourhood forums, tenants associations and partnerships. In the 1990s, local governance has become more complex as networks, partnership and inter-agency working dominate urban policy.

The role for community groups in this new mode of governance operates at a number of levels. Within the community itself building local alliances and inter-organisational bonds is one of the ways in which the sector can exploit funding opportunities and simultaneously present a united front to the other agencies involved in policy-making. In terms of wider partnership forums, community groups also offer other agencies points of contact for representation on regeneration management boards. This is not to suggest that community groups are the only, or indeed the obvious choice for local representation. Rather, it is to indicate that there is potentially a role for community organisations to create a layer of local organisational capacity that can contribute to local governance. How this role is manifested in localities and the extent to which community groups contribute to these processes is consequently of interest in the current policy context.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to review the historical trends in community sector and voluntary sector developments alongside a review of issues in urban policy. In doing so the aim has been to identify how aspects of the role that community groups are expected to play in deprived areas have developed over time.

It was argued in chapter one that differences regarding definitions of mainstream voluntary sector organisations and community sector organisations lay in assumptions regarding their organisational forms and the extent to which the latter were associated with particular kinds of aims and objectives. This historical account has revealed some of the ways in which these differences have evolved against the background of changes in the welfare state.

A review of the role of the voluntary sector has shown how different perceptions of the mainstream voluntary sector and the community sector emerged from the 1960s onwards, as community groups began to be associated with particular organisational forms that were different to the traditional charitable and philanthropic motivations of large voluntary sector organisations. This trend towards separation continued in the 1980s and 1990s as the contract culture created opportunities for mainstream voluntary sector organisations that were contrary to the participatory and mutual aid thrust of smaller groups. Further, there were arguments that smaller groups did not possess the necessary organisational skills to develop into major service providers.

This historical narrative has also explored developments in urban policy as one of the strategies employed by governments to support community participation. It has been argued that the history of urban policy reveals a contradictory role for the community which has partly depended on the dominant definition of the problem policy seeks to address. These definitions have been shown to be historically specific, driven by both dominant views regarding the role of the state in welfare provision and dominant explanations of the causes of urban decline and poverty. Thus, the urban problem has been variously defined as one relating to individual pathology or to economic structures. In the 1990s area-based regeneration policy incorporates elements of both these extremes. Consensus seeking partnerships indirectly address the issue of the threat of urban disorder which, it has been argued, underpinned some urban policy developments in the 1960s and the 1980s.

The emphasis on community development through self-help to promote sustainability indirectly pathologises poverty. The current policy context is that if places fail to turn themselves around they only have themselves to blame. Bennett *et al.* (2000:44) argue that 'there is strong echo here of earlier generations of policies of blaming the victim'.

Whilst there has been an emphasis on resident participation in area-based regeneration policy through the 1990s, the community sector has remained relatively ignored. In fact, there is a clear role for community groups emerging as policy seeks to: incorporate locally defined needs into decision making; create sustainable organisational forms to ensure long term success of projects; and develop complex multi-agency partnerships in which 'the community' is expected to play a part.

Consequently, it has been argued that the three main functions of community groups - service delivery, providing opportunities for volunteering, and collaborative working - potentially have a major contribution to make to the regeneration of deprived areas. The extent to which community groups live up to these expectations is the main issue on which the remainder of this work is based. In order to develop specific research questions around these three main themes chapter three now moves on to explore theories of need, social capital and inter-organisational relations.

CHAPTER THREE

NEED, SOCIAL CAPITAL AND INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONS: THEORISING COMMUNITY GROUP ACTIVITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter develops theoretical frameworks associated with the three functions of community groups identified in chapters one and two. First, that community groups have historically been associated with the delivery of services; second, that community groups have been linked with participatory mechanisms and volunteering; third, that community groups have, in more recent times, been linked with styles of collaborative working related to the implementation and delivery of urban policy.

Each of these three functions can be linked to particular concepts and theories which can be used to further our understanding of patterns of activity in local community sectors. Further, each of these concepts and functions indicates the usefulness of a particular level of analysis, as presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1

Functions, theories and levels of analysis

Function	Theory	Level of analysis
Service delivery	Need	Community group
Opportunities for participation	Social capital	Individual Community group
Collaborative working	Inter-organisational relations	Relations between groups and individuals

Thus, delivery of services can be associated with the concept of need and analysis is most usefully explored at the level of the community organisation or group. Opportunities for participation and volunteering are discussed with reference to social capital, the 'measurement' of which increasingly draws on aspects of volunteering. The third conceptual framework is associated with more recent expectations in urban policy that the community sector should participate in collaborative working.

This function is explored through theories of inter-organisational relations, with particular emphasis on the ways in which inter-organisational working between community groups contributes to the development of local partnerships.

The justification for adopting these theoretical frameworks is three fold. First, using theoretical frameworks to develop research questions draws attention to particular aspects of the ways community groups work; second, this approach avoids an overly descriptive approach to understanding community groups; third, the theoretical frameworks used here reflect a multi-disciplinary approach that is useful for exploring multi-dimensional phenomena such as community group development and functioning.

Although a number of theoretical options may be available to study community groups, this research draws on three - each associated with different social science disciplines. Whilst theories of 'need' are most commonly associated with a social policy tradition, theories of social capital and inter-organisational relations derive mainly from sociology and political science. Thus, this study seeks to utilise a range of appropriate theoretical models to examine different aspects of a particular social phenomenon.

The chapter is separated into three parts, taking each of the conceptual frameworks in turn to identify questions and issues arising that are explored in subsequent chapters.

THEORIES OF NEED: COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Community group activity frequently involves some aspect of responding to local need, through the provision of services and/or activities designed to improve people's lives. The assumption is that community groups are well placed to identify and respond to local needs because they are 'closer' to local people and have a better understanding of what people need. Furthermore, the lack of bureaucracy in community groups is assumed to increase their capacity to respond quickly to new needs as they arise. These assumptions are based on basic beliefs regarding the role of community group activity that can be summarised as follows: community groups are capable of identifying need, based primarily on definitions emanating from local people; local people 'know best' what kinds of needs they have; and community groups provide one source (perhaps an immediate one) of addressing these needs.

However, little empirical work has sought to test these assumptions or to examine the processes through which community groups operate in relation to the concept of need.

The history of theories of need reveals contradictions and problems regarding appropriate methodologies and epistemological debates regarding both the meaning and measurement of 'need'. In social policy, the history of need-related theories is closely identified with the development of state welfare.

Early attempts to identify appropriate measurements and classifications of need (Bradshaw, 1972; Townsend, 1979) have been superseded by a more fundamental debate regarding the efficacy of searching for objective, and universal, classifications of need in an increasingly 'post-modern' context. Universal, uniform state provision based on some notion of basic need has been contested by 'post-enlightenment' theories (Hewitt, 1998; O'Brien and Penna, 1998) that emphasise the fragmented, diverse and complex nature of the society within which welfare operates. Consequently social policy has seen attempts to reconcile the apparent conflicts between these two competing theoretical traditions, most noticeably in debates regarding 'universal' and 'particular' needs (Doyal and Gough, 1991). This discussion draws on a range of literature from within a social policy tradition in order to identify possible factors that influence the way in which community groups both identify and respond to need.

The point is not to evaluate whether or not community groups are successfully responding to 'need'. This would assume that some objective classification of need was possible against which we could judge the activities of community groups - a view that is out of step with much of the following literature. Rather, a series of questions emerge regarding how community group activities develop around particular concepts of need, how these are defined, and who defines them.

The following discussion begins by considering early typologies of need and the contribution they might make to understanding community group activity. It is argued that these typologies remain useful for describing aspects of needs-identification, but tend to marginalise the importance of power in this process.

Drawing on post-structuralist and social constructionist literature, it is possible to see community groups as part of the overall struggle to define needs. Furthermore, in the light of 'post-modern' debates regarding difference and diversity, there is also a need to consider whose needs are being met and how far community groups reflect aspects of universal and particular concepts of need.

The starting point for analysing community group activity in relation to need raises two questions regarding the kinds of needs that community groups are responding to, and who decides which needs should be addressed.

The needs literature draws attention to the way in which attempts to categorise needs frequently refer to both these levels of analysis. The following discussion argues that community group activity can involve all types of needs-identification, and therefore analysing the needs identifiers used within community groups may enable a more critical engagement with the assumption that community activity is necessarily 'close' to the needs of local populations. The initial review of typologies of need draws on Bradshaw's (1972) often used, but still useful, taxonomy which describes four types of need - normative, felt, expressed and comparative - that are discussed below. More recently Bradshaw and Finch (2001) have used the 'taxonomy of need' to examine dimensions of poverty. These are referred to in the following discussion.

Normative need

Bradshaw (1972) argued that normative need, as defined by experts, professionals and policy-makers, represented one type of need, the measurement of which could be based on some standard against which actual conditions were compared. The notion of expertly defined need is common in needs literature (Ife, 1980; Smith, 1980; Spek, 1972) as is the notion that such definitions change over time 'both as a result of development in knowledge, and the changing values of society' (Bradshaw, 1972:64).

As an indicator of poverty, normative need is represented by 'a lack of socially perceived necessities' (Bradshaw and Finch, 2001:2). These are similarly socially, culturally and historically specific, but the measure does indicate the on-going interest in establishing measures of need and poverty that can be applied universally.

At a local level expert defined need is an important component of access to resources as indicators like the Local Index of Deprivation reflect a standard against which actual conditions are compared. Once the locality has been defined as 'deprived', community groups are in a potentially good position regarding access to resources.

Expert defined need can also help to overcome difficulties associated with latent need, although questions have been raised regarding who should be considered an 'expert' and the validity of the advice given by those who claim to be experts (Clayton, 1983). Ife (1980) distinguishes between needs identified by 'caretakers' who have a service function within the community, and help to identify and meet the needs of that community; and 'inferred' needs identified by an external agent such as a researcher or policy maker on the basis of data collected for that purpose. Caretakers can be further distinguished between 'internal' caretakers - those who share characteristics with the population concerned - and 'external' caretakers who are not typical of those they serve. Ife (1980:103) goes on to argue because of the 'different quality of their experience with the associated problem [these] need definers will define the "problem" and hence the "need" in different ways'.

In terms of community groups, then, we might expect to find aspects of normative, or expertly defined need, influencing activities through a variety of mechanisms. The use of survey data to identify aggregate individual need, alongside different kinds of expert 'knowledge' are likely to affect decisions made within groups about what services to provide, and crucially, what kinds of activities they are likely to gain support for from funding sources. Consequently, we might argue that community groups are likely to reflect contemporary societal values regarding 'need' which may or may not correspond with locally defined needs.

Felt Need

Felt need is defined as 'want, desire or subjective views of need' (Bradshaw, 1994:46) most commonly associated with population surveys where people are asked whether they need something. Measures of subjective poverty - whether people say they feel poor - have more recently been used to identify 'core poverty' (Bradshaw and Finch, 2001), suggesting that felt need remains an important component in understanding aspects of deprivation and social exclusion.

It has been argued that these 'population defined needs' (Ife, 1980) are the most valid, although the extent to which they have been used to influence policy making has been questioned (Bradshaw, 1972). Whilst questions have been asked regarding the appropriate methodology for identifying needs through population surveys (Clayton, 1983; Ife, 1980; Manning, 1998), the idea that 'people know best' remains firmly on the agenda of community-based responses to social problems. Where community group activity is closely associated with identifying and responding to locally defined needs, we might expect to find that definitions of 'felt' need form part of the decision-making process.

Expressed Need

Bradshaw (1972) characterises expressed need as felt need turned into action. In examining poverty, Bradshaw and Finch (2001) draw on receipt of social security benefits as evidence of expressed need. In terms of community group activity, it can be argued that using community based services is a reflection of expressed need. The range of services provided by community groups may therefore reveal the kinds of needs expressed in a locality.

Community groups also reflect collective expressions of need where they are engaged in campaigning or pressure group activity (Clayton, 1983). An analysis of community groups may therefore offer some indication of the kinds of felt needs community-based activity is able to give expression to, as well as the kinds of felt needs they seek to pressure other agencies to provide for.

Comparative need

According to Bradshaw's (1972) taxonomy, comparative need is to do with equity, the measure of which is most commonly associated with comparing the characteristics of individuals or places. In their study of 'core poverty' Bradshaw and Finch (2001) represent comparative need with 'relatively low income' - less than 60 percent of the median before housing costs (Bradshaw and Finch, 2001:4). Regeneration schemes are not so precise, relying on a combination of 'expert need' and 'felt need' expressed in local bids to decide which places are most in need, by comparing the relative merits of local applications. For community groups, the issue of comparative need may be more simplistic. Clayton (1983) quotes Miller (1966) as follows: 'need stems not so much from what we lack as from what our neighbours possess' (from Clayton, 1983:220).

Thus comparative need may enter into community group identification of need in two ways. First, groups themselves may compare their services in order to identify aspects of provision that are lacking for their users; and second, users 'felt' needs may be influenced by comparing local facilities with those available elsewhere.

This brief overview of the key elements of need identification raises questions regarding: what kinds of activities community groups are offering; how these reflect aspects of felt and expert need; and how far comparative need forms part of the decision making process within community group activity. A substantial issue is, however, missing from these typologies of need, regarding the relative power of these needs-identifiers to successfully influence definitions of need.

The power to define need

A. Williams (1992) argues that priority setting is more important than need as a conceptual tool for understanding the process of trade-off that inevitably enters the world of 'needology'. Thus questions about who is, and who has the right to assess need and whose values count in the event of conflict arise in the analysis of need (Cordon *et al.*, 1992).

For Clarke and Langan (1998):

'the power to define "need" and the processes, practices and relationships associated with needs has been and continues to be central to the organisation and provision of social welfare. Forms of economic, social, political and organisational power are involved.. in constructing definitions of legitimate need' (Clarke and Langan, 1998:270).

The social constructionist perspective, reflected in the above quotation, reveals the importance of moving away from a concept of need that emphasises the static attributes of a particular group of people, to one that seeks to place definitions of need within a social, and historical, context. Simply describing the different stakeholders in needs-identification tells us little about the context within which decisions are made. Social constructionists have focussed on the 'external' factors that 'create' needs, such as 'the concepts of professional practitioners' (Smith, 1980:68).

In a similar vein, it has been argued that an individual can only identify a need for something when the provision to meet that need exists (Langan, 1998). Furthermore, expressions of need are likely to be qualified by judgements as to whether or not a claim is likely to be considered legitimate. Thus, Langan (1998) argues, supply, or provision, conditions demand, or the expression of need.

This view places community groups in the centre of a paradoxical struggle over the allocation of resources to particular needs. On the one hand they can be characterised as 'creating need' by providing services, whilst on the other they are themselves influenced by the availability of resources to develop provision. Thus, we might want to question the extent to which community group activities are conditioned by external factors and how far community groups are themselves responsible for creating need within a locality. Furthermore, the social constructionist perspective leads us to consider the social, political and economic context within which community group activity develops.

The social constructionist view is therefore useful in terms of analysing the underlying factors that influence community group activity. However, such a view risks over-emphasising the inevitability of the power of external forces, and has been accused of presenting a reductionist view. In contrast, theories associated with a 'post-enlightenment' tradition reflect the diversity and plurality of power struggles. Within this tradition, post-structuralist theories have argued that needs are 'the products of political struggle over meaning' (O'Brien and Penna, 1998:124). Working within this theoretical tradition, Fraser (1989) identifies the way in which competing discourses of need create contradictory theories and policy responses to social problems.

Fraser (1989) identifies 'expert', 'oppositional' and 'reprivatisation' needs discourses within social policy. This division is useful for exploring struggles over needs (O'Brien and Penna, 1998) although there is clearly a limitation in terms of potential alternatives that could exist within these broad categories. For example, oppositional discourses which seek to bring issues into the public arena might themselves represent a series of competing claims - feminism, greenism, anti-racism and so on do not necessarily share a unified oppositional discourse, but represent a series of alternatives that may be differentially successful in influencing policy.

The post-structuralist view therefore emphasises struggle and power in the way in which competing needs claims are expressed. The community sector, according to this view, is working in a climate made up of competing and contradictory discourses. Whilst community groups have tended to be associated with 'oppositional' discourses, it is feasible that they also reinforce and reflect 'expert' discourses. A key question remains, then, regarding what kinds of discourses influence community groups to respond to some needs over others.

O'Brien and Penna (1998) have questioned how the discourses identified by Fraser (1989) might be distinguished in empirical work, although methods such as discourse analysis may offer some means of doing so (see for example Petersen *et al.*, 1999). In addition, there may be indications of the way in which community groups appear to be supporting or contradicting normative definitions of need as expressed through the regeneration programme agenda, as well as opportunities to consider how far community group activity contributes to an 'oppositional' agenda in terms of both the kinds of needs identified and the method of meeting those needs.

A view emerges of a complex balancing act for community groups to perform, between the competing discourses that shape access to resources and legitimise particular forms of provision, and the demands of the local population.

The extent to which community groups are in a position to meet the competing claims of local people presents the final aspect of this analysis of need. In the context of increasingly fragmented and diverse patterns of identity, questions about whose needs community groups are meeting are also important. The needs literature offers fruitful territory for exploring this issue as the debate over universalism versus particularism as the basis for developing welfare provision has gained momentum.

Universalism and particularism

Debates regarding particular and universal needs lie at the heart of issues associated with social policy. Universalism attempts to apply the same standard to all persons whilst particularism argues that different standards are appropriate in different circumstances for different individuals and groups (Thompson and Hoggett, 1996).

Hewitt (1998) argues that neither collectivist nor market welfare systems are sufficient to meet the increasingly diverse needs represented by fragmentation of identity and aspects of difference in the modern world. Consequently there have been calls for social policy to stress

‘social diversity rather than commonality and thereby give emphasis to the particular needs, moral frameworks and social expectations of different groups’ (Thompson and Hoggett, 1996:31).

Essentially these post-enlightenment theories reject the notion of basic needs, values or aspirations in favour of plurality and the explicit recognition of, and response to, difference.

Much of this literature has concentrated on the ways in which a notion of ‘particularism’ can work within a ‘universal’ welfare state system (Doyal and Gough, 1991; Hewitt, 1998; Thompson and Hoggett, 1996; F. Williams, 1992). In fact, the increasing diversity of welfare delivery mechanisms means that the emphasis on state delivered welfare is out of tune with the way in which welfare systems are developing in the context of increasing reliance upon both private and voluntary sector modes of delivery.

Traditionally the voluntary sector has been associated with a form of particularism - that is in seeking to address claims of particular sections of the population. In addition, the voluntary sector has rarely sought to provide a uniform delivery or service across large geographical areas - it may be more luck than judgement that a branch of a national voluntary organisation develops in an area. In the early 1980s this lack of uniformity was used to argue that ‘welfare pluralism’ (Gladstone, 1979; Hadley and Hatch, 1981) was inconsistent with any notion of improved welfare service delivery (Brenton, 1985).

However, the role that the voluntary and community sector might play in serving diverse interests is once again part of a critical debate within social policy. As previously discussed (chapter one), Hirst’s (1998) vision of associationalism assumes an increasingly central role for voluntary agencies in the provision of welfare. For Doyal and Gough (1991) the mechanism through which universal, or basic, needs could be met in ways that recognised difference and diversity rests upon a “‘dual strategy” incorporating both the generality of the state and the particularity of civil society’ (Doyal and Gough, 1991:297).

They argue that decentralisation would allow experiential knowledge (Bradshaw's (1972) felt need) to counter the authority of experts. This is not to suggest that Doyal and Gough are blind to the limits of decentralisation and community-based solutions to social problems, especially where these are closely associated with particularism:

‘Any local, community-based, small-scale form of need-satisfaction can foster “insider” conceptions of human need and inhibit the growth of generalisable notions based on a wider and collective identity... Provision by and for different communities can blind people to the common needs they share with others and monitoring is needed to ensure that serious harm does not result from too much emphasis being placed on the perceptions and preferences of particular groups’ (Doyal and Gough, 1991:308).

In terms of community groups it might be argued that the emphasis has always been on attending to the ‘particular’ rather than the universal. In this sense their contribution to a ‘particularist’ notion of welfare delivery is potentially important. The question remains however, how some aspects of diversity come to be accepted as a legitimate site for community group intervention, whilst others are potentially marginalised.

Furthermore, from Doyal and Gough’s point of view, the particular should always be placed in the context of the universal - the achievement of particular aims for particular groups should not be at the expense of others, and should also be explained and understood in the context of some ‘higher objective standard’ (Doyal and Gough, 1991:309).

This brief review of theories of need has shown how any analysis of the role of community groups in responding to local needs can embrace a wide range of perspectives, from descriptive tools that can be used to analyse the types of needs and needs-identifiers used by community groups, to analyses that can expose some of the limitations of assuming that community groups are necessarily ‘closer’ to people’s needs. In chapter five these various aspects of the needs literature are used to examine the role that community groups play in responding to local needs.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL: COMMUNITY GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERING

Despite a degree of controversy over the precise use or meaning of the term social capital, it is possible to identify certain features of this concept that can be used to assist in the analysis of community group participation. At its most general level we can think of social capital as

‘those features of a community or society which promote social cohesion and a sense of belonging and which enable its members to co-operate for the benefit of all’ (Cooper *et al.*, 1999:21).

The positive benefits of social capital have been associated with: improving democracy (Putnam *et al.*, 1993); reducing rates of school drop out (Coleman, 1988); lower levels of violence (Sampson *et al.*, 1997); increasing child development and well-being (Morrow, 2000; Runyan *et al.*, 1998) and improving economic prosperity (Coleman, 1988; Smith, 1998; Wilson, 1997).

These potential benefits provide governments with evidence that encouraging the development of ‘social capital’ can contribute to prosperity and assist in regenerating poor areas. The emphasis that social capital places on participation, social trust and collaborative working presents policy makers with a useful device for underpinning the involvement of local people and ‘communities’ in solutions to social problems. In this way, social capital has become something of a panacea in terms of potential policy responses to social problems. Morrow (1999) has suggested

‘there is a danger that “social capital” will become part of what might be termed “deficit theory syndrome”, yet another thing or resource that unsuccessful individuals, families, communities and neighbourhoods lack’ (Morrow, 1999:76).

The implication is that generating social capital creates benefits and opportunities, although it has also been argued that ‘a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful to others’ (Coleman, 1988:98).

Thus, social capital may not be an inherently 'good' thing. Examples of more negative aspects of social capital are numerous, and might include organised criminal activity, such as the Mafia; nationalist and racist organisations such as the National Front or Nation of Islam; and terrorist organisations such as ETA or the 'Real IRA'.

Even within relatively benign activity such as volunteering, a range of evidence exists to highlight the way in which access to social capital is differentially distributed across social groups, and consequently how activities associated with the development of social capital can reinforce existing patterns of inequality.

The focus in this work is on the use of volunteering as a proxy for social capital, based on the assumption that voluntary organisations produce social capital through participation in face-to-face interactions. There have been criticisms that the voluntary sector is only one potential source of social capital and that empirical work has tended to ignore other sources of social capital such as the informal sector, family, workplace and neighbourhood (Newton, 1997). However, the increasing amount of empirical work using membership in voluntary organisations as a proxy measure of social capital, raises questions about how such organisations can generate or maintain social capital.

An emerging British literature on social capital has used a variety of 'measures' of social capital, including membership in voluntary groups, to explore the relationship between social capital and health (Campbell *et al.*, 1999; Cooper *et al.*, 1999; Morrow, 1999, 2000). These studies have used measures of social capital as a means of indicating the level of social cohesion in a community which, it is argued, has implications for health. Despite this empirical trend, there has been a lack of work in Britain that has explored social capital in the context of voluntary or community groups (the exception is Smith, 1998). Thus, much of the work referenced here in relation to voluntary groups is from American sources.

Two main assumptions underpin the following discussion, related to the 'location' of social capital. First, this work draws upon a context-dependent formulation of social capital, that is, what constitutes social capital in one setting or time period may not in another (Edwards and Foley, 1997). Thus, access to social capital may not be evenly distributed, and not all forms of social capital are equally beneficial (Edwards and Foley, 1997).

Where voluntary activity has been used as a proxy for social capital there is widespread evidence of differential access according to age, gender, race and social class. Hall (1999) and Johnston and Jowell (1999) both found lower levels of participation among lower classes compared with middle classes. This is not a surprising, or new, finding.

By measuring social capital according to participation in associations, existing evidence strongly suggests that differential rates of participation are likely to be found (see chapter one). Furthermore, a context-dependent formulation of social capital allows us to examine differences between types of voluntary organisation. This is in contrast to the majority of work in the British literature which has a tendency to treat the voluntary sector as homogenous.

Second, social capital is seen to inhere in social relations and not in individuals:

‘Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors. It is not lodged either in the actors themselves, or in the physical implements of production’ (Coleman, 1988:98).

This feature of social capital has been neglected in empirical work that has used large data sets to measure association membership and social trust (Cooper *et al.*, 1999; Hall, 1999; Putnam, 1995a) at the level of the individual. Some argue that such studies ignore the context-specific and socially embedded nature of social capital (Edwards and Foley, 1998). Furthermore, it is argued that the social networks and organisational forms underpinning social capital are not accessible through this kind of data (Edwards and Foley, 1998). This has led others to argue that it is not possible to measure and then analyse all the structures of human relationships in a society (Greeley, 1997).

In the context of community group participation it can be argued that it is the relations between individuals in a group, or the relations between groups, that generate social capital rather than individuals themselves. This is not to suggest that there is no relationship between levels of human capital and social capital, however. In fact, it might be posited that social capital generated by individuals with high levels of human capital is more productive than that generated by those with lower levels of human capital (Wilson and Musick, 1998).

In terms of community groups this raises questions about links between human capital and community activism as a source of social capital and group formation. That is, it might be hypothesised that people with high levels of human capital are more likely to be instrumental in developing community activity, thereby contributing to the formation of social capital.

This study adopts a context-dependent view of social capital. Community groups can be seen as one potential site for the generation of social capital. Emphasis is placed on the social context within which relations are embedded, drawing attention away from the individual as a source of social capital and towards a more structural and dependent view.

A review of the American and British literature on social capital highlights an emphasis on three particular features: social networks, social trust and social benefits. Each of these is now discussed with reference to the implications for an analysis of community activity.

Social networks

Voluntary association has been used as an indicator of social capital because this is seen to represent the kinds of face-to-face interactions (or networks) that generate social trust. The centrality of social networks in the development of social capital is well established (Newton, 1997). Hall (1999) summarises social capital as follows:

‘The premise is that the social networks generated by..patterns of sociability constitute an important form of social capital in the sense that they increase the trust that individuals feel toward others and enhance their capacity to join together in collective action to resolve common problems’ (Hall, 1999:418).

Whilst Hall (1999) draws attention to the way in which trust and networks are related, questions remain as to whether trust makes the development of social networks possible, or whether networks generate trust (Newton, 1997). Whilst such questions are difficult to measure empirically, there is evidence to suggest that certain network types (diverse and geographically dispersed) may be more health enhancing than narrower, more dense types (Campbell *et al.*, 1999). These ideas are reminiscent of the notion of ‘the strength of weak ties’ identified by Granovetter (1973) in the early 1970s and, more latterly, by the work of network analysts such as Wellman (2000).

Further, Coleman (1988) drew attention to the way in which close-knit networks associated with social capital could act to exclude as well as include. Social capital does not seek to equalise opportunities or maximise participation and thus its development can act to reinforce existing patterns of exclusion. Similarly, voluntary organisations and community groups may adopt different approaches to the recruitment and retention of volunteers. It might be contended that low levels of participation are less about individual apathy and more about a lack of social networks, or opportunities, to participate.

This distinction between types of social network also raises questions regarding the idea of 'community' in relation to social capital. The tendency to assume that community is tied to place and that we can examine social capital as a feature of particular localities needs to be re-thought (see for example Morrow, 2000). Where places can be made up of many different kinds of 'community' (or social networks) there is a need to be sensitive to the ways in which competing perceptions of community may impact upon the ways in which social capital is generated.

The message from this type of analysis is that different kinds of networks can have different kinds of benefits, thereby drawing attention away from the idea that all networks necessarily create social capital. Similarly we can argue that different types of voluntary activity have different implications for social capital.

Newton (1997) has argued that formalised organisations that are less likely to involve members in decision-making are not as important for developing social capital as amorphous groupings that include people in decision making. Thus some organisational forms may not encourage participation as much as others. Furthermore, the extent to which belonging to a network gives an individual access to social capital may depend on the position of the individual in the network, and the quality of relations that exist between members (Bourdieu, 1986; Foley and Edwards, 1999; Pennington and Rydon, 2000).

Community groups can therefore be seen to contribute to social capital where they offer opportunities to develop face-to-face interactions and social networks. Examining how people access community groups, and the kinds of relations that exist in groups may contribute to a deeper understanding of how social capital can be generated and maintained.

At the same time there is a need to be aware of the social and political context within which networks and groups develop. Hall (1999) argues that government policy has influenced the maintenance of social capital in Britain through policies that support the voluntary sector. Others have argued that the development of social capital needs to be seen in the context of institutional arrangements that act to enhance or inhibit its growth (Muntaner *et al.*, 2000). Thus, the kinds of constraints placed on community groups in terms of funding opportunities, and regulations regarding accountability, may affect organisational capacity to adopt the kind of 'horizontal' participation so closely associated with the development of social capital.

Social Trust

Most work on social capital makes a connection between participation and levels of social trust. High levels of trust, reciprocity and resulting positive community identity, underpin the idea of cohesive local communities (Campbell *et al.*, 1999). Trust and co-operation are perceived as the values that turn people from self-seeking individuals into members of a community with shared interests and a sense of the common good (Newton, 1997). However, there is a danger in assuming that social capital and generalised reciprocity are as closely related as some formulations of social capital imply. For example, whilst Hall (1999) found evidence of declining social trust in Britain, he did not find any decline in association membership, leading him to argue that civic engagement may not depend as much on generalised trust as Putnam's work implies (see Hall, 1999:458).

Johnston and Jowell (1999) found that whilst association membership and willingness to ask neighbours for help were significantly correlated, trust in strangers had no link to organisational membership. This evidence supports the view that community involvement has an impact on trust within particular communities but this does not necessarily create generalised trust in strangers.

Following on from Coleman (1988), trust can be thought of as a resource available to individuals who share access to a particular social context. He argued that trust and reciprocity increased economic prosperity by facilitating commerce and shared knowledge between diamond traders, thus representing social capital. However, this social capital would not necessarily be taken with them out of this setting and into other social relations.

The norms of trust and reciprocity are not, therefore, values of individuals *per se*, but are embedded in particular social relations. Consequently, it is not posited here that involvement in community groups will necessarily create generalised trust. However, a situated view of trust does allow us to examine the different ways in which organisations and their members generate trust within the group and what impact this might have on social capital. According to Coleman (1988) groups with more trust are seen to accomplish more than groups without trust. The differential aspects of trust were highlighted by Eastis (1998) who compared the levels of trust and co-operation between members of two choral groups. She found that 'equality' (similarity in level of skill and knowledge) between members in one group led to greater co-operation where each person could contribute to discussions and decisions. Conversely, less equality and diversity of ability in the second group did not create the same levels of trust or collaboration.

Consequently, the issue of trust may help to identify reasons why people leave community groups where it could be posited that groups that generate low levels of trust and co-operation between members find it more difficult to retain volunteers, whilst those that exhibit high degrees of collaborative working and trust find it easier to recruit and maintain volunteers.

Social benefits

Coleman (1988) argued

'like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain goals that in its absence would not be possible'
(Coleman, 1998:98).

It can be argued that where community groups are delivering services to local people and offering opportunities for volunteering, they are 'productive'. However, it has also been argued that the provision of facilities is not enough to produce social capital and that 'more attention needs to be paid to the processes whereby such facilities are established and run' (Campbell *et al.*, 1999:155). In particular, they draw attention to the need to examine more carefully the ways in which organisations include users as well as volunteers in decision-making as a source of social capital.

It is not just the process of engagement that may create differential levels of social capital between groups, but the outcomes of social capital may also be differentially distributed (Putnam, 1995b). This has repercussions for social capital to develop 'social cohesion' because if social capital remains locked within particular 'communities' (or parts of the locality), only a minority of people are likely to benefit. The ways in which social capital is distributed between parts of the locality may therefore raise questions regarding assumptions about the widespread benefits of community group activity. The most obvious benefits deriving from social capital occur at the level of the individual in terms of the development of transferable organisational skills, and in this sense it is closely related to the development of human capital (Morrow, 1999). To reiterate the point made above, social capital contributes to the building of human capital and, in turn, the development of social capital may depend on certain levels of human capital being present.

It is the way in which this human capital is mobilised that is of particular interest here, given the possibility that many people in a locality have relevant experience and skills appropriate to community group participation.

There is also the need to examine the ways in which voluntary activity develops these aspects of human capital that might be important for its future maintenance. Eastis (1998) found that organisational characteristics affected the ability of people to develop transferable skills. The group with fewer resources needed more volunteers to help run its activities, which in turn created greater opportunities for the development of transferable skills, than the better off group which could pay others to do these jobs. Thus, not all forms of volunteering necessarily generate human capital which in turn, may have implications for the long term maintenance of social capital within a social network.

The above discussion reveals features of community group activity that warrant further investigation with respect to social capital. This is somewhat exploratory work since there is a lack of British research that has sought to examine the production, presence and use of social capital within the voluntary sector (the exception is Smith (1998) whose work is explored in chapter six). This study hopes to fill some of this empirical void by concentrating on the role of community groups in developing social capital.

Given that voluntary association membership can be seen as one source of social capital, the three features considered above - networks, trust and benefits - provide an analytic framework for exploring differences between community groups that might help to explain differential access to social capital in deprived areas. Thus, the intention is not to measure levels of social capital but to identify ways in which organisations can enhance or inhibit the potential for people to access social capital.

This specific focus is used to consider the role that the community sector might play in developing social capital in deprived areas. This requires some thought to be given to the ways in which social capital might be built. Putnam *et al.* (1993) are somewhat pessimistic regarding the building of social capital where it does not already exist and where conditions are unfavourable - as it may be in poor neighbourhoods. However, once established, social capital may contribute to sustainability by generating the growth of social cohesion. According to Coleman (1988) the more social capital is used, the more will be produced. Conversely the less people work together, the more the community's stocks of social capital will be depleted and the harder it could be to get people to work together in future (see Cooper *et al.*, 1999).

The capacity for community groups to contribute to the building and maintenance of social capital may therefore depend on the extent to which the residents in localities are able to draw on stocks of human capital to create conditions under which social capital might flourish.

THEORIES OF INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONS: COMMUNITY GROUPS AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Theories of inter-organisational relations (IORs) reflect most closely those forms of collaborative working that have come to dominate the management of regeneration programmes in the UK since the early 1990s (see chapter two). In the regeneration of deprived areas, social problems have increasingly been perceived as too complex for single agencies to deal with. Collaboration through partnership is therefore seen as a way of bringing greater resources to bear on intractable social problems (Carley *et al.*, 2000; Geddes, 1997; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Mayo, 1997; McArthur, 1995; Taylor, 2000b).

In the study to be reported here, the term partnership refers to the management board of local regeneration programmes where different interests are brought into the process of decision-making. Although the make-up of individual partnerships differs locally, typically they involve representatives from the local authority, Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), the voluntary sector, the private sector, and 'the community' (Clarke, 1995).

This discussion will draw on two strands of inter-organisational literature - resource dependency theory and new institutionalism - in order to identify a theoretical background to the forthcoming analysis of the relationship between the community sector and local regeneration partnerships (see chapter seven).

This discussion is concerned with two types of inter-organisational working: voluntary and mandated relations (see Hall, 1977). '*Voluntary*' IORs occur between groups as a result of common interest or exchange. The kinds of connections that develop between community groups can be characterised as voluntary. '*Mandated*' IORs are imposed by external forces - most commonly through government regulations and laws (Aldrich, 1976; Hall, 1977). The partnership model of policy implementation can be conceptualised as a mandated form of inter-organisational working.

The link between IORs and partnership working is best exemplified by the increasing amount of literature that identifies pre-existing voluntary networks and traditions of locally organised activity as the most promising basis for mandated local partnerships to work (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997; Skelcher *et al.*, 1996; Taylor, 1995b, 1997).

The focus in this discussion is to consider the ways in which local voluntary IORs may affect opportunities for some groups to be involved in partnerships and what the consequences of these IORs might be for community groups. To this end, two aspects of the inter-organisational literature are of interest. First, *resource dependency theories* which have sought to explain why organisations work together and offer insights into the differential access to local coalitions that community groups may experience.

Second, *new institutionalism* draws attention to the consequences for community groups of seeking to adopt and maintain norms of organisational working associated with local regeneration partnerships. Both theoretical frameworks offer a means of analysing existing empirical work on partnership working, as well as raising questions for analysis in this work.

Resource dependency theory

Resource dependency theory can be used to identify reasons why community groups might seek to enter into IORs, and how inter-organisational working might be related to local coalition-building and collective action. Thus resource dependency theory assists in developing theoretical propositions regarding voluntary IORs between community groups and how these might feed into mandated partnerships.

Three aspects of the resource dependency theory literature are used here and can be explained as follows: Resource dependency theory posits that organisations enter into exchange relations which in turn create the potential for power imbalances to occur as one organisation becomes dependent upon another for resources. Organisations that sit at the centre of resource-networks, upon whom many others are dependent for resources, can develop into 'focal organisations' which are more likely to be invited to join local coalitions, or be instrumental in their development. At each stage of this process there are implications for both community groups and relations with local partnerships.

The procurement of resources as the basis for exchange between organisations is the most prevalent reason given for IORs to develop (Galaskiewicz, 1985; Reitan, 1998). The kinds of resources that might be exchanged are diverse and could include information, money, personnel, technology and so forth (Hall, 1977; Reitan, 1998).

There is evidence that mandated IORs in the form of partnerships are based on the procurement of resources - particularly of funds. Competitive bidding processes force partnerships to compete with other places for resources (Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998; Mayo, 1997; Oatley *et al.*, 1998). Mackintosh (1992) calls this model of partnership 'budget enlargement' where public and private sector interests join together to extract resources from a third party - the government or European Union, for example.

Some have argued that regeneration partnerships have been dominated by the need to access funding rather than by any commitment to an overall regeneration vision (Bennet *et al.*, 2000; Taylor, 2000b). Thus, co-operation and collaboration in local partnership is used as a means to compete with other places for money (Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998).

Within local partnerships themselves there is also evidence that collaboration is predicated on the need to secure additional resources. Mackintosh's (1992) model of 'synergy' reflects the emphasis in government statements that partnerships can maximise available resources as partners pool assets. Furthermore, the control of resources by local partnerships has been identified as an incentive for voluntary organisations to get involved (Jacobs, 1995; Osborne, 1998a), whilst others have found that the availability of resources also encouraged new people to become active in localities (Hastings *et al.*, 1996).

The procurement of resources can therefore act as a motive for organisations to work together in partnerships. However, where partnerships have been predicated on the basis of securing finance, resource dependency theory would argue that once this primary motive has been removed, organisations will return to their preferred independent state. Galaskiewicz (1985) argues that organisations strive for autonomy and would prefer not to work together since IORs may constrain subsequent action (see also Hudson, 1993). Evidence from the regeneration literature supports this claim where it has been found that once the money in partnerships has run out, previous patterns of working return (see Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Macfarlane and Laville, 1992; Mayo, 1997).

Despite evidence of the importance of resource procurement as a motive for mandated partnership working, and as a source of potential problems, there is less known about the kinds of resources community groups might exchange or motivations for the development of voluntary IORs between them. This lack of evidence has implications for the identification of 'focal organisations' as discussed below.

The second aspect of resource dependency theory that is useful for examining the relationship between community groups and partnerships relates to the power imbalances that can occur as organisations become dependent on others for resources (Aldrich, 1976).

Again, there is evidence from the regeneration literature of the way in which unequal power relations occur within the partnership. Frequently it is the 'community' partner that is characterised as weak compared with others (Davoudi and Healey, 1995; Macfarlane and Mabbott, 1993; Mawson *et al.*, 1995). This relative weakness has commonly been explained in terms of community representatives' lack of power, resources, technical knowledge and access to the 'insider networks' of dominant partners (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994b; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; McArthur, 1995; Skelcher *et al.*, 1996; Taylor, 1997). Others have specified the resource dependency of community organisations on certain partners as the root of unequal power relations between community representatives and others (Russell *et al.*, 1996).

Whilst these power imbalances and potential resource dependency have been found to occur in partnerships led by local authorities, we might want to question the validity of such claims in community-led partnerships. In such instances it might be argued that the 'community' has substantial power and control over resources that might reduce or negate other inequalities such as technical knowledge. Furthermore, there is little evidence regarding power relations between community groups themselves. The potential for some organisations to be central in resource-networks has implications, according to resource dependency theory, for access to local coalitions.

Resource dependency theory suggests that 'focal organisations' develop, upon whom other organisations are dependant for resources. In the US Galaskiewicz (1979) and Knoke (1983) both found that organisations central in community-resource networks were seen as more influential by other community actors. Furthermore, US evidence shows how overlapping membership deriving from IORs can lead to the development of 'inter-organisational leaders' - individuals who straddle several organisations in a locality simultaneously (Perrucci and Pilisuk, 1970). The centrality of an organisation in a network of overlapping membership has been found to correlate positively with its reputation in community affairs (Laumann and Pappi, 1976).

Thus, we might expect to find that community organisations upon whom others are dependant for resources, and those that are linked to other organisations through overlapping membership are more likely to be involved in local partnerships.

These processes may assist in the identification of factors that increase the likelihood of some groups gaining access to the partnership over others and has implications for the ways in which pre-existing IORs between community groups might be used by partnership builders to select 'community representatives'.

There is evidence that some individuals are invited to join partnership boards because they are perceived as the appropriate person to represent the community across a range of issues (Mayo, 1997). Such individuals have been called 'godfathers' (Williamson, 1993), the 'usual suspects' Taylor (1995b) and 'community professionals' (Anastacio *et al.*, 2000). However, these studies frequently imply personality and individual traits over organisational features.

In fact, findings in the US have argued that individuals are important not because of their personalities but because of their position in relation to a number of different organisations (Galaskiewicz, 1989). Thus, it is the IORs that create the 'usual suspects' as much as individual charisma or leadership qualities.

From an organisational perspective, the British literature reports the widespread use of existing community structures as a route for finding appropriate community representatives (McArthur, 1995; Osborne, 1998a). Consequently it has been argued that larger voluntary organisations have an advantage because they are well known and have access to resources (Taylor, 2000b). In contrast, smaller organisations and minority ethnic organisations are less likely to be selected where these are less well networked (Chanan, 1991; Russell, 1998; Russell *et al.*, 1996; Skelcher *et al.*, 1996; Taylor, 1997). Smaller organisations may therefore find the costs of being involved in partnerships a burden (McArthur, 1993; Taylor, 1997).

Thus a view emerges that aspects of the 'focal organisation' and 'overlapping membership' theses of resource dependency theory may be operating in localities. However, two issues remain unclear:

- First, what kinds of community groups and what kinds of resources are more likely to contribute to the development of focal organisations in deprived localities?
- Second, are focal organisations necessarily more likely to be invited to join partnership boards?

An analysis of the ways in which community groups enter into IORs and the implications of these for organisational success in accessing partnerships is undertaken in chapter seven.

Whilst resource dependency theory proves useful for identifying factors that may influence the development of inter-organisational working and partnerships, it proves less effective as a tool for considering the impact or outcomes of this method of policy implementation for community groups. New institutionalism, in contrast, presents a means of exploring some of the contradictory messages emerging from the partnership literature.

New institutionalism

New institutionalism theory draws attention to the ways in which organisations within a particular field become 'institutionalised' - adopting common forms, outlooks, strategies and competencies (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Reitan, 1998; Selznick, 1996). Since there is no coherent body of theory on which to draw for new institutionalism (Lowndes, 1996) this discussion focuses on the organisation theory literature which argues that 'while institutions arise out of human activity, they are not necessarily the product of conscious design' (Lowndes, 1996:184). In the context of regeneration partnerships and inter-organisational working, this literature draws attention to how and why meanings, forms and procedures come to be taken for granted and what the consequences of this are (Bielefeld, 1992).

Viewing partnership working as an inevitable feature of governance in a globalised and fragmented world moves away from the notion of partnership as a solution, and allows for the possibility that this form of policy implementation is adopted because it 'fits' with prevailing conditions.

In the context of urban management, Davoudi (1995) draws attention to the way in which universal, hierarchical welfare state structures have become fragmented to the point where local government is no longer the focal point for service integration, but is simply one of many actors competing for access to resources. In this context, management by partnership offers a route through increasing fragmentation (Mayer, 1995).

Indeed, despite criticisms of the way community partners have been treated, there is a view throughout the regeneration literature that the process of partnership working can be improved for community involvement to be 'meaningful'. The recommendations most frequently cited emphasise a reinforcement of the community's role in partnerships through mechanisms such as: training; capacity building; earlier involvement; and seeking to alter the attitudes of other partners towards community representatives (Anastacio *et al.*, 2000; Clarke, 1995; Geddes, 1997; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Purdue *et al.*, 2000; Taylor, 1995b). Such recommendations reinforce the dominance of partnership working rather than providing alternatives. This discussion seeks to consider some of the consequences for community group working emanating from the norms and values that have come to underpin partnership working.

Three particular norms of partnership working are considered here: the drive for representativeness; the need for consensus; and the establishment of bureaucratic forms, in order to highlight the way in which these run counter to assumptions regarding the nature of the community sector more generally.

Representativeness and particularism

The inclusion of 'community' partners in decision-making processes has tended to be predicated on the belief that drawing people in from the locality will increase the 'representativeness' of the board itself. The pressure for community board members to be 'representative' has come from residents, other partners and from community organisations (Hastings *et al.*, 1996) - thus reflecting the widespread belief that representativeness is a requirement of community board members.

However, the extent to which community members can be representative of diverse identities and social groups has been undermined by research that argues that community representatives have access to limited and fragmented communities of interest and actually replicate wider patterns of social exclusion (Purdue *et al.*, 2000). Others have argued that disagreement and tension between community organisations hampers their capacity to contribute to local decision-making where no common interest can be pursued (Geddes, 1997; Gregory, 1998; McArthur, 1993; Russell, 1998).

Thus the normative requirement for representativeness at the level of partnership working can undermine the positive aspects of particularism for which the community sector is renowned. This is to assume, however, that individual members of community groups who accept positions on local partnership boards do so in order to further sectional interests. The process of accessing partnership boards by community groups, is therefore of interest in seeking to determine how far the need for representativeness undermines the capacity of community groups to speak for particular sections of the local population.

Consensus and conflict

Partnership working has tended to be equated with consensus based decision making. This is affirmed in the organisational literature that emphasises the importance of mutual understanding and trust in IORs. However, commentators have argued that a lack of conflict in partnership boards may indicate that the community partner is weak or that certain issues are ignored (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; McArthur, 1995). Thus, it has been argued that consensus limits opportunities for community representatives to challenge decisions and present alternative and diverse agendas (Taylor, 1995).

It is unclear from these findings whether there is an interaction between community group 'style' and activity on the board - in other words, organisations whose objectives lie outside those of the partnership may choose not to be involved, whilst those that are pursuing objectives similar to the regeneration project may be more likely to be involved. Furthermore, the extent to which individual community representatives oppose partnership decisions may reveal more about the style of management of the partnership than about the capacity for conflict to emerge.

Purdue *et al.* (2000) found that in partnerships where power was retained centrally community representatives were more likely to oppose decisions, whilst in partnerships where levels of trust were high and power more equally shared, community members were more likely to accept partnership decisions.

The normative requirement for consensus working within local partnerships can therefore be seen to detract from the capacity for 'the community' to present opposing views. In turn, this feature of partnership working potentially undermines the oppositional position that community-based organisations have been able to adopt in the past. However, it remains unclear how far invitations to participate on partnership boards is restricted to those most likely to conform to consensus-style decision making. Furthermore, the assumption that partnership boards exert some power over local decision-making may be irrelevant to organisations whose activities lie beyond the scope of a local regeneration programme. Thus, we can question how far resource opportunities act as a primary motive for involvement where this may conflict with other organisational goals.

Bureaucracy and participation

New institutionalism suggests that inter-organisational working will lead to homogeneity of form across organisations in a field. This homogeneity (or isomorphism) derives from three sources: External pressure through government mandates or cultural expectations (coercive isomorphism); from a copycat scenario where organisations model themselves on apparently successful forms (mimetic isomorphism); and through professionalisation where staff impose similar forms in organisations (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). For community groups then, we might expect to find inter-organisational working leading to similarity in working patterns. In particular, evidence suggests that there are contradictory expectations regarding the need for bureaucratic styles of working and the participatory mechanisms commonly associated with community-based activity.

Taylor (1995) argues that partnership structures tend to copy those of local authorities, based on technical and professional cultures rather than participatory forms. Early studies pointed to the way in which these structures forced community partners to adopt ways of working that were alien to them, leaving them isolated and lacking in confidence to engage with decision-making (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; McArthur, 1993).

More recently, the idea of isomorphism has been used to describe the processes through which community organisations adopt working practices that can enhance their likelihood of securing funds (Taylor, 2000b).

It has been argued that the institutional environment within which partnerships have developed leave little opportunity for the community sector to impose its own cultural norms (Taylor, 1995). The implication from all the studies of partnership working is that the emphasis is on the community partner changing its working patterns to fit with the partnership (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Skelcher *et al.*, 1996). Consequently, it is widely argued that there is a need for officials and government to recognise the legitimate right of local people to participate as an equal partner (Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Geddes, 1997; Taylor, 2000b), although there is an apparent lack of incentives for officials to do so (Taylor, 2000b).

The implication of 'isomorphism' occurring within community organisations as they seek to access decision-making processes, is that the participatory structures associated with community-based activity may be undermined as the drive for bureaucratic accountability leads to widespread adoption of hierarchical forms of organisation. The question remains how far community group working reflects trends away from participatory and 'flat' organisational structures and how far these changes are associated with increasing involvement in IORs.

The new institutionalism literature draws attention to the way in which prevailing norms of working, designed to 'fit' with wider social and political trends, create conditions whereby previous patterns of working can be undermined. In the context of community groups, the drive for representativeness, consensus based decision making and procedural requirements for bureaucratic styles of working may undermine the particularism, conflict and participatory structures with which the community sector has traditionally been associated. Chapter seven seeks to analyse the role and organisational styles of community groups in order to examine how far these changes are altering fundamental characteristics of community-based organisations.

CONCLUSION

Individually, these three theoretical perspectives offer a means of analysing specific functions of community group activity. Together, they begin to point the way to a theory of community sector activity that recognises the social, political and economic context within which community groups operate, that extends beyond a simple study of localities.

Each of these theoretical perspectives assumes that community groups are operating within a complex and fragmented immediate locality, that is in turn linked to wider social trends and dominant discourses regarding the appropriate solution to intractable social problems.

Returning to the position outlined in chapter one, these perspectives contribute to an understanding of community based activity that distinguishes it from the voluntary sector more widely, and acknowledges the situated nature of the assumptions that are frequently made regarding the positive characteristics of the community sector. Thus, they enable a more critical review of the role that community groups play in urban regeneration than has been pursued in the past.

The main research questions that have been identified through the application of these theoretical frameworks to community group working are summarised in Table 3.2 overleaf. Before moving on to the three main analysis chapters that draw on each of these theoretical perspectives, chapter four describes how these research questions were operationalised and introduces the two case study localities.

Table 3.2
Summarising research questions and theoretical perspectives

Function and main assumption regarding community groups	Theoretical perspective applied to analysis	Main issues emerging	Key research questions explored in analysis chapters
Community groups can provide accessible and immediate services that are responsive to local needs	Theories of need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing 'needs-identifiers' seek to impose definitions of need. • External factors can influence the identification of needs. • An increasingly diverse and fragmented range of needs exists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of need do community groups reflect through their activities? • Who/what influences decisions regarding which needs will be met? • Whose needs are prioritised and why?
Community groups play an important role in developing social capital where they offer opportunities for volunteering and participation by local people	Theory of social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different kinds of social networks create differential opportunities for social capital • Different levels of trust and co-operation may affect social capital • Social benefits deriving from social capital are differentially distributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do community groups support volunteering? • How do aspects of co-operation and trust affect the retention and recruitment of volunteers? • Who benefits from the development of social capital? In what ways?
Community groups should be involved in inter-agency working and local regeneration partnerships	Theories of inter-organisational relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups work together to exchange resources • Focal organisations are more likely to be involved in partnerships • The norms of partnership working undermine traditional patterns of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of resources are exchanged by community groups? • Do focal organisations exist and what is their role in the locality? • How does partnership working affect community groups?

CHAPTER FOUR

DESCRIBING THE STUDY

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

As we have already discussed, the broad objectives of the study were to explore voluntary activity in the context of deprivation and ethnicity through the functions and activities of community organisations. The specific objectives of the research design were to study the role of community organisations and groups in localities with a view to examining three functions: service delivery; volunteering; and involvement in local decision-making. The research questions focus on: what community groups do? Who gets involved in community groups and why? How do community groups interact with each other and the people living in localities? (See Table 3.2).

From the outset the method that was considered to be best suited to achieving these outcomes was a place-based case study method, since the local context within which community groups were operating was deemed important. Milofsky (1988) argues that the organisation itself is less important than its relationship to the surrounding community. Thus, whilst the community groups were the main unit of analysis used throughout the data collection and research design, various aspects of the local context within which they operated were also taken into account - including the views of local residents and users as well as active volunteers and people working in community groups.

The activities of community groups are studied in the context of regeneration policy. Thus, the research design also sought to encompass places that were in receipt of money from the SRB. In fact, the selection of localities was determined by the policy context, as the forthcoming discussion reveals.

The remainder of this chapter describes how the research design was operationalised, including a description of the two case study localities.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

An area-based case study method was adopted. This method has been used in both area-based regeneration research (Carley *et al.*, 2000; Cattell and Evans, 1999; Fearnley and McInroy, 1999; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Silburn *et al.*, 1999) and in studies of the voluntary sector (Knight, 1993; Knight and Hayes, 1981; Smith, 1998). This study brings the two aspects together.

The use of an area-based case study approach was informed by the objective of the research which was to explore community groups as part of a local social system, rather than as discreet entities. Yin (1994) has argued that

‘[a] case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident.... You would therefore use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions’ (Yin, 1994:13).

The decision to use place-based case studies was informed by two related issues. First, the study sought to explore the relationships between community groups and other spheres of social life. Community groups are almost universally acknowledged to operate within spatial boundaries, drawing their clients and volunteers from the immediate locality (Alcock, 1996; Chanan, 1999; Milofsky, 1988; Taylor, 1997). Thus, exploring the community sector within spatial boundaries is logical if the purpose of the study is to examine the relationships between community groups and their local environment. Second, the study uses regeneration policy as a tool through which to examine the role of community groups in deprived areas. In common with much regeneration policy research, this study found that the area-based focus of the policy makes research based on ‘place’ legitimate and necessary.

To the extent that this research is locality focussed it is a ‘community study’, but it would not necessarily be defined as such by earlier researchers who sought to understand the totality of community life. From the 1960s onwards sociological and anthropological studies of ‘community’ have revealed the importance of maintaining an ‘open’ approach to the boundaries that can be imposed by area-based studies.

In these studies, place gave way to 'local social systems' (Stacey, 1962) and 'social networks' (Pahl, 1968) as conceptual tools for thinking about the way 'communities' extended beyond geographical boundaries (see Bell and Newby, 1971). Wellman's (1979) notion of 'community as network' has much in common with Pahl's analysis. He argues that social structure and social linkages are of primary importance to sociology, whilst questions of social sentiment and spatial distribution hold secondary positions. Thus, Wellman (1979, 2000) argues that place is an inadequate basis for study and that analysing social networks requires us to think about the relationships between people regardless of geographical location.

These studies present both a challenge and an opportunity to place-based case study methods. On the one hand they criticise the boundedness of place-based approaches as inadequate for understanding 'community'. On the other hand they point to the importance of maintaining a dynamic and open approach to studying local phenomena, such as community groups, which the research design for this study has sought to embrace.

This study is based on the way that community groups operate within a local social system. Although the study is locality based it encompasses the notion of 'social networks' in the form of community groups. Thus, place is not the predominant or overarching feature of the research design. This study is an example of the kind of 'community study' that Crow and Allen (1994) defined as

'[a] level above that of individual and household, of greater scope than family or kin grouping, yet one which is located and consequently contextualised within relatively small scale social structures' (Crow and Allen, 1994:194).

Whilst acknowledging the limitations of a place-based case study method in terms of 'community' studies generally, the method has advantages in terms of allowing for a comprehensive approach to the collection of data. Yin (1994) has stated that

'..the case-studies unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence - documents, artifacts, interviews and observations' (Yin, 1994:10).

The broad thrust of the work is qualitative, but the numerical significance of some aspects of the work is drawn out through the analysis. Thus, there is no epistemological position guiding the methodological approach or the type of data collected, nor any implication that either qualitative or quantitative research methods provide 'better' quality data (Cricher *et al.*, 1999). Thus, the multiple data collection techniques employed sought to uncover as much diversity of experience as possible. Table 4.1, below, summarises the six techniques used and provides an overview of the range and depth of data collected.

Table 4.1

Data collection techniques

Technique	Number	Respondents/activities
Information gathering contacts	18	Government Office for Regions Local Authority Community Capacity Builders Managers of SRB Programmes
Survey of groups	64	Community group respondents
In depth interviews	70	42 Volunteers/committee members/paid staff 8 community representatives 20 non-active residents
Group Discussions	6	Users of community groups: 1 Asian women learning English 3 young people's groups 2 older person's group
Non-participant observation of areas	2	Manningham and Girdlington Royds
Participant Observation	8	3 Photo sessions (young people) 1 Painting session (5-7 years) 2 Day trips (13-16 years) 1 Healthy Living Centre Steering Group 1 Consultation exercise

Information gathering contacts were made in a number of relevant agencies in order to gather basic information at the start of the research design. These individuals were not interviewed formally, but the advice and help they offered was invaluable in developing a sense of the localities and the kinds of projects that were underway across the region.

The information provided by contacts at Government Office formed the basis for the selection of localities (see below). The local authority, capacity builders and managers of the SRB programmes assisted in the identification of community groups in both localities by providing lists of known organisations. It was not taken for granted that official documentation would necessarily be accurate or complete and the non-participant observation of the areas was, in part, a means of identifying other activities and groups. This meant literally walking systematically around the localities. This observation also helped the researcher to gain a sense of the places, people, schools, public services and facilities that contributed to an overall familiarity with the localities.

Every organisation identified (sixty four in total) was included in a 'survey' exercise, based on a structured questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The researcher completed the questionnaire during a visit to the group, when a paid worker or committee member responded to questions. This survey data formed the basis from which individuals were selected for in-depth interviews and group discussions.

The in-depth interviews drew on qualitative methods to explore the 'frames of meaning' of respondents (Bryman, 1988). The topic guides were altered to reflect the different types of respondent but they were all based on gathering in-depth information about people's experiences of being volunteers; their feelings about the locality and community groups; and their understanding of the local regeneration programmes. A total of seventy interviews were completed. These included: paid workers; active volunteers; non-active residents; and 'community representatives' who were members of the partnership boards running the regeneration programmes.

The group discussions were undertaken with users of community groups. They were not 'focus groups' in that there was no attempt to specifically analyse the data according to the relations between individuals involved (see Kitzinger, 1994).

The user groups were all 'natural' groupings - although it was not clear how far personal relationships between individuals extended outside the use of the centre. This method allowed a number of people to be interviewed simultaneously. The context of the discussions were about people's use and perceptions of community groups; the benefits that people derived from using community centres; why they chose to use these facilities rather than others; and whether they were actively involved in running or decision-making within groups.

Non-participant observation in the form of diary and field notes were collected throughout the time spent in the field and have been used to compliment the formal data collection methods. Being immersed in the local area was important for understanding more about the context in which community groups were operating. In addition it would be true to say that each case study generated 'key informants' (Whyte, 1955) and there was a clear commitment made to generate familiarity with the settings through local news and issues (Salmen, 1987).

Participant observation also occurred through attendance at umbrella group meetings; helping out with a playgroup; and organising photography sessions with young people. These aspects of researcher involvement provided invaluable experience of being part of decision-making processes, and understanding how some of the community groups and individuals interviewed operated in these kinds of umbrella forums. The sessions with young people gave some insight into how they felt about the places where they lived, and assisted in the recruitment of respondents for group discussions.

The topic guides are included in Appendices 2 and 3. These were tested for clarity and comprehensiveness with colleagues in mock discussions.

The multiple techniques used to gather data and the range of contacts and respondents that were met through the fieldwork process has generated a rich and detailed data set that has enhanced the researcher's understanding of how community groups operate and some of the difficulties they face.

SELECTING LOCALITIES

Sampling is an important aspect of qualitative research design (Mason, 1996). The sampling in this study was multi-stage in that the first sampling issue regarded the selection of the case study localities. The second sampling issue related to the selection of respondents within the localities. This section begins by describing how the two localities came to be selected and goes on to describe the key characteristics of each place.

The need to be immersed in the field for some time in order to come to some understanding of activities and people made it rational to select localities in the region where I live (Yorkshire). This allowed daily visits to each locality to be undertaken over a period of six months. The selection of localities was based on purposive sampling - that is because they illustrated features and processes of interest to the research questions (Mason, 1996; Silverman, 2000).

Three criteria informed the selection process. First, the localities had to be in receipt of SRB monies. Rounds one to four of SRB were included, thereby ignoring the newly launched round five bids and the New Deal for Community areas. Second, a minimum of two localities were to be selected on the grounds that additional sites could be selected if time allowed. This decision was based on some consideration of the issue of 'generalisability' in qualitative research. Ward-Schofield (1993) has drawn attention to the trade-off between breadth (a large number of sites) and depth (providing enough internal validity for the findings to be generalisable) that occurs where heterogeneity is used as the basis through which generalisability can be enhanced. Given the range of respondents and depth of work that the study hoped to include, it was deemed appropriate to allow depth to dominate rather than breadth. This strategy worked well to meet the objectives of the study. Whilst it may have been possible to complete the survey data and a small number of in-depth interviews in more places, the results suggest that understanding the multiple relationships that were identified through a more in-depth approach yielded more interesting findings than the survey data alone. The third consideration that informed the case study selection was the need to include at least one locality with a significant ethnic minority population in order to explore aspects of ethnic minority voluntary activity.

The Yorkshire and Humber GOR provided details of all SRB programmes running in the region - a total of sixty four programmes across four rounds of funding. These covered a range of programme types, including economic, social and physical regeneration projects, as well as those based around the needs of ethnic minorities. In addition, the SRB programmes were running in inner city areas, outer peripheral housing estates, ex-coalfield areas, seaside towns and across whole cities. Thus, the regional focus did not reduce the range of programmes available or the types of localities from which to choose.

An initial sift of these programmes removed those running in large geographical areas (such as whole cities or towns) which was considered to be beyond the scope of a single researcher; those that were 'thematic' - for example targeting all young people in a city and consequently not area based programmes; and those that had ended by the time the fieldwork commenced. This initial sift of possible localities left twenty seven localities that fulfilled the main criteria. These were spread across all four SRB rounds (see Appendix 4).

All twenty seven possible localities had something to recommend them to the overall research design. Three districts - Bradford, Sheffield and Leeds - emerged as those most likely to generate a spread of programme types, localities and population differences. By selecting two case study localities in the same district travelling time was reduced and the same contacts at district level were used to assist with access to localities and background information.

The deciding factor in selecting Bradford as the area for the research to be undertaken was based on two issues: one theoretical and one practical. The round one bid in Bradford (The Royds) differed from all the others in that it was resident-led, in contrast to the other schemes where the local authority was the lead partner. This SRB programme has been used as an example of best practice in resident led regeneration programmes (Taylor, 2000a) and has received national attention for its physical refurbishment programme. As such, The Royds represented something of a 'deviant' example of regeneration strategies, a recognised means of developing theoretical sampling (Mason, 1996; Silverman, 2000). It was felt that the resident-led nature of the project was more likely to reveal positive aspects of the regeneration decision-making process than one that was imposed by external agents.

The estate based focus of the Royds programme also contrasted well with the inner city Manningham and Girdlington SRB scheme which operates in an area with a high proportion of ethnic minority population. Furthermore, both areas seemed to exhibit high degrees of community activity with numerous centres and groups in operation.

Thus, a combination of opportunity, practicality and theoretical considerations informed the selection of the two case study localities. It is important to note that the locality itself was not the main unit of analysis for the study - the community groups operating within the localities were to be the focus. However, there was a clear intention to study these groups in a policy and locality context and therefore selecting localities that reflected difference and diversity was deemed important.

INTRODUCING THE LOCALITIES

This introduction to the two localities covers three aspects. First, background data is presented, based on the 1991 census, which give a flavour of the basic issues pertaining to demographics, employment and housing in each locality. Second, the census data is supplemented with more up to date statistics from the Index of Multiple Deprivation (DETR, 2000d) in order to identify aspects of deprivation that these localities represented in relation to the rest of England. Third, consideration is given to the SRB programmes in each area, explaining how these are managed and the key differences between the two localities.

Background data

There are difficulties in presenting an accurate picture of each of the localities, as defined by the SRB boundaries. Most statistical data are available at ward level - which are not coterminous with SRB boundaries in either of the localities.

The Royds estates have a combined population of 12,000 and cover approximately 669 acres of residential area (RCA, 1994). The Manningham and Girdlington SRB area includes a population of approximately 25,000 (Bradford Congress, nd), and covers an area approximately two miles by two miles, including a mix of residential and non-residential areas. The basic demographic characteristics of the two localities are presented in Tables 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, below. These have been collated from 1991 census data.

Bradford City Council research and statistics department provide census data analysed at 'neighbourhood forum' level (www.bradford.gov.uk). These operate at a level smaller than electoral wards and are a useful guide to considering some of the key demographic, employment and housing characteristics of the two localities. It is recognised that 1991 census data is now somewhat out of date, but at the time of writing it is the only data available to cover particular characteristics.

The boundaries of the neighbourhood forums are not coterminous with the SRB area boundaries. A 'best fit' has been achieved by combining data from three neighbourhood forums for the Manningham and Girdlington SRB area, and combining data from two neighbourhood forums for Royds. This means that in Royds, only two of the three estates that make up the SRB area are included (the third is the smallest estate). In Manningham and Girdlington it is difficult to clearly identify the parts of the SRB area that are excluded, but the three neighbourhood forums were all operational at the time of the fieldwork and were all operating within the SRB boundary. Consequently, these data should not be interpreted as presenting an accurate reflection of each locality. They do, however, serve to identify some of the main differences between the two localities and some of the key differences between these and the Bradford district more generally.

Table 4.2

Ethnic group characteristics - Royds and Manningham and Girdlington

Ethnic Group	% Royds	% Manningham and Girdlington	% Bradford District
Total White	97.3	39.7	84.4
Total non-white	2.7	60.3	15.6
Pakistani	0.3	48.6	9.8
Indian	0.8	4.3	2.6
Bangladeshi	0	1.8	0.8
Black	1.1	3.0	1.2
Chinese and other	0.5	2.6	1.2
Base	15,447	25,315	457,344

Table 4.2 draws attention to the ethnic diversity represented by the two localities. The Royds estates were dominated by a white population (97.3 percent) and during the fieldwork no black or Asian individuals were seen or mentioned in any interviews. In Manningham and Girdlington a more diverse ethnic mix can be observed, although the Pakistani population (48.6 percent) is the most dominant. They are joined by Bangladeshi, Indian and African Caribbean populations that contribute to the overall multi-cultural feel to the area. The statistics do not, however, reflect the concentration of some ethnic groups in particular parts of the locality - the Bangladeshi community, for example is concentrated in two or three specific streets, which belies their relatively small numbers in the locality as a whole (1.8 percent). The field notes do not reflect the fact that almost 40 percent of the population was white. The locality was dominated by cultural and religious references that indicated its multi-cultural background, and the white population seemed a relatively insignificant minority during the field work itself.

Table 4.3

Employment profile - Royds and Manningham and Girdlington

Employment Status	% Royds	% Manningham and Girdlington	% Bradford District
All residents 16-pension age			
Economically active	76.2	62.7	76.2
Employed/self-employed	63.3	45.2	67.0
Unemployed	11.4	15.7	8.5
Government scheme	1.5	1.7	1.2
Other	23.8	62.6	23.3
Base	9,060	13,739	270,027
Aged 16-24			
Economically active	73.2	59.6	69.7
Employed/self-employed	72.0	60.2	78.1
Unemployed	22.8	33.5	17.2
Government scheme	5.2	6.3	4.7
Base	2,171	3,914	60,425

Table 4.3 shows that in 1991 both localities had unemployment rates that were higher than for the district as a whole. For all residents unemployment rates were much higher in Manningham and Girdlington (15.7 percent) and Royds (11.4 percent) than for Bradford district (8.5 percent). These differences are especially marked among the under 25 year old's with 33.5 percent unemployed in Manningham and Girdlington and 22.8 percent in Royds, compared with 17.2 percent across the whole district. Unsurprisingly, a greater proportion of young people in these localities were also on government schemes compared with the district as a whole. In 1991, unemployment was higher in Manningham and Girdlington (15.7 percent for all residents) than in Royds (11.4 percent), and most of this difference is accounted for by the higher proportions of unemployed young people.

Table 4.4

Housing characteristics - Royds and Manningham and Girdlington

	% Royds	% Manningham and Girdlington	% Bradford District
Housing tenure			
Owner occupied	56.4	64.6	71.1
Council rented	35.4	12.8	16.6
Other rented	8.2	22.6	12.3
Base (all households)	5,721	7,912	174,087
Housing type			
Detached	5.5	5.1	10.3
Semi-detached	55.2	13.7	35.1
Terrace	23.1	61.8	39.1
Flats and other shared	16.2	19.4	15.5
Base (all dwellings)	6,093	8,432	182,901
Crowded households			
	8.2	30.8	2.6
Base (residents in households)	15,333	24,922	451,038

Table 4.4 reflects the main differences in housing tenure between the two localities with the expected higher proportions of council rented property in the Royds estates (35.4 percent) compared with Manningham and Girdlington (12.8 percent). The relatively high proportion of owner occupation in Royds (56.4 percent) may reflect the amount of council housing that has been sold under the 'right to buy' legislation. However, the figures presented here are not coterminous with the SRB boundary areas and include neighbourhoods surrounding the estates that are predominantly owner occupied. According to the statistics collected for the SRB bid in 1994, there were only 3,356 dwellings, of which 2,276 (67.8 percent) were local authority owned and 1,080 (32.2 percent) owner occupied (RCA, 1994). It is not clear from the RCA report how this data was collected, although it clearly demonstrates a higher proportion of local authority property than the 1991 census data.

The 1991 census does indicate differences in the proportions of owner occupation and local authority housing between the two localities. These differences reflect the position as identified during the fieldwork and have repercussions for the way in which the two SRB programmes have developed aims and objectives (see below).

Manningham and Girdlington had a much higher proportion of 'other rented' tenure (22.6 percent) compared with both the Royds estates (8.2 percent) and the district as a whole (12.3 percent), in 1991. Explanations for this lie in the different housing types found in each locality. In Manningham and Girdlington 61.8 percent of property was terraced. This ranged from traditional working class terraced housing to large Victorian terraced houses, many of which had been converted into flats and bedsits. The proximity of Manningham and Girdlington to the City centre, along with the availability of these large Victorian houses may contribute to the relative importance of the private rented sector in parts of this locality. In contrast, the Royds estates were mainly composed of semi-detached property built during the 1950s and 1960s. The 1991 data indicates that 16.2 percent of dwellings were flats and other shared property. It is likely that this proportion has fallen in recent years as the SRB programme has led to the demolition of many of these.

The high percentage of overcrowding in Manningham and Girdlington (calculated as a percentage of residents in households), at 30.8 percent compared with 2.6 percent for the district, reflects a pressing need among ethnic minority groups for larger family homes.

One of the largest Black housing associations in the country originated in Manningham and has sought to expand the numbers of large family homes for Asian families available in the district.

Whilst data from 1991 is useful for providing a broad overview of local characteristics it is worth reflecting on how far observations made during the fieldwork indicated any change between 1991 and 1999. In terms of ethnic group characteristics the 1991 census data seems to reflect the general diversity of ethnic groups found in Manningham and Girlington as well as the overwhelmingly white population in Royds.

The unemployment statistics similarly reflect observations made during the fieldwork. They do not, however, reflect the reality of unemployment for many people who remain out of work. The causes of unemployment in both localities has its roots in the de-industrialisation that shook northern cities in the 1980s and 1990s. In Manningham and Girlington one local mill employed 5,000 workers, mainly drawn from Indian sub-continent and the closure of this was a bitter blow to the locality. Many of the men who came to England searching for work in the 1950s and 1960s and found it in the mills, never learned to speak English. The social and economic isolation these men face underlies the statistics presented in Table 4.3.

For young people in 1999, unemployment remained an important issue. Observations made during the fieldwork indicated the prevalence of young unemployed people looking for somewhere to go and something to do during the day, as noted in fieldwork diaries:

‘A lot of young people hang around on [this street]. Mainly African Caribbean and lots of young Asian men driving around in cars. There’s not a lot for them to do and some of them are here for hours at a time. Unemployment a problem’ (Fieldnotes, May, 1999).

‘Met three young unemployed lads at the centre today. One of them has an interview tomorrow in a factory but he said he didn’t want to go there because one of their friends had been injured by the machinery and the money’s not very good (£3.25). These kids don’t stand a chance of getting good jobs’ (Fieldnotes, August, 1999).

The statistics do not reveal the underlying despair that some of the young people felt about their futures. Many were ill equipped for the process of looking for work or attending interviews. The apparent lack of concern that many young people presented about finding a job was as much a feature of their age and social networks as it was about apathy or a real sense of what the future might be like if they remained unemployed. At 16 or 17 years old, their dole money seemed enough to get by on and some of them had no family members working to whom they could look for advice. Thus, the employment figures not only reflect a lack of economic success, but they are underpinned by a series of social problems that both SRB programmes were seeking to address.

In terms of housing, the statistics do not reveal the poor quality of some housing stock in both localities or the poor environment. In Manningham and Girdlington litter problems are endemic and alley ways separating terraces were sometimes impassable for litter. Similarly in Royds the quality of the housing that had not been refurbished was poor. The environment was bleak due to the high numbers of abandoned properties and owner occupation is proving to be a drawback for those residents whose properties will not be refurbished under the regeneration programme. However, other parts of the estates that have undergone major transformation as part of the physical regeneration programme, provide evidence of the impact that regeneration money has had on the general quality of the environment. The demolition of blocks of flats has been greeted with joy by residents on one of the estates and new build starter homes and family homes contribute to an overall attempt to diversify tenure on the two smaller estates.

The basic characteristics available from the 1991 census data reflect some of the main differences between the two localities in terms of housing tenure and ethnic minority groups. They also reveal some similarities in terms of unemployment, and particularly youth unemployment, that are characteristic of deprived localities in many parts of the country (see DETR, 2000d).

In an attempt to update this material, data from the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2000 (DETR, 2000d) has also been reviewed. This reveals the relative position of these two localities compared with the rest of England.

Aspects of deprivation

The IMD2000 is based on ward level data. These were not coterminous with SRB boundaries in either locality. Manningham and Girdlington covers parts of four wards (Undercliff, Heaton, Toller and University), whilst Buttershaw is in the Wibsey ward and Delph Hill and Woodside are both within the Wyke ward.

The IMD2000 data offers ranked scores of deprivation across a number of ‘domains’: income; employment; health and disability; education skills and training; housing; and access to services. These are combined to produce an overall rank of multiple deprivation. The rankings are based on 8,414 wards in England, with the worst ward ranked 1 and the least worst ranked 8,414. For the purposes of this comparison the ‘access to services’ domain has been excluded because their location in a major city meant that none of the localities ranked below 5,241 nationally. The data presented below does include the ‘child poverty’ rank which is a supplementary domain, not included in the overall ranking (see DETR, 2000d).

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show ward rankings relevant to the two localities. The figures in bold indicate rankings in the worst 10 percent (between 1 and 841) in England, whilst the figures in italics indicate rankings in the next worse 10 percent (between 842 and 1682) in England.

Table 4.5

IMD2000 Rankings for Manningham and Girdlington wards

Ward	IMD 2000 rank	Income rank	Work rank	Health rank	Education rank	Housing rank	Child rank
Heaton	672	680	<i>1321</i>	<i>1391</i>	372	285	827
Toller	134	85	<i>431</i>	<i>850</i>	147	31	119
Undercliffe	352	381	<i>844</i>	<i>991</i>	80	331	365
University	104	127	<i>292</i>	<i>957</i>	76	3	63

Table 4.6**IMD2000 Rankings for Royds wards**

Ward	IMD 2000 rank	Income rank	Work rank	Health rank	Education rank	Housing rank	Child rank
Wibsey	1545	1604	2252	2101	564	1374	1713
Wyke	1289	1642	2380	1834	177	1632	1640

The four wards included in the Manningham and Girdlington SRB area are all ranked in the worst ten percent of wards nationally, on the composite IMD2000 measure. University ward is the 104th most deprived ward in England and has the 3rd worst ranking for housing deprivation - 'people living in unsatisfactory housing' (DETR, 2000d:37). All four wards are ranked in the worst ten percent on the child poverty indicator; the education rank; the housing rank; and the income rank. On the remaining ranks they are all in the worst 20 percent wards in England.

This indicates that residents in Manningham and Girdlington are indeed suffering from multiple deprivation. However, the SRB programme is very firmly focussed on education and training and some business development. The housing rankings are particularly poor and reflect long term neglect that was observed in the area. Manningham and Girdlington was given Housing Renewal status in 1993, but the SRB bid document stated that 'the high levels of need mean that not all households have benefited from this' (Bradford Congress, nd:11).

Furthermore, Bradford Congress (nd) states that physical renewal of housing is not worth the investment unless residents can afford to maintain refurbishments :

'Even if such an investment were possible without an increase in the general wealth of the area the housing stock would simply deteriorate once again....therefore more sustainable initiatives are required, creating capacity within the community to maintain its own housing' (Bradford Congress, nd:11).

This will involve training young people in construction industry skills as part of the SRB programme and offering households the opportunity to learn DIY skills.

The education rankings for Manningham and Girdlington are also poor: Undercliffe has the 80th worst ranking for education and University ward 76th in the country. In part, these rankings are explained by the ‘segregation’ that occurs in schools in Bradford. This is an issue that has been highlighted by the Bradford Race Review (2001) as a factor that contributes to poor race relations in the City.

In contrast, the wards that include the Royds estates fare much better. Although both wards are in the worst 20 percent overall, it is only on the education rank that they fall into the worst 10 percent. These statistics can be misleading. The ward level data that includes Buttershaw also includes areas of owner occupied, good quality, large housing. The worst excesses of deprivation on the estates may be masked by the inclusion of more affluent areas around them. In fact, this analysis would fit with observations throughout the fieldwork where the estates did feel like ‘islands of poverty’ that it would be easy to miss completely whilst driving out of the City.

Despite the fact that the Royds wards rank higher than those in Manningham and Girdlington, it should not be forgotten that they are still ranked within the worst 20 percent deprived wards in England. Thus, the residents of Royds may be slightly better off than those living in Manningham and Girdlington, but there is little evidence of any affluence here at all.

The IMD2000 data is useful for providing a more up to date picture of the kinds of deprivation experienced by people living in these two localities. However, we should be cautious in assuming this level of data provides an accurate picture of the two SRB areas since ward boundaries are not coterminous with those of the SRB. To that extent, there is a clear need to increase our understanding of how poverty and deprivation are manifested at smaller geographical levels if we are to adequately identify aspects of poverty and deprivation at the neighbourhood level.

Before moving on to explore how respondents were drawn from these two localities for in-depth interviews, it is worth reviewing the policy context within which each locality has sought to combat some of the problems identified above. The SRB programmes and how they are managed are the subject of the following section.

The SRB programmes

The main characteristics of the SRB programmes in each locality are presented in Table 4.7, below.

Table 4.7
Characteristics of the regeneration programmes

	Manningham and Girdlington	Royds
Regeneration Programme	SRB Round 4 (1998-2004)	SRB Round 1 (1996-2002)
Type of locality	Inner city	Peripheral Housing Estates
Focus of project	Education, training and employment for 0-25 year old's.	Integrated strategy including property refurbishment, social and economic programme
Total spend (SRB and match funding)	£9.7 million	£104 million of which £23 million economic strategy £76 million physical strategy £5 million social strategy
Lead partner for implementation	Local authority	Royds Community Association (resident-led).

At the time of the fieldwork, the Manningham and Girdlington SRB was just beginning to operationalise some of the delivery plan. It is focussed on education and training for young people and has no significant capital budget, so there is no money available for any physical refurbishment or new build. This has led some people involved with the scheme to argue that the lack of physical change in the area will make it appear that the SRB has had no effect - particularly when some other parts of the district have seen high profile physical refurbishment in recent years. In contrast, the Royds SRB programme was in its fourth year when the fieldwork took place. The management were beginning to plan their 'forward' (exit) strategy and only two phases of physical refurbishment were still to be completed.

The subsequent discussion focuses on the management of the two SRB programmes and some of the history of how they came into being. It is these aspects that are most relevant to the current study.

The Royds

The Royds was one of nine successful SRB round one bids led by the 'voluntary sector' and by far the largest of these, receiving £31 million compared with £3.2 million shared between the other eight (Mawson *et al.*, 1995). The Royds locality consists of three housing estates, Buttershaw, Woodside and Delph Hill located on the periphery of Bradford. The total population of the three estates is just over 12,000.

The three estates are not 'natural allies'. The failure of both Buttershaw and Woodside to successfully access regeneration monies in the past led to a joint bid for SRB that brought all three estates together under one umbrella organisation - the Royds Community Association (RCA). It is the RCA that has lead status in the regeneration programme.

Each of the three estates has its own identity. Buttershaw is the largest of the three and has the most colourful history. The estate has been dubbed 'drugs capital of the North' in local newspapers and is persistently associated with negative perceptions within the city. It is on Buttershaw where the major refurbishment is yet to be completed. This has led to concerns among some residents that the money will run out before their houses are finished. The smallest estate is Delph Hill. The refurbishment is now completed and the opening of a new community centre completed the main spending programme here in 1998. Some Delph Hill residents believe that they were only included in the SRB programme to 'make up the numbers' and that consequently their needs are often overlooked, particularly given the size of the other two estates. Woodside is the third estate and has also seen most of the major capital spend completed. The RCA owns two commercial properties on the Woodside estate, reflecting its concern that ownership of local assets is a key to sustainability in the future. In addition, a new 'village hall' was being planned at the time of the fieldwork, which opened in the spring of 2001.

The three estates that make up the Royds locality were brought together by an umbrella body - the Royds Community Association (RCA) - which acts as the partnership board for the SRB programme. The language that has developed around Royds can be confusing and for the sake of clarity in the forthcoming chapters the following terms are used:

- RCA - the Royds Community Association is both the partnership board for the SRB and a community association in its own right. References to RCA are used to indicate that it is the organisation that is being referred to.
- Royds - some people use the term Royds to describe the RCA. This happened in interviews with residents and community groups. To avoid confusion, the term Royds is used in the forthcoming chapters to refer to the three estates as one locality (for example 'on the Royds estates' six people said....).

The SRB is the responsibility of the RCA. The RCA is a partnership made up of local residents, a construction company, a housing association, the local authority and more recently representatives from Yorkshire Forward (the Yorkshire and Humberside RDA). The structure of the partnership is reproduced overleaf (Figure 4.1). The 'Board of Directors' of the RCA is made up of three sets of partners:

- Resident directors - twelve elected residents (four from each estate) sit on the board for four years at a time. The chair of the board is a resident director. The term resident director is used in this study to refer to these community representatives in the RCA.
- Council directors - three representatives from Bradford council are members of the board.
- Institutional directors - seven representatives from housing associations, construction companies, education providers and other areas of expertise are seconded to the board.

Thus, the structure of the board is such that the resident directors always out number other partners and the chair of the board is drawn from the resident directors. In addition, the RCA employs a number of paid staff (officers) who run specific parts of the programme - social, economic and physical aspects are covered. The working parties and committee structures that operate below the main board are reproduced overleaf (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.1

The structure of the Royds Partnership Board

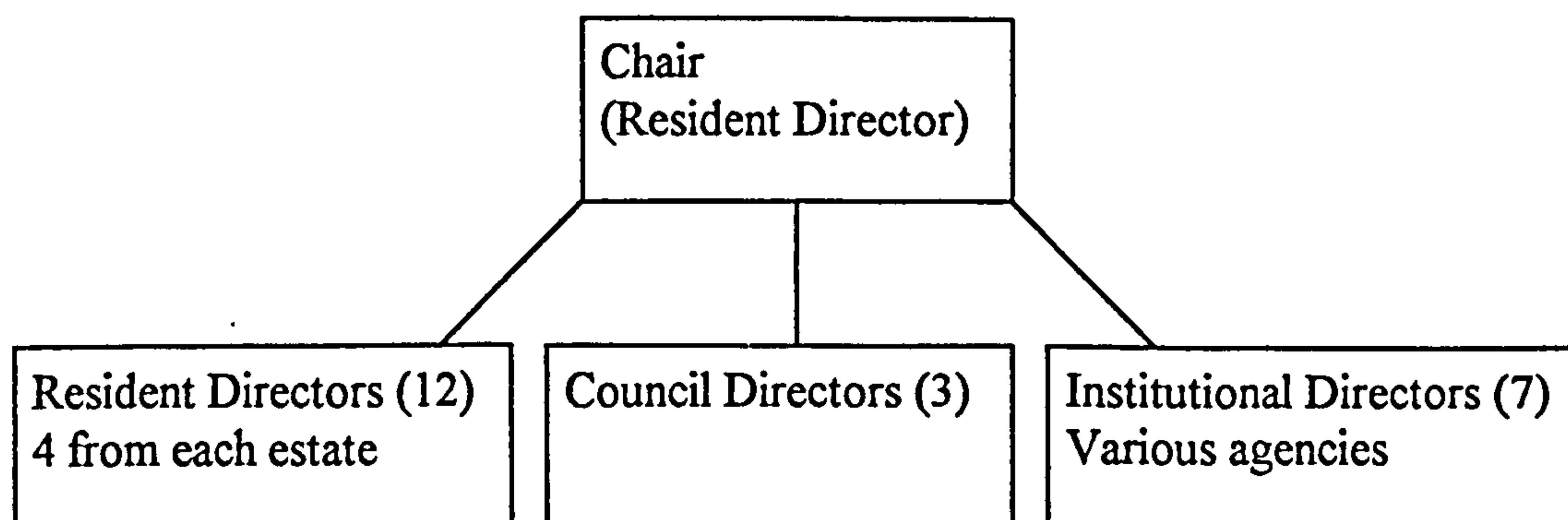
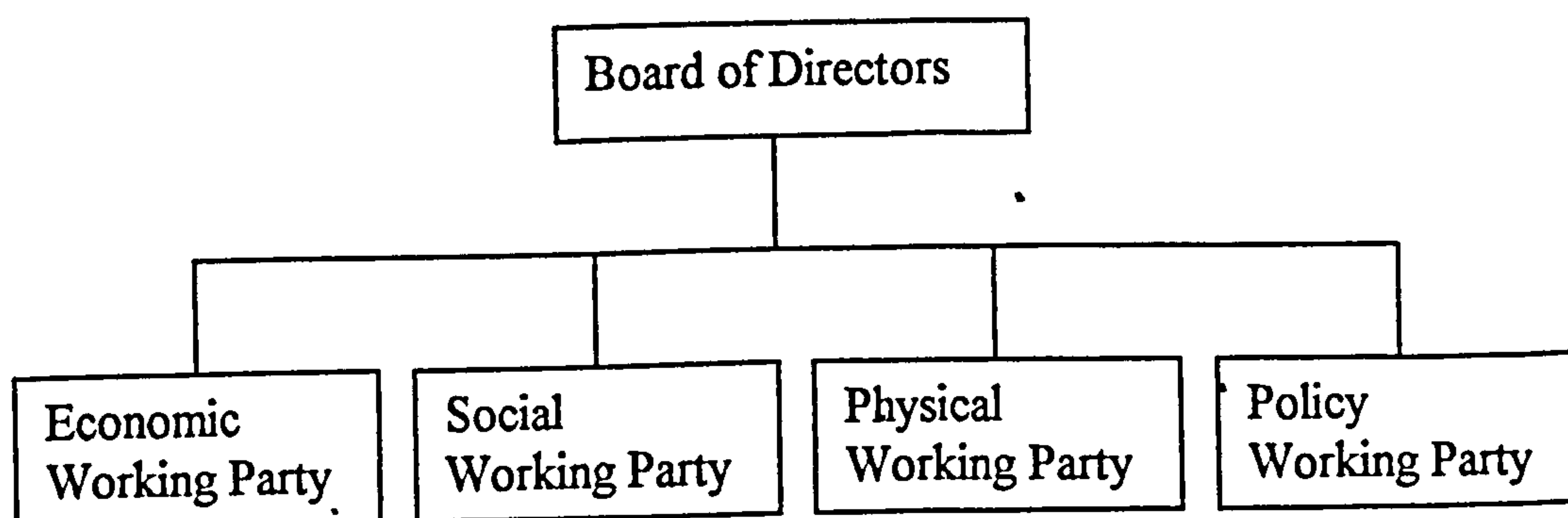


Figure 4.2

The working party structure - Royds Community Association



The working parties are the ‘bread and butter’ of the RCA and the resident directors are split between these working parties. This means that resident directors can be extremely knowledgeable about particular aspects of the programme and know relatively little about others. These structures and mechanisms are referred to and explored in more detail throughout the forthcoming chapters.

Manningham and Girdlington SRB

The Manningham and Girdlington SRB bid was successful in the fourth round, after previously failing to win regeneration funds.

Unlike the Royds estates there are no natural boundaries to Manningham and Girdlington. The locality lies close to Bradford City centre covering parts of four electoral wards. Although the area commonly known as Manningham is completely covered by the SRB programme, only a part of Girdlington is actually included. This has led to claims by residents in Girdlington that they were only included in the bid to 'make up the numbers'. An area to the north of Manningham has also been included to cover the Bangladeshi population living on the outskirts of the common boundary area. Its inclusion in the SRB area has been associated with particularly high levels of need. The total population covered by the SRB area is 25,000 (Bradford Congress, nd:1).

As in the Royds estates, there is no common 'community identity' across the locality. Ethnic mix combines with territorial divisions to make the locality highly differentiated. These issues are explored in more detail in forthcoming chapters. The locality has been associated with immigrant populations for many years. The first immigrants came from Eastern Europe and the legacy of Polish, Hungarian and Ukranian populations persists in the form of city-wide social clubs located here. More recently African Caribbean's and those from the Indian sub-continent have settled here. The white population lives reasonably peacefully with its neighbours, although many white people feel that the 'Asian' population is 'out of bounds' as far as the police are concerned and that the council is 'afraid' to do anything to upset the status quo (see also Bradford Race Review, 2001). This lack of understanding means there is little integration in the area.

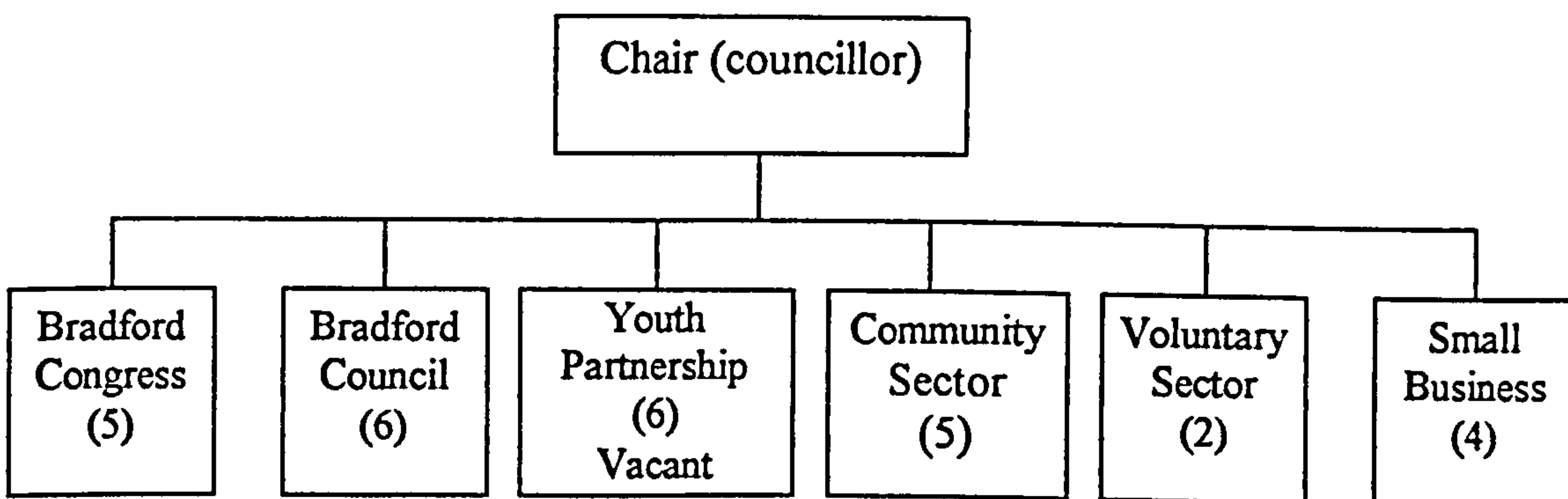
Furthermore, there was evidence that the Pakistani population was itself fragmented and divided. Anecdotal evidence from numerous sources stated the way in which the Pakistani population had settled in neighbourhoods that replicated villages in Pakistan. How far this remains true is unknown, although it was the case that use of Mosques was differentiated so that men would only worship in particular places and would rarely use other religious buildings. Thus, the use of generic terms such as Asian or Pakistani imply a homogeneity that is far from accurate.

The Manningham and Girdlington SRB was successful in its bid to raise educational achievement and skills among young people in the locality. The Manningham and Girdlington SRB is delivered and implemented by the Manningham and Girdlington Partnership Board. The term 'partnership board' is used in forthcoming chapters.

The Partners are drawn from Bradford Congress, Bradford Council and community representatives including local business representatives and young people. The structure of the board is shown in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3

The structure of the Manningham and Girdlington SRB Partnership



The board is devolved to Delivery Action Teams composed of board members and co-opted members that work on four themes: education; training and employment; business support; and community safety.

The partnership employs three full time staff who are responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of the programme. The community representatives are not elected, nor do they hold a majority on the board. The way that the Manningham and Girdlington partnership board has been developed is reminiscent of most 'top-down' schemes that have been led by local authorities. The issues relating to the way that the community representatives have been involved in the programme is explored in detail in chapter seven.

The two SRB programmes included in this study were at different stages of implementation and reflected different styles of management structure. The key difference between them is the reputation that the RCA has for being an exemplary resident-led partnership. It is with the experiences of the community representatives and resident directors in both localities that this study was concerned. These are explored in more detail in chapters six and seven.

Having selected the two localities and built up some idea of the basic demographic and policy-related differences between them, it is now pertinent to return to other issues that were dealt with as part of the overall research strategy. The remainder of this discussion focusses on how respondents were selected, issues relating to the fieldwork itself and how the data was analysed.

SELECTING RESPONDENTS

Mason (1996) has argued that sampling in qualitative research should encapsulate a relevant range of units. In this study there were a number of ways in which the research questions could be operationalised through community group participants. However, the roles that individuals played in relation to the groups differed and therefore it was deemed necessary to embrace a range of different kinds of respondents. Furthermore, area-based regeneration research has tended to focus on the 'active' or 'key stakeholders' and therefore ignores inactive or resident perceptions (see McCulloch, 2000). This focus on 'key' stakeholders also removes the individuals from the institutional context within which they operate. In this study it was deemed necessary to examine the organisational and institutional aspects of regeneration implementation through the eyes of community groups, residents and active 'community representatives'. Drawing on a diverse range of respondents allowed a multiplicity of views to be accounted for.

Involving community groups in the survey questionnaire

The survey data was collected for all identified community groups. Bradford City Council provided a list of all the groups it funded in Manningham and Girlington which provided a starting point for identifying community groups operating in the area. The remaining groups were identified using a community magazine and by walking around the area looking for community buildings or evidence of other groups. Once the survey commenced, groups were also asked to add any other organisations they knew of to the existing list.

A saturation point was reached when no new organisations were being mentioned and all possible avenues for identifying more organisations had been covered. In total, forty four community and voluntary groups were identified within the boundaries of the SRB area. This almost trebled the original list of organisations provided by the Council, proving the value of not relying on official documentation alone in identifying community activity. The final list of community groups was made available to professionals working in the area.

The forty four organisations were not all community groups however. In contrast to earlier studies that have adopted a systematic approach to the study of voluntary activity in particular localities (Knight, 1993; Knight and Hayes, 1981), this study explicitly sought to distinguish between organisations whose goals are related to locality and those whose location is coincidental.

Marshall (1995) refers to the importance of geographical boundaries in developing research methods for the community sector:

‘Organisations do not have to be physically located within the selected boundaries as long as they serve the population of that area in a meaningful way and are local.. Equally, organisations located within the boundary but not particularly involved with local people should not be included’ (Marshall, 1995:35).

In Manningham and Girdlington a number of organisations located within the SRB boundary area had little or no contact with local people unless these happened to fall into a specific client group. These were groups with a national or city-wide focus and could be defined as ‘voluntary organisations’ rather than ‘community organisations’. The former were interviewed as part of the overall survey data collection, at which point it was usually clear that they were not community groups. Twelve such organisations have been removed from the data set altogether. The remaining thirty two organisations are defined as belonging to the community sector in Manningham and Girdlington. In common with earlier studies (Chanan, 1992; Duggan and Ronayne, 1992) all forms of participatory local groups were identified. However, more formalised groups were easier to identify than smaller groups and thus, there is possible bias in the emphasis on formalised organisations (see Chanan, 1993).

In Royds a list of groups operating in the area was made available by the Royds Social Programme Co-ordinator. The same process of checking this list was undertaken as in Manningham and Girdlington, but no new groups were identified. It might be argued that the resident-led focus of the SRB programme in Royds meant that the management board was able to draw on local knowledge more thoroughly - hence the greater reliability of the information they provided regarding local community group activity. A total of thirty two groups were operating across the three estates. All of these were serving the residents of the estate and therefore none of them was eliminated from the data set.

Selecting respondents for in-depth interviews

In selecting respondents for in-depth interviews, however, a more strategic approach to selection needed to be adopted. There were two aspects to this. First, sampling had to embrace diversity of type of activity and type of organisation across both localities. The survey data provided the basis on which to select those organisations that reflected a diverse range of activity and organisational form. Second, the sample of respondents needed to reflect diversity of experience based on the view that understanding processes of volunteering and active involvement in community groups could obscure the experiences of users and non-active residents.

The sample of respondents that emerged was based on accumulating knowledge of the community sectors in both localities and identifying the different kinds of user groups and volunteering that was taking place. The eventual sample consisted of the following four types of respondents:

- Volunteers, committee members and paid workers who were active in running groups and activities. In-depth interviews were conducted with a range of respondents from different kinds of organisations in both localities. Some of these individuals were not residents of the locality.
- Community representatives from the regeneration partnership boards were also interviewed. In some cases these were also active volunteers and committee members, in other cases involvement in the board was the only form of volunteering the individual participated in. Some of these individuals were not resident in the locality.

- Users of community groups were interviewed in small groups. Given the potentially vast range of users in both areas the small group discussions were held with groups that had otherwise tended to be marginalised in terms of the overall research design. Young people rarely volunteered but were well catered for in terms of community group activity. As a numerically significant user group, the views of young people were consequently sought. Asian women were also difficult to reach through community group volunteering and representation at regeneration board level. Language was also a significant barrier to accessing Asian women that had not been educated in England and therefore a user group of women attending English classes provided an opportunity for a neglected section of the local population to be included in the sample. To balance the data across the localities a group of older residents were interviewed in Royds who were involved in social activities. The prevalence of these social groups for older residents in the estates made this a valid selection and also corresponded with a user/volunteer overlap that was under represented in the overall sample.
- Non-active residents were also selected on the basis that our understanding of volunteering and community activity is most readily available through the eyes of those who do participate, rather than taking account of the views of those who do not. Non-active residents were not necessarily people who had never been actively involved or who had never used any community groups or services. They were, however people whose experiences of community activity and the regeneration programme was limited and none of them were currently actively volunteering.

McCulloch (2000) draws attention to the way in which there cannot be just one narrative of what happens in a group or organisation. Similarly there cannot be just one narrative of the role of community groups in a locality. Hence the views of different kinds of stakeholders were considered in this research. The diversity and breadth of the selected respondents contributed to the overall depth of the case studies that was achieved. A list of respondents is included in Appendix 5.

RECRUITMENT AND FIELDWORK

Recruitment

Initial contact in both localities was made through the City Council and the SRB management boards. The collection of survey data relied upon 'cold calling' - by telephone and in person - to make contact with respondents. The survey was useful for making contacts in the localities as well as for generating data. In the majority of cases the survey data was returned to groups for their information and to allow them to add or change any of the responses. A letter enclosed with these requested selected groups to identify committee members, volunteers or paid workers that would be interested in taking part in an in-depth interview. The responses to these requests were all positive.

Recruiting user groups relied upon assistance from paid workers in selected community centres. The user groups were contacted and organised by paid workers and therefore the selection of individual respondents was made by paid workers. This may have led to some bias in the characteristics of the group, but the content of the discussions do not seem to bear this out. The exception to this was one of the groups of older residents in Royds whose selection was more opportunistic in so far as they were available to meet quickly and a number of people were able to attend.

Recruiting non-active residents presented something of a dilemma in terms of recruitment and sampling since it was not easy to identify characteristics or dimensions along which any diversity of experience might be found to exist. In both localities the resident interviews were the last set of interviews to be conducted. As the fieldwork progressed and greater familiarity with the locality was gained, it was possible to identify smaller neighbourhoods within the locality that provided some elements of difference between residents.

This was not a particularly 'objective' method of selection. Streets within each identifiable neighbourhood were selected at random. All households were given the opportunity to participate in the interviews via a simple invitation posted to every house. The following day each house was called upon in turn to arrange appointments for interview. Given the relatively low rates of volunteering and active participation found to occur in both localities it was not anticipated that many of these households would contain active volunteers.

In addition, a high response rate was not anticipated given the cold-calling technique and opportunity for people to avoid contact. In the event the response rate was over 60 percent across both localities. This reflected a view expressed by some active respondents that people were desperate to be asked about their views and had a lot to say about where they lived.

The recruitment of community representatives on regeneration partnership boards was assisted by the regeneration management teams and none of the representatives approached refused to be interviewed.

Conducting the fieldwork

The fieldwork was conducted over a six month period between April and September 1999. The survey questionnaire was completed by the researcher and returned to respondents for checking. All of the interviews were conducted in community centres or people's homes and all the interviews and group discussions were tape recorded.

Many of the people interviewed were engaged in public activities - as paid workers, volunteers or committee members. Those who were community representatives for the regeneration partnerships were also public figures in that they were either elected by other residents or were high profile community sector activists. McCulloch (2000) argues that outside interest in localities can lead to a 'polished collective performance' thereby detracting from the possible fraught reality of the organisation being studied. Thus, it was deemed important to seek out conflicting views and to uncover as many different perspectives of community group activity as possible. There was a danger that individuals might want to present an overly positive impression of their organisation, or of the regeneration programme.

These concerns are reminiscent of those identified by Cornwell (1984) in her distinction between 'public and private' accounts given by respondents in interviews. Public accounts are those that are selective or socially desirable descriptions and can be contrasted with the richer and more detailed 'private accounts' that Cornwell (1984) felt were achieved as interviewees got to know her better over time.

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In conducting the fieldwork an emphasis was placed on seeking as many 'private' accounts as possible in interviews. The various techniques employed and the diverse range of respondents drawn upon allowed some comparison to be made between respondents in the same organisation - a form of triangulation - and to identify possible 'public' accounts. In addition, the majority of the respondents were met more than once. Frequent visits to centres and being involved in activities with user groups should have engendered some trust between respondents and the researcher and led to the kinds of private accounts that Cornwell (1984) valued so highly.

The problem of gaining respondent trust and increasing the validity and reliability of the data was not simply a matter of public and private accounts. This can be an issue in any form of interviewing. In this study there were two other issues that were most relevant to the subsequent quality of data collected.

First, as a white, middle class female researcher in Manningham and Girdlington I was aware that there were clear cultural, racial and class differences between myself and those involved in the research. Stanfield (1993) identifies the ethical problems that can arise around

'whether or not Euro-Americans can penetrate the intersubjectivity of people of colour and, if so, what strategies they should follow to minimise inevitable biases flowing from being reared in a different, dominant racial or ethnic population' (Stanfield, 1993:9).

The multiple ethnic minority groupings in Manningham and Girdlington would have precluded any single researcher from conducting work that could live up to such expectations.

In fact, it was possibly easier for a white female to access this diversity than it may have been for a white male - who would have found access to Asian women difficult, or a black male or female whose identification with one of the ethnic minority groups in the locality could have been a more significant barrier to accessing Asian or African Caribbean respondents. In Royds these aspects of difference centred around class distinctions and the researcher was no less of an outsider in the predominantly white estates.

In both localities a range of conscious and unconscious strategies were adopted which sought to minimise those aspects of difference between the researcher and the researched that may have jeopardised the fieldwork process. By becoming familiar with the localities and the groups through frequent visits and prolonged stays there came a point where the researcher was no longer an 'outsider' (see also Andersen, 1993). In comparison with residents who had lived in areas for many years and never visited a community centre, the researcher was in some ways an 'insider' in terms of community group activity. Furthermore, the researcher's presence was never associated with any authority or particular expertise, positions which could make it more difficult to access some social groups (Andersen, 1993).

Despite these attempts at minimising possible difficulties, the second issue of language differences was not resolvable. At least three different languages were spoken in Manningham and Girdlington that were unknown to the researcher. This prevented interviews being conducted with significant sections of the ethnic minority population - particularly elderly Asian men and women who were least likely to speak English. In the resident survey, however, four Asian women wanted to take part and asked other members of the family to interpret for them. The validity and reliability of these interviews must be questioned and they are only included in the analysis of community group use and knowledge of local facilities.

Conducting the fieldwork in both localities was mainly enjoyable and a steep learning curve for a first attempt at empirical investigation. It is not possible for researchers to be all things to all people. The best we can hope for is that we treat everyone with respect and sensitivity and gain the same in return.

DATA ANALYSIS

The need to articulate as clearly as possible the method of analysis in order to detract from the view of qualitative research as a 'soft' option is frequently cited (Cricher *et al.*, 1999; Silverman, 2000). In doing so however, there is a risk that the process of data analysis described here reflects a linear series of events that was not the reality. In fact, the analysis of the data began with the first survey questionnaire and was incrementally built up over time.

The survey data was analysed quickly so that interviews could be organised with selected respondents from different kinds of groups. Given the nature of the research, however, there were always opportunities to change the sample size or sample content based on data being gathered and partially analysed.

The analysis that was being undertaken while the fieldwork was progressing reflected aspects of a 'grounded theory' approach, that is the use of analytic induction to generate hypotheses based on a few cases which are then applied to each subsequent case. 'Pure' grounded theory (Strauss, 1987) requires the coding of transcripts at progressively higher levels of abstraction followed by testing relationships through constant comparison and finally constructing theory. The problem with using this method post-fieldwork is that it assumes no prior knowledge of theory and that theory will derive from the data alone. In reality, aspects of grounded theory do emerge from the data but these follow from existing theoretical constructs, rather than deriving simply from the data.

Thus, whilst some form of analysis was being completed as the fieldwork progressed, the in-depth analysis and cross checking was completed once all the data had been generated. This was a sizeable amount of data. There was a breadth of experience represented in the data as well as depth in terms of interview data. The multiple techniques generated different kinds of data that were not necessarily comparable and the individual respondents were not easily placed within mutually exclusive categories of 'volunteer', 'user' or 'resident'. Given this complexity, the management of the data itself was of crucial importance, aided by the use of a qualitative analysis computer package (Atlas t.i) for coding and indexing data.

Whilst the size of the data set and the range of respondents was a positive feature of the data collection, the use of 'multiple methods' in qualitative research has been criticised for being used to imply reliability that is not necessarily the case (Silverman, 2000). Silverman also argues that multiple methods can be used to imply a 'whole picture' that is actually an illusion. In seeking to overcome this criticism the multiple methods used in this study were associated with specific research questions linked to particular units of analysis.

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It is important to state again that the localities themselves were not the primary unit of analysis. The purpose of the research was not to generate findings relevant to the specific localities. The community groups operating within the context of the localities were the main unit of analysis. The individuals associated with these groups represented one set of cases, the non active another and the user groups a third. The analysis draws on an amalgamation of these different sets of cases to produce explanations of the way that two specific community sectors were operating. The localities formed the context to the research in terms of providing some means of identifying places embedded in particular policy contexts - in this case regeneration policy - but they were not the subject of the analysis in their own right.

The post-fieldwork analysis began by coding and indexing the data. Where theoretical and empirical constructs are closely allied, it is important to recognise that the analytic approach was underpinned by theoretical frameworks.

The data was subject to multiple forms of dissection. Thematically, by locality and by category of respondent as well as by topic guide categories. This multiple indexing allowed for comparisons to be made within the broad themes as well as indicating issues that were not being included in the thematic analysis. By subjecting the data to these multiple levels of analysis drawing on themes, theoretical propositions as well as the descriptive categories assigned to groups and individuals it was possible to cross-tabulate almost all the responses to identify deviant cases and to enumerate responses (Cricher *et al.*, 1999). The latter has been a useful tool in identifying the relative prevalence of some aspects of the study and numbers are used in the analysis to indicate this.

Cross-sectional analysis allowed the identification of themes relating to specific research questions to be determined. The categories for this analysis were both deductive, in so far as they were determined by the emphasis on particular themes that were reflected in the topic guides and survey questionnaire, and inductive, in that some aspects were built on as the data generation commenced. In seeking to overcome Silverman's (2000) concerns regarding the use of multiple methods as a substitute for rigour and reliability, the analysis does not seek to combine the different data to present a complete picture. Different aspects of the data are used to analyse different research questions.

The identification of 'need' and what kinds of services groups were providing lent itself to an analysis of survey data that could offer a picture of activity at a single point in time. This data could only superficially identify how and why these services and groups had developed and therefore interviews with active group members offered a means to examine these issues in more depth. This data is used in chapter five to examine theoretical propositions regarding community groups and responses to locally defined need. In contrast, analysing the data with regard to social capital lent itself to thinking about the individuals and their relationship with voluntary activity within groups. Although the survey data was again used to provide some numerical data regarding the numbers of volunteers used by different groups, the analysis draws more heavily on interview data with volunteers, residents and users (see chapter six). Thus, it is possible to bring together theory, method and analysis to generate an overall view of how the study progressed. The key elements of this are presented in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8
Functions, theories, analysis and methods

Community Group Function	Theory	Level of Analysis	Methods
Service Delivery	Need	Community group	Survey data In-depth interviews
Opportunities for Volunteering	Social Capital	Community group Individual volunteers Non-active residents	Survey data In-depth interviews In-depth interviews
Collaborative working and partnership working	Inter-organisational relations	Community group Committee members Community representatives	Survey data In-depth interviews In-depth interviews

The process of analysis therefore sought to apply a series of recognised techniques to the data in order to generate reliability and validity. The cases were constantly compared across themes and categories using tables and grids; all the data was treated with equal weight and where relevant deviant cases are analysed separately (see Silverman, 2000).

McCulloch (2000) has argued that regeneration research needs to be more explicit about defining 'key' players and making it clear whose voices are heard and whose are not. Where relevant this study does seek to define how individuals came to be allocated to specific categories. This is particularly relevant in chapter seven where the identification of focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders may, in other studies, be seen as 'key players'. The intention in this study is to relate these individuals to the institutional context in which they were found to be operating - namely within the community sector.

SUMMARY

This chapter has described the way that the research was designed in order to achieve the breadth and depth of data that was needed to answer the research questions within a framework that sought to acknowledge the position of the community sector in relation to other aspects of local life. The two localities selected for the study reflect differences across ethnicity, structures and type of SRB management programmes, housing tenure and their geographical location. Most importantly, the localities offered the opportunity to study two local community sectors in deprived areas and consequently to examine how far this form of voluntary activity could live up to expectations regarding the delivery of services, the promotion of volunteering and involvement in local governance structures. It is to the first of these - delivering services and responding to local need - that chapter five now turns.

CHAPTER FIVE

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SERVICE DELIVERY - RESPONDING TO LOCAL NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

The first stage of the analysis sought to understand how community group provision was related to local needs. One of the assumptions that is often associated with community group activity is that it is responsive to locally defined needs, and therefore community groups are increasingly called upon both to play a part in service delivery and assist external agencies in the identification of local needs (Fearnley and McInroy, 1999; Hastings *et al.*, 1996).

This local responsiveness to need is one of the most well established characteristics of community group activity and has its roots in the development of community activity in the 1960s and 1970s. Although a range of studies have argued that the voluntary sector itself can fail to respond to some needs, that it is unevenly spread and vulnerable to following popular causes (Brenton, 1985; Clarke, 1991; Willmott, 1989), there is a lack of empirical work that has sought to understand the way that community groups respond to needs in localities. Exceptions to this include Duggan and Ronayne's (1991) study of local action in Ireland completed as part of the EFILWC comparative project on coping strategies in deprived areas, and Jackson and Field's (1989) study of community groups and service delivery within an Asian community undertaken for the Home Office. There have also been studies of the role that mutual aid can play in providing coping mechanisms in deprived areas (Burns and Taylor, 1998; Williams and Windebank, 1999). By their nature these are more concerned with informal aspects of community activity, rather than with the community sector *per se*. There have also been studies based on in-depth work with small numbers of community groups (Butcher *et al.*, 1980) and with groups associated with the social economy (Amin *et al.*, 1999).

More emphasis has been placed on the role of community groups in partnerships and inter-agency working at a general level (for example Bemrose and MacKeith, 1996; Gregory, 1998) or explicitly in relation to their role in regeneration partnerships (Fearnley and McInroy, 1999; Hastings *et al.*, 1996). However, these studies tend to emphasise the role of community groups in relation to other partners and to processes of consultation and influence by 'the community' more generally.

A third set of empirical work has been concerned with tracing the development of voluntary activity and patterns of provision across localities (Knight, 1993; Knight and Hayes, 1981; Reynolds, 1994; Rochester, 1993). However, these studies have tended to lack any policy context and also tend to view voluntary activity homogeneously so that any specific role for the community sector is subsumed within a wider remit.

It is hoped that this study can combine the positive elements of all these approaches in order to develop a more complete picture of aspects of community group activity in localities than has previously been attempted. This first part of the analysis seeks to build on previous work by explicitly focussing on the way in which patterns of service delivery by community groups in two localities could be explained with reference to the concept of need. Chapter three revealed the way in which theories of social need could offer both descriptive and analytic mechanisms to consider the influences upon needs-related decision making.

The purpose of this analysis is not to identify whether or not groups were responding to local needs or to identify needs that were not being met. Rather, the aim was to identify what kinds of services were being provided, how these needs had come to be identified and by whom, and whose needs were being met by community groups. The analysis that follows reveals the way in which community groups believe themselves to be highly responsive to local needs and that each area could demonstrate a range of activities provided by community groups. More interestingly, the analysis reveals the way in which differences between organisational form in each area contributed to the range of activities and services available and how different kinds of needs-identifiers could also be seen to influence community group decision-making. The analysis also considers the contradictions that emerged in relation to universal and particular aspects of need. The final section considers the role that community groups played in the identification of need for the SRB projects.

In conclusion it is argued that we should be cautious in our attempts to justify greater reliance on community groups in service delivery and the identification of local needs. In these two areas, community groups reinforced and reflected patterns of difference and discrimination both in terms of the services they provided and the users whom they served.

THE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY GROUPS

The first stage of the analysis used the survey data collected from all community groups operating in both areas. The importance of community groups in local activity was summed up in Royds by one of the resident directors who commented:

‘The groups are really important. If you didn’t have them nothing would get done at all would it?’ (Alison, resident director⁵).

In the context of dwindling local provision and facilities, community groups in Royds were often the only evidence of activity occurring outside the home. There were few shops and no public houses on the estates where people could meet socially and only one estate had a doctor’s surgery. Consequently, community groups and the activities they organised were, on the face of it, an extremely important way for people to access services that were otherwise non-existent.

In Manningham and Girdlington there was more evidence of activity and services available outside those offered by community organisations. The proximity of Manningham and Girdlington to the City centre meant that the area had a vibrancy lacking in the estates. A range of shops and facilities serving the ethnic minority population in particular, made this a lively area with many more opportunities for people to meet socially than was evident on the peripheral housing estates. The community centres, in this context, were contributing to an apparently vibrant neighbourhood life.

⁵ Quotes from the in-depth interviews with active residents and paid workers are identified by a pseudonym and a description of their role in community groups or regeneration partnerships. Quotes from users in group interviews are identified as R1, R2 etc. alongside a description of the type of group (for example R1, Asian women learning English). Quotes from in depth interviews with non-active residents are similarly identified (for example, R1 resident Royds).

A total of sixty four community groups - thirty two in each locality - were operating at the time of the fieldwork. The full list of activities is included in Appendix 6. These services were grouped together into six general types: youth provision; employment training and education; housing and resident associations; social activities; collective self-help; and environmental, health and advice services. These are described below. The number of activities provided each area is shown in Table 5.1, below.

Table 5.1

The types of activities and services provided by community groups⁶

Activity/service	Number of groups providing Manningham and Girdlington	Number of groups providing Royds
Youth Provision	18 (56%)	9 (28%)
Employment, training, education	14 (44%)	3 (9%)
Housing/residents associations	6 (19%)	3 (9%)
Social activities	4 (12.5%)	13 (41%)
Collective Self Help	-	6 (19%)
Environmental, health, advice	11 (34%)	9 (28%)
Base	32	32

Services for young people varied in terms of content across the two areas and comprised elements of different styles of youth work (see for example Coles *et al.*, 1998). Most of the activities were centre-based although both localities had ‘detached’ youth workers who sought contact with young people on the streets and in cafes in order to attract them into more structured youth-based services. Similarly community organisations in both localities provided a range of diversionary activities - that is ‘leisure and recreation-based activity such as sports, crafts and discos’ and ‘developmental’ work - ‘to use different activities to develop self-esteem and confidence amongst young people’ (Coles *et al.*, 1998:20).

⁶ Some groups provided more than one activity and hence the numbers of activities and the number of groups are not equal.

The latter was more common in Manningham and Girdlington where youth workers used developmental work with young people to address race discrimination issues, and to encourage young people from ethnic minorities to take a pro-active role in personal development. In the Royds estates, diversionary activities were more commonly found to dominate youth services.

Employment training and education services similarly varied in content across the two areas, although not to the same degree. Both localities contained organisations that were offering vocational training such as typing and computer classes as well as employment based schemes to help people with interview skills, writing job applications and compiling CV's. In Manningham and Girdlington many of these services were 'bought in' by centres and were provided by the local TEC and further education college. The biggest difference in content of services across the two areas regarded basic numeracy and English language education which was prevalent across organisations in Manningham and Girdlington.

Housing and resident associations existed in both localities. In Manningham and Girdlington five of the six groups were small resident associations operating on one or two streets. The exception was an influential black housing association that had emerged from the Bangladeshi community, and maintained links with the locality. In Royds the two smaller estates ran resident associations that covered the whole estate. A third organisation in Royds included in the housing/resident association type is the RCA itself whose role in physical redevelopment of the area and general management role makes it a focal point for housing related issues across the estates.

Social activities were similarly offered in organisations in both areas. Again the content of these differed in the two localities. Lunch clubs, cafes, bingo clubs and other small social gatherings were included in this type. In Manningham and Girdlington this kind of provision was limited to lunch clubs for elderly people - a service provided in most centres in Royds. In addition the Royds groups ran a number of bingo sessions in community centres. These were seen to be good fund-raising events by organisations and were in high demand. Three sessions attended in the course of the fieldwork were attended by over forty people - the highest number of users observed at any centre in a single session .

Collective self help is the term applied to services in Royds that included savers clubs, a furniture recycling scheme and a toy library. No examples of this kind of service were found in Manningham and Girdlington and the relative paucity of such schemes is a reminder that current trends in promoting particular styles of community-based activity should be treated with caution. The survey generally found little commitment to developing self-help activities in either of the two areas where the notion of community groups as service providers prevailed. The lack of collective self-help style activities in both areas is a timely reminder that community sector provision is operating in the context of pre-existing services and forms of coping. Thus, one explanation for the lack of visible self-help activities in Manningham and Girdlington may be related to the relative strength of the informal sector, where Mosques and extended family forms reduce demand for some types of formal provision (see Ahmed, 1998; Jackson and Field, 1989; Silburn *et al.*, 1999).

Environmental, health and advice services represent a broad type that were related to single purpose activities in each area. Environmental groups were the most limited with only one established organisation in Manningham and Girdlington providing help to residents to organise clean-up campaigns and gardening advice. Other groups organised litter campaigns on an ad-hoc basis in both localities. In Royds the RCA had developed a community business that worked to improve the local environment through landscaping and clearance work. This employed local residents and contributed to plans for employment and training opportunities as part of the social regeneration programme.

Health related services varied across the localities. In Manningham and Girdlington some groups organised district nurses, chiropodists and dentists to visit centres for their users. These services were offered in order to give non-English speaking residents an opportunity to meet with health professionals in an environment they found safe. In Royds small groups had developed around health-related activities such as keep fit for elderly residents. Royds also had a drugs advice centre and a pregnancy testing service was offered by one organisation.

Finally, both localities had their share of advice centres. These are something of a classic community based activity, whose work is generally regarded highly by users and public authorities. In Bradford, these have been accorded 'core' status within voluntary sector funding by the local authority which will assure them of three years stable funding until 2002. All the advice centres were offering general benefits advice. In Manningham and Girdlington this was supplemented with a high level of expertise in immigration law and multi-lingual facilities. The demand for these services was exemplified by the waiting lists and queues in all centres. Advice centres are perhaps the best example of service provision in the community sector whose status as an alternative to state services is highly prized - the respondents from advice centres all referred to their reputations in terms of unbiased advice and trust which residents did not have in statutory service providers.

The general range of activities provided in each area was similar. This convergence over the scope of community activity might reflect the fact that 'need' is greater for these services (see for example Fearnley and McInroy, 1999), or that funding is more readily available for some services (see for example Addy and Scott, 1988, Amin *et al.*, 1999; Leat, 1995a), or that groups are comparing activities with others and copying successful patterns of activity (see for example Taylor, 1996). Each of these factors has been used in other studies to explain aspects of community group or voluntary organisation activity. In fact, as the following discussion reveals, there were elements of all these processes at work in decisions over responses to need by community groups.

However, whilst the general range of activities provided in each area were similar, the relative emphasis placed on these activities differed. Table 5.1 shows that twice as many organisations in Manningham and Girdlington were providing services for young people compared with Royds, whilst just over three times as many groups in Royds were providing social activities compared with those in Manningham and Girdlington. These differences suggest that the needs in each locality differed among different social groups and that community groups were simply responding to these different manifestations of local need. However, when the types of organisational form were compared in each area it became clear that this was playing a key role in the development of new activities in Manningham and Girdlington and that the Royds estates were potentially falling behind in terms of access to funding and services.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONAL FORMS - EXPLAINING LEVELS OF ACTIVITY

Whilst the content of services provided differed in each area, so too did the organisational forms that community groups adopted. Originally the classification of organisations was based on primary service or client group - for example, advice services, or young people or older people. It transpired during the fieldwork that groups were not organised in these ways, and that a more complex configuration of organisational forms existed. Thus, it was not possible to characterise group activity according to some primary objective - particularly where some groups were operating according to a variety of objectives relating to the needs of diverse client groups. Although more complex means of classifying groups would be possible, a four-fold categorisation based on two key factors was used to distinguish between organisational forms. The factors used were:

- The number of activities provided by an organisation or community centre - either single or multiple. This was a basic distinction that emerged from the survey data as a means of analysing different kinds of community groups.
- Whether the organisation or community centre was 'controlled' by a single management committee or paid worker. This was deemed important in terms of identifying ownership of particular activities and decision-making regarding extending service provision.

In contrast to Chanan's (1991) classification of community sector organisations this typology did not include sources of funding as a distinguishing feature of organisations at this stage. Rather, it is argued that the organisational form groups adopt has implications for access to external funding, which in turn may affect levels of autonomy groups are able to achieve. This argument is explored further below.

Here, the intention is to show how organisational form can explain the greater numbers of activities being provided in Manningham and Girdlington at a general level and therefore, it is argued, organisational form can affect the extent to which community groups respond to local needs.

Four organisational forms were identified across the two localities which offered a set of mutually exclusive types: Community venues, multi-purpose organisations, hybrid organisations and single purpose organisations. Table 5.2 shows the number of each organisational form operating in the two localities.

Table 5.2

Organisational forms operating in each locality

Organisational form	Number in Manningham and Girdlington	Number in Royds
Community venue	-	6 (19%)
Multi-purpose	15 (47%)	5 (16%)
Hybrid	2 (6%)	1 (3%)
Single Purpose	15 (47%)	20 (62%)
Base	32	32

Community venues

The term 'community venue' refers to those centres that were hosting various activities run independently from one another, although many organised 'user committees' with representatives from organisations using the centre. The buildings were most likely to be owned by the local authority or churches who hired out rooms to groups. This type was only found on the Royds estates reflecting the greater number of churches actively hiring out community space, and local authority owned buildings. In Manningham and Girdlington venues attached to churches were not being used in this way at the time of the fieldwork. One centre that had been run as a community venue in the past was planning to become a 'hybrid organisation' (see below) because the church was selling the building. In Royds community venues were an important local resource for single purpose groups, many of whom used community venues as a site for their activities. The main criticism of community venues made by community groups related to the charges made for hiring rooms which were considered too high for some organisations. A new group in Royds was planning to address this issue in the future by offering free room hire to community groups in return for help in kind - such as cleaning or decorating.

Multi-purpose organisations

Multi-purpose organisations were usually run by a paid worker employed by a volunteer management committee and offered a range of activities under one roof. There were 15 multi-purpose organisations in Manningham and Girdlington compared with only 5 in Royds, and it is the existence of multi-purpose groups in Manningham and Girdlington that contributes most significantly to the amount of community activity that occurs here. In contrast, the lack of such facilities in Royds partly explains the more limited range of activities and services.

Table 5.3 (overleaf) shows the numbers of activities provided by multi-purpose groups in each locality. In Manningham and Girdlington multi-purpose organisations are responsible for providing the majority of activities (except resident and housing associations which are all single purpose groups). When this is compared with the numbers of activities and services provided in Royds it becomes apparent that multi-purpose organisations are contributing significantly to the sheer number of services on offer. In Royds the lack of multi-purpose organisations may consequently be contributing to the smaller number of services available to residents.

A key feature of multi-purpose organisations in both localities was the expansion and diversity of activities they had developed over time. One of the advantages of multi-purpose organisations is their ability to adopt new projects easily and incorporate these into current provision. One organisation described over twenty different projects that they had received funding for in the last seven years. Another acted as a conduit for various funding opportunities that arose, arguing that their aim - 'to empower the people of Girdlington' - was broad enough to encompass any number of small community based projects.

These projects are often based on short-term funding opportunities which limits the extent to which any sustainable services can develop. Numerous examples of projects that had ended were mentioned in interviews. One respondent described the process in the following way:

‘Well we did the clean-up campaigns for about two years, until the funding ran out and then we moved onto something else.... At the moment we’ve got funding for the healthy eating project - people growing food and native vegetables and the reading scheme.....When they’re finished we’ll do something different’ (Shirley, committee member).

Table 5.3

Services provided and organisational form⁷

Place/Activity	All groups	Multi purpose	Single purpose	Hybrid
MANNINGHAM AND GIRLINGTON				
Youth provision	18	15	3	-
Employment training and education	14	10	2	2
Housing and residents associations	6	-	6	-
Social	4	3	-	1
Environmental, health and advice	11	7	4	-
ROYDS				
Youth provision	9	3	5	1
Employment training and education	3	2	1	-
Housing and residents associations	3	2	1	-
Social	13	1	11	1
Collective self-help	6	2	3	1
Environmental, health and advice	9	3	5	1

⁷ The number of services provided by hybrid organisations reflects those that are organised and run by centre managers or management committees. Independent groups that hire rooms in hybrid organisation are included in the single purpose category.

Multi-purpose groups in Manningham and Girdlington also demonstrated a multi-faceted approach to social problems through the provision of a range of services. In many organisations, basic language skills were offered alongside more formal employment training giving people a 'ladder' approach to learning and access to training. A committee member from a multi-purpose centre in Manningham and Girdlington working with Asian women described this process:

'People come for sewing classes and then we can encourage them to join the English lessons. Once women are used to coming here and their families have accepted them coming here we can help them to expand their skills and activities' (Seema, committee member).

Duggan and Ronayne (1991) have argued that this multi-faceted approach to social problems is evidence that community groups are able to respond more flexibly to the multi-faceted nature of complex poverty-related problems. Furthermore, they argue that the wide range of funding sources that these groups have to manage are not an advantage because of the time and resources it takes to make multiple applications, and that the requirements of individual funding bodies can make managing multiple sources of funding difficult (Duggan and Ronayne, 1991).

However, the multi-purpose organisations in this research were not so clearly identifying their decisions to introduce new activities in terms of offering a range of responses to poverty. It was clearly the case that groups were able to adopt flexible attitudes towards new funding opportunities that led to an expansion in the range of services on offer. Furthermore, as funding requirements become more stringently attached to providing evidence of innovation (Osborne, 1998b), and less interested in providing core funding for established activities (Leat, 1995a), there is an incentive for multi-purpose organisations to follow a project-led approach to service delivery, rather than providing stable long term activities.

The shift from core to project funding had enabled these groups to develop new activities, but they were also forced to do so if they were going to survive. Leat (1995a) is among many commentators on developments in voluntary sector funding who has argued that the shift from core funding to project funding, alongside assumptions that organisations must find their own resources for projects to continue, has led to a position where:

‘Many voluntary organisations may be forced constantly to re-package their activities as new and innovative in order to secure yet another dose of short-term funding’ (Leat, 1995a:160).

This pattern was clearly observed in the multi-purpose organisations in both localities, thereby raising questions regarding the relationship between needs-led and funding-led developments.

Thus, multi-purpose organisations were able to respond to new funding opportunities which increased the range of services they offered local people and created a multi-faceted approach to the solution of social problems. However, the extent to which the decision-making around these projects was determined by levels of local need is more debatable. There was more evidence to suggest that multi-purpose organisational forms had developed in response to changing funding environments. In turn, the short-term nature of many of these projects meant that there was a lack of stability in some services offered in multi-purpose groups over time. Ahmed (1998) argues that multi-functional organisations in South Asian communities face pressure from users to develop multiple services because people have little trust in mainstream provision. Consequently, he suggests that this leads to basic and superficial service provision across a number of areas, rather than the development of good quality provision in more limited areas. Thus, pressure from users combined with project-funding opportunities may be the source of diversity in service provision. However, these flexible approaches towards project-funding made multi-purpose groups appear to be relatively secure from the vulnerability to funding changes that characterised single purpose organisations, as the next section reveals.

Single purpose groups

Single purpose organisations are those that have a specific focus to their work in contrast to the multiple activities provided in multi-purpose organisations. This was the most common type of community group organisational form across both areas, with 35 of the total 62 groups defined as such. However, relatively, these were more common in Royds where 20 of the 32 groups were single purpose organisations. This reflects the greater prevalence of community venues in Royds where single purpose groups could hire rooms for one or two sessions per week in contrast to the multi-purpose organisations that were open most days and nights. Table 5.3 shows how single purpose organisations in Royds generally dominate service provision, particularly in social activities where the plethora of small lunch clubs hiring rooms in community venues dominates the overall picture of community group activity on the estates.

There were two different kinds of single purpose organisations operating in the localities. The majority of single purpose groups were small, relatively informal groups such as resident associations and social groups. Eight of the 15 single purpose groups in Manningham and Girdlington were of this type, and 10 of the 12 in Royds fell into this category. These small groups were particularly vulnerable to closure, but also provided a source of new community group activity in both areas. Anecdotal evidence suggested that these small groups had always existed, run by different people and that as one group folded another one formed. Most of these groups were self-financing and consequently their vulnerability in relation to demand was increased.

A second type of single purpose group was less prevalent and included larger, formal organisations such as advice centres that ran from their own premises and employed paid workers alongside volunteers. Seven such organisations were operating in Manningham and Girdlington and 2 in Royds. They offered long term stable services in contrast to the one-off projects many multi-purpose centres relied upon. Furthermore, these organisations were characterised by high levels of expertise - particularly in advice work which was in demand from multi-purpose centres which hired-in advice workers on a sessional basis.

However, single purpose organisations are vulnerable to changes in funding trends precisely because they are focussed on one type of activity. Two examples of this were cited by single purpose organisations in response to questions about their vulnerability. An advice centre in Manningham and Girdlington risked closure in the mid-1990s when council funding rules initiated a 'points' system which acted against many single purpose organisations by requiring evidence of innovation and the development of new facilities. A campaign launched by workers, users and committee members to change the rules was successful, but the experience left other groups all too aware of their vulnerability to changes in funding criteria:

'If you're not doing whatever it is they want you will fold. It is as simple as that' (Christine, committee member).

'They won't give you funding for the same - it's a constant battle to show that its new or different and I keep telling them that we're an advice centre - that's what we do, give advice - how many different ways can you say it?' (Neil, committee member).

Thus, single purpose organisations are able to provide stable services over time - often in core areas of provision and can develop expertise in particular areas.

Their weakness lies in their vulnerability to changing levels of demand by users and changing perceptions of externally-defined need on the part of funders. Attempts by single purpose groups to maintain service delivery in the face of declining and changing funding opportunities suggests that they may be less influenced by external-needs identifiers than multi-purpose groups that shift the focus of their work more often and more easily. However, attempts to maintain core service provision in specific fields also makes single purpose groups more vulnerable to changing funding environments than their multi-purpose counterparts.

The differences between multi-purpose and single purpose organisations in terms of access to alternative funding opportunities reflects Halfpenny and Scott's (1996) view that there is variable organisational ability within voluntary organisations to respond to changing environments. The final community group type to be described, reflects the way that some organisational forms can combine features to create potential opportunities.

Hybrid organisations

Hybrid organisations exhibit characteristics of both multi-purpose and community venues. They are not, however, a 'miscellaneous' category but reveal interesting trends found to occur in organisational form in both localities. In hybrid organisations a paid worker may run core activities but the building also operates as a venue for other groups to meet. The numerical insignificance of hybrid organisations in both places belies the local importance of all three facilities. One of the Royds estates relied completely on a hybrid organisation for all community activity as did a substantial area in Girlington. Hybrid organisations were found to be more accessible than community venues where there was more likely to be someone available regularly; they were more likely to be open; and there tended to be more information available about opening times and services on offer.

At the time of the fieldwork, hybrid organisations were relatively under-developed in both areas. Potentially they offer an opportunity to combine the benefits of multi-purpose organisations in terms of expanding activities, while supporting and enabling the development of single purpose groups. Interestingly the evidence from both areas suggested that new organisations were more likely to be developing around these hybrid forms.

In Manningham and Girlington two organisations were developing hybrid style activities by renting rooms to city-wide organisations as a means of supporting their core activities. In Royds all the new community centre developments funded and managed by the RCA were organised on a hybrid basis, although only one of these was open at the time of the fieldwork. In addition a new organisation on Buttershaw was being formed around the development of a derelict house which planned to organise service delivery and provide rooms for free.

On the one hand these developments suggest that organisations are seeking to respond to a range of different needs and utilise organisational forms that can assist in this. In particular these forms allow community buildings to be used for a range of projects - each of which can attract funding - whilst simultaneously allowing existing groups to remain independent but use managed facilities. Duggan and Ronayne (1991) found that the most recently established groups in their study were those established in co-operation with state agencies which they argue reflects the increasing incidence of partnership between the community sector and the state. In this research, however, most new organisations were able to combine external sources of funding with some self-sufficiency through the hiring-out of rooms which enabled them to retain some overall independence.

Thus, new organisations were developing around principles that had enabled multi-purpose groups to grow and develop and to that extent there was evidence that new organisations were conforming to the notion of institutional 'isomorphism' (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991) - that is the way in which organisations adopt common languages and imitate perceptibly successful organisational forms - a process that has been associated with voluntary organisations more widely (Taylor, 1996).

However, these organisational forms were not always viewed positively since the development of new services and activities in multi-purpose and hybrid organisations can mean that some groups come to dominate the local community sector. A community worker described the community sector in Manningham and Girdlington as follows:

'There's a stagnation in the community sector here - same names, same faces have been around for years and are so well versed in funding arrangements they can virtually monopolise access to resources...I'm not saying they necessarily stifle other groups to form but it certainly makes it more difficult' (Ajit, community worker).

The implication of the development of monopolistic organisational forms is explored further in chapter seven. Here it is important to note that multi-purpose organisational forms may be positively associated with the development of numerous activities, but these might also create particularly powerful organisations that can dominate the local community sector.

The prevalence of community group activity was therefore found to be related to particular organisational forms. This evidence suggests that project-led activities, in particular, are not necessarily created in response to local need. Furthermore, as Willmott (1989) has argued, the *ad hoc* and spatially uneven nature of voluntary provision means that there is no guarantee that the identification of a need will lead to the creation of a voluntary body to respond to it. Hence, this study sought to explore the ways in which needs came to be identified and how far users and residents 'felt' needs were reflected in community group provision.

NEEDS-IDENTIFIERS

One of the reasons why politicians and mainstream service providers are interested in the views of community groups is that the latter are perceived to operate 'close' to the needs of local people and that this physical and psychological proximity places them in a strong position with regard to identifying and responding to local needs (Fearnley and McInroy, 1999). Every organisation in this study identified 'need' as the reason why they had developed. The identification of need legitimised access to external funding for the majority of organisations, and was cited by all groups as the primary reason for their existence. However, the following evidence regarding who identifies need and the source of group development reveals mixed evidence regarding this claim.

Following the discussion of needs-identifiers in chapter three, this chapter draws on three of Bradshaw's (1972) types⁸ alongside Ife's (1980) analysis to consider the way in which community groups identified need. Although there are different ways in which data regarding needs-identifiers might be analysed (see for example Ife, 1980), this study adopted two mechanisms. First, sources of group development were identified in order to provide some indication of how particular needs had come to be manifested in community group activity. The results from this analysis are shown in Table 5.4, overleaf. Second, evidence from interviews was used to seek examples of on-going patterns of need-identification.

⁸ The fourth, 'expressed need', is defined as use of community facilities and thus the community groups themselves are evidence of some expressed need occurring in localities.

The identification of needs varied across types of service and across organisational form. The analysis shows the way in which groups are influenced by different kinds of need-identifiers and how some organisational forms are more vulnerable to influence by external sources than others. It is argued that the capacity for community groups to remain close to local people and consequently identify local needs is complicated by external demands.

Table 5.4
Sources of group development

Source of need identification	Manningham and Girlington	Royds
Normative need	13 (40%)	18 (56%)
Felt need	19 (60%)	12 (38%)
Comparative Need	-	2 (6%)
Base	32	32

The three basic types of needs-identifiers used here were described in chapter three: aspects of normative need, felt need and comparative need. Table 5.4 shows the number of organisations associated with particular sources of groups development according to these three types.

Aspects of normative need

In chapter three it was argued that aspects of normative need defined by experts or societal values were likely to play an important role in the identification of needs by community groups. The evidence supported this claim - but with some exceptions. The source of group development revealed that external and expert influence has been instrumental in the development of community groups.

In Manningham and Girlington 40 percent of groups identified the source of their organisation with professional expertise, and in Royds 56 percent of groups similarly identified external influences as the source for the development of their organisation.

These organisations were similar to one of Chanan and Vos's (1990) organisational categories which were defined in terms of the input they received from external authorities. Chanan (1991) argued that groups established by external agencies may have autonomy only within the parameters set by the external agency. This degree of external management of community groups was not found to occur in organisations in either area. In contrast, external influence was most commonly in the form of local authority community work projects that had subsequently emerged as independent organisations. In other cases, the local authority remained in control of centres - as in the case of community venues in the Royds estates, although groups operating from these centres remained independent of external control.

In all cases, the establishment of the groups in this category relied upon professional responses to perceived need that were influenced by dominant discourses. These ranged from the community centre movement of the 1970s (Clarke, 1990), to more recent examples of social control and the fear of unrest. The latter is exemplified in the development of youth facilities in Manningham and Girdlington. Youth provision was offered in every multi-purpose centre in Manningham and Girdlington. A local authority funded detached youth work project was also working in the area. Nine of the eighteen organisations providing youth provision referred to the riots of 1995 as the event which had galvanised external support for more funding to be made available for youth activities in the area. It is likely that similar funding opportunities will arise from the most recent disturbances in the area. In the immediate aftermath of the riots in 2001 the Home Secretary promised more provision for young people over the summer holidays, as the opening discussion of this thesis showed.

However, most respondents were keen to stress that the 'riots' of 1995 had been over exaggerated by the local press and the police, implying that the 'problem' was not as deeply entrenched as it had been portrayed. Thus, youth workers in the area tended to deny the existence of the 'youth problem' but were able to use the discourse of need that dominated external perceptions of young people here to access resources.

It was this heightened concern over the youth problem in Manningham and Girdlington that justified additional funding, whilst in Royds organisations providing services for young people found it more difficult to attract the same sums of money.

One respondent involved in youth provision in Royds specifically identified Manningham in her complaints about funding:

Paula (volunteer): 'We're good at what we do round here and people still complain about the kids... they'd have something to complain about if the kids actually did anything.... It makes you think though... that if they did behave more badly we'd probably get more money'

Interviewer: 'What makes you think that?'

Paula (volunteer): 'Well them lot on Heaton Road did and on Lumb Lane - the worse they are the more you get I reckon'

Aspects of normative need-identifiers were also exhibited in funding arrangements that created the environment within which groups operated. Those organisations in receipt of external funding were most likely to be affected by normative definitions of need, and were more likely to change their methods of working or objectives to maximise funding opportunities. One organisation in Royds explained how they had come to offer employment training services in the 1980s:

'We started out doing diversionary stuff for unemployed people on the estate - that was back in 1978 when everyone wanted to see unemployed people occupied.... we did arts and crafts stuff mainly - pottery and that - some of the blokes even came in for sewing... Well then the funding changed and you couldn't get money for that anymore - it was all about training people to be employed and getting them on training schemes and that. So that's what we did - all the workshops and that went and we got this place. We only started out doing typing classes and look at us now' (James, paid worker).

In Manningham and Girdlington government initiatives in the 1980s had similarly brought opportunities that continue to influence the kinds of services provided by community groups in employment-related training. The area had received Inner City Task Force money which emphasised investment in training and enterprise provision.

Four organisations identified the Task Force money as important to the development of their activities in training for unemployed people. Two of these argued that the Task Force money had provided them with a legitimacy for training provision that they were able to use to secure more funding later on:

‘Without it we wouldn’t be here now. And I don’t suppose the employment stuff would be going on without it’ (Arthur, paid worker).

There was also evidence that dominant discourses of need that gave community groups legitimate access to funding could also be manipulated by groups and users for their own ends. The most common example of this occurred in Manningham and Girdlington where a broad consensus existed among professionals and community groups that employment training was only appropriate if English language skills could be improved. Groups could apply for funding to provide English language lessons on the grounds that these were a pre-requisite for employment training and offer them to local residents, many of whom had motivations other than getting a job to join the classes as this centre manager explained:

‘A lot of these men are never going to work again. They are too old to start looking for work now - and most of them wouldn’t get a job anyway.... so they come to the classes to meet up with their friends from the mills and learn English so they can talk to their grandkids’ (Simon, paid worker).

Thus, some organisations and users were able to re-define needs in order to address basic social skills that older people in Manningham and Girdlington had been denied during their working lives. The influence of dominant discourses of need on community group services tends to be related to the availability of funding, and although some groups are able to manipulate the content of services to address user-defined needs, the overall pattern of provision tends to reflect the way in which many community groups operate in a complex funding environment that determines the broad thrust of their activities.

The influence of externally defined needs on the way that community group services have developed could be interpreted as evidence that community groups are only as close to the needs of local people as dominant discourses allow them to be.

However, as Alcock *et al.* (1999) have argued, funding opportunities are only one of a number of local influences on voluntary organisations. The findings also revealed the way in which user defined need had influenced the development of organisations in both localities.

User defined need

Table 5.4, above shows the prevalence of user-defined need in group development. This was more likely to have occurred in Manningham and Girdlington, where 19 (60 percent) organisations had formed this way, than in Royds where 12 (38 percent) groups identified users or residents as the source of group development. This type of organisational development corresponds with Chanan's (1991) definition of 'autonomous', or 'community initiated' local groups organised and administered by local people. Drawing on Chanan's (1991) typology, Duggan and Ronayne (1991) argued that these organisations were less likely to be influenced by state definitions of an issue (normative need).

In the majority of cases organisations that formed as a result of user-defined needs started life as campaigning groups. This finding is similar to that of Butcher *et al.* (1980) who found that groups were most likely to form around a provocative issue, often related to the shortcomings of social policy. In Manningham and Girdlington these campaigning functions were related to provision for ethnic minority groups. Table 5.5, below, shows that 80 percent of the organisations providing for specific ethnic minority groups explained their development in terms of campaigning for specific services to be met within the community.

Table 5.5

Source of group development and provision for ethnic minorities in Manningham and Girdlington

Source of need identification	Specific ethnic minority provider	Non-specific ethnic minority provision
Normative need	3 (20%)	10 (59%)
Felt Need	12 (80%)	7 (41%)
Base	15	17

Examples from the interview data reveal this:

‘As a young person there was no provision for young people in the area so we started a campaign provisionally for young people in 1982.... and we thought we would start operating on our own either on the street or from the basement of a house and fight for funding with the council to get a youth centre built’ (Idrees, committee member).

‘A lot of houses in the area were pulled down but no new houses were built and people from the community was applying for houses but they were allocated on housing estates and because of racism our people couldn’t stay in housing estates. So we wanted the council to build houses in our locality and it wasn’t happening so we thought we better take it up ourselves (Iqbal, paid worker)

‘There is a lot of frontiers we have to roll back. There’s a hell of a lot of talent out there but they have nothing to channel their energy into and I think a lot of them hang around day in and day out just to see other black people they can talk to because systematically the council and police have divided the black community in Bradford. .. and so the point of [this group] is to give black people something they own - that they have a say over’ (Terrence, committee member).

These groups had developed in response to the perceived failure of white-led public services to cater for the needs of ethnic minorities (see also Bhasin, 1997). They also reflected the claim made in previous research that some ethnic minorities prefer to be involved in organisations that are catering for their specific needs (Silburn *et al.*, 1999). The relative prevalence of campaigning as a source of group development within ethnic minorities is corroborated by evidence from the 1988 survey of black volunteering which found that over 25 percent of people volunteered in order to meet community needs (Advance, 1988).

Similarly, through the development of services to cater specifically for the needs of Asian women community groups could be seen to be reflecting the need for culturally sensitive practices. Two groups had developed in response to culturally defined needs that made it difficult for Asian women to access services provided by male-dominated community groups (see also Bhasin, 1997). The proliferation of groups serving specific ethnic minority needs also needs to be understood in the context of cultural and religious differences within some of the broad categories of ethnicity. Ahmed (1998) argues that these cultural and religious differences and conventions make it difficult for one organisation to cater for the needs of all 'South Asians'. Thus, the proliferation of community groups in Manningham and Girdlington also reflects the needs of ethnic groups that may be described with a common label but who do not necessarily share a common view of their specific needs.

Consequently, there were examples of organisations in Manningham and Girdlington whose development could be understood in terms of addressing particular needs within a discourse that was centred around the identification of diversity and sensitivity to cultural and ethnic difference. One set of activities that these organisations specialised in providing were based around preserving cultural and traditional practices, including supplementary classes to young people in order to ensure that they remained attached to their cultural roots. This feature of provision within South Asian voluntary organisations has been commented on by Ahmed (1998).

Felt need, particularly in terms of racial discrimination, influenced the development of organisations in Manningham and Girdlington that were specifically associated with particular ethnic groups. Over time these have all developed into service providing organisations. The source of their campaigns - to improve or increase provision for their communities of interest - has led to the development of community organisations to provide that service rather than to an increase in local authority provision.

In Royds organisations that had started out campaigning and subsequently become service providers were all resident associations. Each of the estates had a residents association that had started out campaigning for housing improvements and gradually become involved in other forms of service provision.

The establishment of the RCA and the subsequent regeneration programme had removed the need for these groups to continue campaigning for improvements. At the time of the fieldwork these groups were all involved in service provision on their specific estates.

Duggan and Ronayne (1991) argued that increasing reliance upon external funding leads to a decrease in the relative weight organisations give to campaigning. However, the evidence from the Manningham and Girdlington groups suggested that if campaigning was related to lack of service provision community groups were more likely to seek access to funds in order to provide these missing services. Thus, their objectives were to increase service provision and not to campaign more generally. These groups were turning felt need into expressed need by developing services for specific ethnic groups. In Royds the campaigns had been successful in so far as the physical regeneration programme had improved housing conditions. The residents associations had, however, continued to develop service provision once these improvements had been won. It was not the case that a reliance on external funding had reduced their campaigning function - rather that the campaign had been won.

Consequently, one of the generally held views that community groups perform dual functions as both service-providers and as campaigners (Butcher *et al.*, 1980; Duggan and Ronayne, 1991; Emmanuel, 1993) is not supported by evidence that suggests service delivery functions are particularly important to community groups.

Other organisations were more clearly based upon a campaigning function. As predicted by Duggan and Ronayne (1991) and Chanan (1991) these were less likely to be reliant upon external sources of funding than groups whose roots were in campaigning activities but had developed into service providers. The clearest examples of these types of groups were small resident associations in Manningham and Girdlington whose main aim was to improve the local environment. One was campaigning for the street to be re-surfaced and the pavements re-laid; whilst another was campaigning against the expansion of the local football club.

These small groups remained outside any external funding mechanisms and retained a core campaigning function. To that extent they support Duggan and Ronayne's (1991) claim.

However, as the experience of the Royds resident associations reveals, there is no guarantee that these groups will retain this campaigning function over time and it is possible they will develop into service providers in the future. Thus, user-defined or felt need is manifested in the source of group development but this is not necessarily related to general aims of organisations that remain in place over time. Whilst user-defined needs can be the impetus for groups to form, over time it is more likely that they will become drawn into aspects of normative need definition in order to access funding.

In an attempt to retain some identification with local needs, groups in both areas used various consultation mechanisms to 'find out what people want' (Terrence, committee member). Multi-purpose organisations demonstrated an ability to respond to specific requests by users. For example at one women's centre the manager had organised visits from the police service after users had asked for information about crime prevention. On a more formal level, some groups also used questionnaires and 'fun days' to attract people to centres in order to find out what kinds of services they would like. This happened in both localities and most groups identified some mechanism through which they sought to identify user needs.

However, groups were aware of the limitations of 'felt need' as a route to service development. The idea that people cannot always identify their own needs was prevalent:

'The problem is that you can ask them what they want but they don't always know... and people get fed up with being asked all the time. This area really suffers from "questionnaire-itis" and people know they're not going to get whatever it is they ask for' (Luke, volunteer).

'Asking people what they want is a problem. We do do it - you have to really - but they always want what we can't give them and you spend most of the time explaining to them why we can't have indoor football pitch, or dentists surgery' (Steve, paid worker).

Thus, groups were increasingly aware that providing blank sheets for residents to fill in led to disappointment when ideas were not taken up. This latter point reflects the way in which available resources can influence the identification of felt need - limited resources means that groups have to target activities and do not want to risk letting people down or raising hopes. Consequently, many groups were found to favour approaches to the identification of user needs that involved the development of fully formed project ideas and asking users for their views. This approach gave caretakers the opportunity to place boundaries around identification of felt needs. Control of these consultation processes therefore meant that rather than identifying any 'felt needs', community groups were able to legitimise pre-existing ideas.

One respondent described this approach as follows:

'It's the only way to move forward... if they don't like it they can tear it up and start again.. but we have to give them something to work with and let them know what kinds of things are achievable with the money we've got' (Ajit, community worker).

The dangers of the 'blank sheet' approach to identifying felt needs was exemplified by the development of a Business Centre in Manningham. In the late 1980s a research team was employed to ask resident what kinds of services were lacking in the area. These surveys elicited a wide range of 'needs' and wants - including a swimming pool. The majority of these ideas were rejected by the local authority and the Task Force, who ultimately identified 'a lack of provision for business development services'. Thus, a derelict mill became a Business Centre - with no leisure facilities, little provision for local groups and has consequently gained a reputation for being a place where local people do not go:

'You only have to look in the car park to see they're all people from outside the area. It's not a place for local people at all' (Linda, committee member).

This example shows how the influence of external agencies can impose particular definitions of need despite using legitimate methods of consultation to identify felt needs in a locality.

Similarly, using pre-existing plans to ask local people for their views can be used to legitimise decisions that have already been made. Using fun days to attract people in order to identify needs only works if groups have resources to develop activities. Although survey data can be used to support funding applications there is no guarantee that funding will be available for whatever is identified and thus groups risk alienating those whose needs they have sought to address.

The identification and use of felt needs as a way of developing community group activity is consequently difficult to achieve. Although the evidence did suggest that groups tried to involve users and residents in needs identification, there was less evidence that these were turned into any new service.

Comparative need

The final aspect of needs identification that groups referred to in interviews derived from aspects of comparative need. The use of comparative need indicators by community groups differs from Bradshaw's (1972) original definition that was based primarily on the use of external data to compare the needs of different sections of the population. Here, evidence of comparative need identifiers by community groups was restricted to comparisons between user groups and community groups that influenced the way that felt needs could be manifested.

First, the sources of group development showed that two groups in Royds had explicitly stated that their reason for being established was to offer the same activity for their group that was provided elsewhere. These were both small social groups of elderly residents who did not want to attend other centres. These aspects of comparative need identification therefore reflected spatial and cultural differences in community group provision more widely (see below).

More commonly, aspects of comparative need identification were found to drive the extension of services in multi-purpose groups. The duplication of services found to occur across localities could be explained with reference to these aspects of comparison. Most frequently these were associated with the desire to offer the same range of activities for particular communities of interest that were provided elsewhere.

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At the time of the fieldwork community groups in Manningham and Girdlington were all seeking to provide homework clubs. The proliferation of these was explained by a community worker as follows:

‘They all want what everyone else has got. So one group gets a homework club and then they all have one’ (Ajit, community worker).

In interviews with community groups, they explained the proliferation of these clubs in terms of need - that the children could be encouraged to study by offering them recreation time afterwards. When it was pointed out that other centres were also providing the same activity most groups argued that ‘their’ children did not go to that centre and would be missing out if the service was not provided here. Yet there was evidence that young people did use more than one centre and community groups were aware of this when they organised ‘joint’ events (see chapter seven). This contradictory evidence suggests that when organisations are aware that funding is available for particular services, and they see these being developed throughout the locality, they are encouraged to supply the same services in their centres. Once again, aspects of normative need definition through funding opportunities can be seen to underpin decisions to copy services provided elsewhere.

The relative importance of different needs-identifiers in both the source of group development and the on-going development of services suggests that normative need explanations play a large part in community group decision-making. Whilst this is to be expected in terms of access to funding generally, the findings also show how the identification of felt needs can be driven by externally defined agendas and that even where felt needs are identified by community groups it is the availability of resources that limits their capacity to act. This suggests that community groups are operating a balancing act between aspects of normatively defined need that can legitimate access to resources and the felt needs presented by users. Community groups in both localities were constrained from acting in any other way because of the relationships they had to maintain with funding bodies. Thus, community groups were able to respond to some needs in the locality and were able to develop campaign groups to act on specific issues. However, caution should be maintained over the assumption that community groups are necessarily developing activities that respond to locally defined needs.

Given that community groups were offering a range of activities whose development was contingent upon various needs-identifiers, the research sought to identify whose needs were being met in order to complete the descriptive analysis. It is here that the first signs of struggle between community groups and residents begins to emerge. In terms of theories of need, these differences reflect the struggle between 'particular' and 'universal' definitions of need.

PARTICULARISM AND UNIVERSALISM IN COMMUNITY GROUP ACTIVITY

Traditionally, community and voluntary groups have been associated positively with an ability to cater for particular needs. An unstated assumption is that these organisations are deliberately seeking to address the needs of particular sections of society, or particular issues, and in some cases this is clear, for example in voluntary organisations dealing with particular health-related issues, or working with homeless people.

In the case of community groups, however, the notion of 'particularism' is more difficult to apply according to the same logic. On the one hand it might be argued that community groups whose remit is to develop services within specific localities are attending to the particular needs of that locality. In such cases we might expect to find community groups offering a range of services available to all local residents. On the other hand, it is also feasible that community groups are attending to more particular needs within localities and that some sections of a local population are targeted specifically.

The preceding discussion has shown the way in which community groups have developed around targeted approaches to need. The provision of services directed towards particular social groups - such as elderly people or young people - combined with the evidence that groups in Manningham and Girdlington were developing services to counteract the failure of mainstream service provision, all suggests that community groups do reflect definitions of need based on the specific and particular.

However, this section will argue that community group activities also reflect aspects of the struggle between universal and particular definitions of need that can create contradictory outcomes. Two aspects of this contradiction were found to occur. First, there was evidence that particularism could reinforce rivalry and division between sections of the population.

Second, there were contradictions between the 'universal' claims of some groups and the manifestations of service use found to exist.

Firstly, however, attention is drawn to the way in which particularism was found to reinforce ethnic minority divisions in Manningham and Girdlington. Throughout the interviews in this locality references were continuously made to the degree of 'in-fighting' and rivalry that existed within the Asian population, as the following quote reveals:

'A Muslim friend of mine said once that white people have no need to be afraid of all the Muslims rising up together against the British because they were so divided they could never decide when they were going to do it' (Paul, committee member and resident).

Although the fieldwork was unable to map these rivalries and tensions in any precise way, two examples from the data revealed the way in which divisions within the ethnic minority population had led to the development of new organisations.

Within the Bangladeshi community, there were rumours and speculation that a 'split' within the community had manifested itself in the development of three organisations, all catering for the Bangladeshi population. One of these was particularly isolated from the co-operation and collaboration that characterised working between the other two (see chapter seven). This organisation explained its position as follows:

'This was the first Bangladeshi organisation to be set up in Britain, in 1958. We were the first - the others split away from us... older people remember this and so it is difficult for us to work with the others. They feel we are the 'real' Bangladeshi organisation... when the council took our funds away it caused resentment and it was unjust - it is the others who caused the problem, not us' (Nirmal, committee member).

All three organisations provided similar types of activity and sessional workers from the youth service and social services find the lack of co-operation between the groups frustrating.

One argued that the Bangladeshi community as a whole was suffering from the lack of unity between the different factions. She suggested that they would be more powerful if they worked together and could access greater resources if they merged the user-base and management committees. In this example, continuing patterns of provision by community groups, that were based on the notion of particularism, reinforced and maintained internal divisions within the Bangladeshi community.

A second example of internal tensions between ethnic minority groups was exemplified by the relations between the African Caribbean and the Asian population. A recently formed group catering for the African Caribbean population explained its development in terms of the lack of local services:

‘Lots of the Asian groups around here have been going for years and it looks like they are more professional. Which is not true- cos if they were catering for our needs then we wouldn’t be looking to form a new organisation’ (Terrence, committee member).

There were underlying tensions between Asian and African Caribbean youths that were not condoned by this organisation, but nonetheless formed part of a discourse of ‘need’ for an organisation to cater specifically for African Caribbean’s:

‘This used to be somewhere you could come - it was friendly. But then a youth element started realising that they were never going to get a job and started approaching things in a different way. The Lane became their employment - selling drugs with hostile selling techniques and things started getting out of hand.... most of the guys out there now are Yardies - they have no sense of humour and are very violent in their nature. Now we’re in a situation where there’s gangs of Asians and Blacks fighting - now its about shooting and killing and dealing..... I want to get the kids away from that - show them it doesn’t have to be about that’ (Terrence, committee member).

The purpose of the new organisation was not to establish conditions under which young Asian's and Black's could be brought together, but to establish an African Caribbean organisation with the same strengths as the Asian community sector:

'The Asian population has always been able to tell the council what they want by having money behind them. They can negotiate with the council from a position of strength. And that's what we've got to do' (Terrence, committee member).

The failure of either the Asian or the African Caribbean community groups to address the inter-racial tensions that were developing between rival gangs, was graphically illustrated in the summer of 2000 when a spate of shootings left two young men dead yards away from the door of one of the groups (Guardian Newspaper, 2000). This extreme example of the violence that could erupt in Manningham was clearly not the fault of the community sector. However, the patterns of community group development did reflect the way in which ethnic minority groups were under pressure to provide services for specific sections of the population. In doing so, they mirrored the rivalries that were played out so tragically on the streets.

The negative features of particularism were matched with contradictory evidence regarding the claim made by some organisations that they served the needs of everyone in a locality. Patterns of use found to occur around cultural, social and spatial divisions undermined this claim.

In Manningham and Girdlington 14 organisations were not explicit about providing services for particular ethnic minority groups. These groups were established on the basis that they were available to everyone, and in this respect they were adopting 'universal' definitions of need in relation to the locality. However, despite protestations that all residents were welcome in these centres, the reality was that use was more prevalent among specific ethnic minority groups. A youth group explained this in terms of population density as follows:

'It is mostly Pakistani boys who come here - but obviously everyone is welcome. Its because we are where we are that the majority of kids are Pakistani. We would never turn anyone away' (Peter, paid worker).

Another respondent identified the way that patterns of use came to dominate perceptions of the services available:

'One of the problems for the advice centre is that people see it as an Asian advice centre. And I think that is a problem because once that stigma exists white people who need help won't go' (Paul, committee member).

This view was reinforced in interviews with white residents who believed that community groups were only there to serve the needs of the Asian community, as this resident explained:

'We used to go dancing up there [Community Centre] but that's not on now. Its all for the Asians now and we don't get a look in' (R2, Gillington resident).

Thus, in Manningham and Gillington organisations that perceived themselves to be serving the needs of all local people, were more likely to be dominated by users from particular sections of the population. The resulting reputation that some community organisations had for being associated with the needs of ethnic minority groups was blamed for the lack of centre use by white residents.

In Royds, the reputation that some groups had was similarly associated with a small minority of residents, leaving others excluded from service provision. On one estate, it was generally felt that people from the 'far end' were least likely to use the community centre. The reticence of these residents to use the facilities was associated with the alleged 'hijacking' of the centre by 'undesirable' residents. This had happened when the original community facility had been demolished as part of the regeneration programme and the community building was moved to a derelict house on one of the least desirable streets on the estate. It was argued by respondents that this house had been taken over by 'problem' families that lived nearby and consequently other residents would not use it.

By the time the new community centre had been built, a reputation for trouble had developed around users of the community centre and some residents would not use services provided there. This reputation meant that the new centre only reached a proportion of all the residents on the estate. Despite its claims to be serving the needs of everyone the reputation that earlier facilities had was limiting its use as a universal service provider.

On the largest of the Royds estates, community groups were limited in their ability to reach all residents by territorial divisions. The clearest of these occurred between the 'top end' and the 'bottom end' of the estate. The 'topenders' were understood to be unwilling to use community facilities on the other side of the estate which left them under-served in terms of community facilities. Community groups in the 'bottom end' believed themselves to be available to all residents, yet patterns of use suggested that they were not engaging with the needs of those in other parts of the locality. These spatial divisions were most clearly demonstrated during the summer playscheme when children from all over the estate attended events, regardless of where they were held. During the playscheme young people remained divided by these territorial divisions. One of the volunteers at the scheme said:

'They'll all stick together in their little groups for the next couple of weeks and then we won't see most of 'em again until next year' (Tracey, volunteer).

This example suggested that community groups were able to address barriers to centre use for some activities, but that the spatial divisions that people used to make sense of their locality were difficult to break down permanently. Once again, claims regarding universal provision were undermined by the reality of divisions that existed beyond the reach of community groups.

Those groups that say they are serving the needs of everyone, but in reality can only reach certain sections of the population, demonstrate the limitations of 'universal' community group provision where patterns of use can reinforce and reflect divisions within localities, whether expressed territorially, culturally or socially.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND NEEDS IDENTIFICATION IN REGENERATION POLICY

The identification of 'needs' in regeneration programmes rests on a combination of normatively defined needs, user defined needs and comparatively defined needs.

The use of comparative need definitions occurs between localities competing for regeneration funds. In order to be successful localities have to identify themselves as in need based on comparative indexes such as the Local Index of Deprivation. Taylor (2000b) has argued that this removes ownership and the power of definition away from local people at an early stage. There was no evidence found in these localities to suggest that community groups had been in a position to influence the way in which comparative need definitions were used to underpin claims that the area was in 'need'.

The extent to which normative and user-defined needs come to shape the objectives of the regeneration programmes is an issue that has been the subject of some lengthy research. There is a generally held view that whilst community groups and local residents may play a valuable role in assisting professionals to identify needs in the locality (Duggan and Ronayne, 1991; Hastings *et al.*, 1996), their role in deciding how these needs should be met is limited (Duggan and Ronayne, 1991; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Taylor, 2000b).

The findings from this study suggests that attitudes towards needs identification within programmes change over time and can be contradictory. Consensus over the key objectives identified in both programmes was found to exist despite different levels of user-defined needs used in the decision-making process.

In Manningham and Girdlington the emphasis of the regeneration programme was on education and training for young people (see chapter four). None of the community groups identified alternative objectives and they all agreed that, given the resources available, the general thrust of the programme was focussed on one of the most pressing needs. These primary objectives of the SRB programme matched closely many of the activities that community groups had been developing, and all the community groups agreed that the aims of the programme had embraced one of the major social problems in the area.

The consensus surrounding these objectives may have reflected an unwillingness for people to suggest that young people were not in need. In areas where multiple needs exist, prioritising these can be difficult. Two respondent's answers to questions about the focus of the SRB programme reflected this:

'It's a problem - of course it is - low levels of literacy and numeracy. No-one's saying the money shouldn't be used for this. Whether it is the best way for the money to be spent is more debatable' (Neil, committee member and resident).

'Developing education and training is very important in this area - I see them when they get to schools and a lot of kids still can't read or write - those basic skills are lacking. But there probably are other things - health would be one. Where do you stop though?' (Christine, committee member).

However, there was opposition in Manningham and Girdlington regarding the way in which these objectives had been agreed. Although people agreed that the aim of improving education, skills and training was positive, they were less enthusiastic about the mechanisms that had been used to ratify these decisions. One set of respondents had not been involved in any decision-making and believed the process to have been secretive, as the following quotations reflect:

'I think it's the most private thing there's been - the SRB thing. It has been absolutely ludicrous. It is not a community based thing at all' (Christine, committee member).

'There was supposed to have been widespread consultation in the area - but to my mind that hasn't really happened' (Luke, volunteer).

'It was all done in secret really. No-one knew what was going on until they announced that we'd got the money' (Simon, paid worker).

'We weren't asked at all what we thought - all very secretive - and I don't know of anyone that was' (Linda, committee member).

Other groups had been involved in consultation exercises. Consultants had visited some community centres and presented users with proposals which they were asked to comment on. These consultation exercises were not viewed positively by those involved, as the following respondents revealed:

'The questions were irrelevant and full of jargon - incomprehensible for most of our users who do not speak English let alone engage in debates about the quality of training and education needed here' (Marie, committee member).

'We had some input into the SRB - a consultation meeting was held here - but then we heard nothing and the whole process has been really slow' (Seema, committee member).

These negative views regarding the consultation process were corroborated by one of the regeneration partnership board members who had been involved in the bid preparation:

'Although there was consultation set up to satisfy government office it was a charade. It was about 'so many people came to the meeting' so they knew we'd done it. It wasn't about working with people in depth towards the bid' (Shirley, committee member and community representative).

Thus, a degree of consensus over the identification of need in Manningham and Girdlington was contrasted with negative perceptions regarding the way these needs had been identified. In one respect these examples reveal the extent to which discourses around 'community involvement' have become part of everyday understanding on the part of community groups about processes involved in regeneration programmes. The groups reflected the view that they had a right to be involved in decision-making and their criticisms were levelled at the lack of any opportunity to express this right. The fact that there was no substantial objection to the needs being addressed by the programme made little difference to people's criticism of the mechanisms for reaching that decision.

In Royds residents associations had campaigned for housing improvements and were instrumental in the development of the RCA which finally won the SRB bid to complete a programme of physical regeneration. The physical regeneration of the estates was of primary importance to residents. There was no opposition to the decision made to focus the regeneration programme on this issue. There was also little expression of criticism about the way these decisions had been reached, although the fact these processes happened some time ago may be affecting responses to these questions. However, in Royds, there has been a degree of subsequent criticism about the way the RCA has managed the project and how far it has become removed from local people. These issues are explored in detail in chapter seven.

These findings suggest that it the process of needs identification on an on-going basis that can lead to opposition between community groups and the regeneration programme. Despite different levels of community group and resident involvement in the identification of local needs, a consensus existed over the primary objectives of the regeneration programme in both areas. However, this consensus regarding the initial objectives of the regeneration programmes belies a lack of consensus over the ways in which these needs are being met and how far local residents are involved in decision-making. In both areas opposition to the regeneration programme has been focussed on subsequent decision-making and the perceived lack of community 'representativeness' on the partnership boards (see chapter seven).

CONCLUSION

This analysis of service provision and the identification of local needs should not be read as a charge against community group service providers *per se*. Community groups worked hard to develop new projects and paid workers were keen to stress the difficulties that they had in finding funding and keeping groups going from one year to the next. The problems associated with the funding of community and voluntary groups are well documented (Alcock *et al.*, 1999; Leat, 1995a; Rochester, 1998; Unwin and Westland, 1996), and this analysis should not be read as a claim that funding community groups is not worthwhile. Rather, it is a call for caution in assuming too readily that community groups are necessarily any better at identifying and responding to local needs than other forms of provision.

The pressures and constraints that are partly created by funding opportunities are placing demands on groups to be innovative and creative in their provision which is at odds with the wishes of many organisations to simply provide good quality services on a continuous basis to local people. It has been argued that

‘Within neighbourhoods there are community groups with varying aims and levels of support. This fragmentation may have strengths in terms of a flexible and wide-ranging response, but needs may not be properly defined or they may be overlooked, while those needing help find it difficult to get it’ (Gregory, 1998:7).

The purpose of this chapter has been to examine some of the reasons why these fragmented patterns come to emerge and what kinds of factors influence community group development around particular issues. In doing so, the preceding discussion has sought to identify the way in which community groups could be seen to respond to local needs based on analysis of the kinds of activities groups were providing and to whom, and how these needs had come to be identified.

Theories of need explored in chapter three suggested that there were likely to be a number of influences on the way that community groups came to identify and respond to local needs, and that these would not necessarily be based on needs-identifiers from within the locality.

The range of services provided in each area suggested that community groups were responding to different levels of local need. However, these levels of service provision were found to be affected by the organisational forms that had emerged in each locality. In comparing these organisational forms it was apparent that multi-purpose organisations could be drawn into funding mechanisms that allowed them to develop multiple activities on a short-term basis. The proliferation of services in Manningham and Girdlington was consequently explained, in part, by the greater emphasis on particular organisational forms, rather than any greater identification of need on the part of these groups.

Thus, in terms of the number of services being provided, the analysis suggested that organisations could be driven by funding opportunities as well as by the identification of need. In the context of changing funding environments within the voluntary sector generally, it was not surprising to find that community groups were subject to the same kinds of opportunities and constraints seen to affect voluntary organisations more widely. However, the analysis did reflect the need for caution in assuming that these changes affect all community groups in the same way. Multi-purpose and hybrid organisations have found opportunities in the changing funding environment as project-funding has given them a flexibility that has enabled many to develop diverse and constantly changing activities. In contrast, single purpose organisations found it more difficult to adopt this kind of flexible approach when their main aim was to continue providing good quality services on a consistent basis.

In analysing the way in which community groups were able to respond to the needs of particular sections of the population contradictory evidence emerged regarding positive and negative manifestations of this. In Royds these particular needs were framed in terms of older people and younger people in the main, whilst in Manningham and Girdlington the provision of services for specific sections of the ethnic minority population were highlighted as examples of particularism. These organisations were expressing the positive aspects of community group ability to respond to diverse needs. The reasons why these specific needs were being addressed in favour of others was a matter of interpretation and could be seen to involve a combination of needs-identifiers.

Expertly or normatively defined need certainly seemed to drive the extension of provision for young people in both areas. In Manningham and Girdlington this was explicitly explained in terms of social control and a fear of social unrest, whilst in Royds more traditional patterns of diversionary activity could be explained in terms of a generally held view that it was important for young people to have something to do. Provision for older people in Royds could be seen to have developed around a more complex set of needs identifiers. On the one hand, there was an expressed need for services that could provide older people with social activities and hot meals. On the other, there was evidence that some groups had formed because they wanted to have the same activities that were provided elsewhere.

The provision for ethnic minority groups in Manningham and Girdlington had almost all developed out of campaigns for ethnic minorities to provide for themselves. These groups were found to be most likely to express oppositional discourses in their initial development. However, subsequently, the drive for funding and expansion of services meant that many of these groups were adopting positions influenced by external (funding) agendas.

On the one hand particularism is a positive feature of community group service provision, because it has enabled the establishment of services for specific sections of the population based on user defined needs that have sought to overcome the inadequacies of mainstream service provision. On the other hand, particularism is negative because it can reinforce and reflect patterns of rivalry and tension within localities.

The observation that localities are understood by people in terms of relatively small areas is one that has recently been applied to an understanding of the spatial and social divisions that underpin people's perceptions of where they live (Cattell and Evans, 1999). Here, it has also been argued that these territorial and social differences also affect the extent to which community groups can legitimately be seen to respond to local needs.

Furthermore, particularism in service provision inevitably means that groups are excluding other sections of the population from accessing services. This exclusion was not simply an outcome of community group objectives, however. The patterns of use that were found to exist also contributed to perceptions of community groups as places where only some people would go. In Manningham and Girdlington this led to lack of centre use by white residents, whilst in Royds a combination of territorial understandings of 'community' alongside negative perceptions of other users, limited organisation's ability to reach all sections of the population. Emmanuel (1993) has argued that

'involving the most excluded and most disadvantaged should make for a stronger, more resilient community with less division across social, racial or ethnic lines' (Emmanuel, 1993:12).

This research suggests that community groups themselves can reinforce the very divisions that their existence is perceived to eliminate.

Social constructionist perspectives of need identify the importance of social and historical factors in explaining how needs come to be identified. This discussion has shown that a complex pattern of social, historical and cultural factors have combined in these areas to create patterns of provision that community groups provide. These theories also raise questions regarding the extent to which community groups might be seen to create need as well as respond to need. The nature of causality between the identification of need and the provision of services is one that is raised by social constructionist perspective. It was argued in chapter three that the provision of services by groups could actually create need based on the argument that people do not know they have a need until a service develops to respond to that need (Langan, 1998; Martin, 1982).

To the extent that groups in both localities were responding to externally defined needs agendas they could be seen to be creating need. However, the influence of user-defined and comparative need in explaining the development and expansion of services suggests that a more complex configuration of causality between creating and responding to need occurs. The evidence suggests that community groups are operating within dominant discourses of need that reflect externally defined needs as well some aspects of user defined needs. The relatively narrow range of services provided further suggested that there were needs within both localities that continued to be ignored. However, in terms of the development of the regeneration programmes in both areas, evidence also emerged that consensus over needs identification could occur regardless of the extent of user input in the definition of these needs. High degrees of overlap between community groups, professionals, comparative needs assessment and normatively defined need existed over the primary objectives of the regeneration programmes in both areas. It was the mechanisms for involvement and decision-making that were most likely to cause opposition and criticism from residents and community groups. If the same criteria is applied to the provision of services by community groups it may be that residents and users are less concerned about what community groups provide, than the way that they provide it.

Many of the activities used in the preceding analysis were organised by volunteers who remain committed to serving local residents. It is to their experiences that the analysis now turns in order to examine how the community sector provides opportunities for volunteering, and the development of social capital.

CHAPTER SIX

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: VOLUNTEERING AND NON-PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION

The discussion of social capital in chapter three highlighted the way in which volunteering in community groups is one of the ways in which residents can participate in local affairs. The concept of social capital explicitly draws attention to these public benefits of volunteering by highlighting the social networks, trust and benefits that derive from the face-to-face interaction associated with voluntary activity. It was argued in chapter three that our understanding of the ways in which volunteering can contribute to the generation of social capital have been obscured by quantitative analyses that have tended to focus on the numbers of people who are active, rather than the quality and type of activities in which they are involved. This chapter is concerned with aspects of volunteering and non-participation in community groups in order to explore the more qualitative features of social capital.

In the context of poverty and deprivation, social capital is used by politicians and academics as a tool for re-configuring the concepts of 'community spirit' and 'social cohesion' that are seen to underpin the successful regeneration of deprived areas. Taylor (2000a:15) states:

'The social and human capital that community involvement develops are not only the means but are part of the solution to the problems associated with social exclusion'.

This chapter argues that statements such as these need to be qualified by drawing attention to the way in which community groups provide differential access to volunteering and consequently to the benefits of social capital. Despite a now widespread acceptance that community groups can exclude as well as include (Burns and Taylor, 1998; Chanan, 1992; Willmott, 1989) volunteering in community groups continues to be seen as a means through which poor people can be reconnected to mainstream society.

However, the nature of causality between social capital, human capital and poverty remains an elusive issue. At one level there is clear evidence that poorer sections of society are less likely to volunteer than more affluent people. This has been used to suggest that poor people lack social capital and to support claims that mechanisms to generate social capital need to be supported in deprived areas, based on an assumption that people who are connected into social networks are more likely to be economically successful (see for example Smith, 1998). Yet at the same time there is evidence that connection to the labour market, and economic stability, is a pre-requisite to the generation of social capital. As Smith (1998) points out, the working class communities that Coleman (1988) refers to as providing examples of places rich in social capital were places where dense social networks were supported by work place connections.

This paradoxical aspect of the relationship between economic success and social capital is matched by other contradictions in the social capital literature, including the relationship between human and social capital, the relationship between social networks and social capital generation and the relationship between social trust and social capital. These are all explored in the subsequent discussion.

Smith's (1998) study explicitly seeks to 'measure' social capital through community group activity. He measured social capital through eight characteristics including: the number of organisations; public awareness of services; and formal citizen participation in local politics and local elections, based on secondary analysis of various data sets. This research adds to Smith's (1998) findings by examining different types of volunteering in community groups and developing further understanding of the relationship between active and non-active residents.

The following analysis is based on interviews with active volunteers and paid staff in community groups as well as with residents who were not involved in any community activity. The views of non-participants are particularly important in establishing any connection between social capital formed through community group activity and wider social life.

Some studies of community group activity have included non-participants, and where appropriate the findings from these studies are used to corroborate findings in the following discussion (Cattell and Evans, 1999; McGregor *et al.*, 1992). However, the non-participants in this study are not treated as a homogenous category as they tend to be in these studies. Rather, it is argued that non-participants attitudes towards community group activity is partly explained with reference to their perception of 'community' and how connected they feel to the place and to people where they live.

This chapter argues that community groups may adopt different approaches to the recruitment and retention of volunteers so that low levels of participation can be explained with reference to a lack of opportunities to volunteer, rather than to individualised explanations that focus on the apathy and lack of generalised trust seen to be associated with poverty and social exclusion. Thus, to argue that poor people need more social capital to overcome their social and economic isolation is paradoxical given the highly complex and contradictory factors associated with participation and non-participation found to occur in these two localities.

Three particular aspects of social capital are explored in the following discussion. First, the social networks associated with social capital are considered with reference to the kinds of volunteering opportunities that community groups offer and how aspects of non-participation reveal the paradox that surrounds the social capital/social network debate. Second, the social trust aspects of social capital are used to explore aspects of withdrawal from volunteering. Again, there are contradictory ways in which notions of social trust relate to people's perceptions of volunteering in community groups. Third, the issue of social benefits deriving from volunteering are explored in order to argue that social capital can be differentially distributed between different types of active roles.

To begin, however, an overview of the kinds of volunteering that occurred in each locality serves to contextualise the subsequent discussion.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE LOCALITIES - AN OVERVIEW

Table 6.1 shows the number of organisations using volunteers in each locality. In common with earlier studies of community sector organisations (Chanan, 1993; Fearnley and McInroy, 1999; Reynolds *et al.*, 1994) the majority of community groups in both localities used volunteers to some extent⁹.

Table 6.1

The numbers of organisations using volunteers and paid workers

	Volunteers and paid workers	Run by volunteers only	No volunteers
Manningham and Girlington (N=32)	16 (50%)	8 (25%)	8 (25%)
Royds (N=32)	10 (31%)	17 (53%)	5 (16%)

Twenty four of the 32 groups in Manningham and Girlington used volunteers. Of these, 8 organisations were run solely on a voluntary basis. The remaining 16 employed paid workers who organised activities and used volunteers. In Royds 27 groups used volunteers of which 17 were run solely by volunteers and 10 had a paid worker.

In addition, volunteering in management committees was an important function for volunteers in both areas. In most cases, groups referred to their management committee first in questions about volunteering in community groups. The extent to which management committee membership is the most prevalent form of volunteering in each area is difficult to measure since many committee volunteers sat on more than one committee. The issue of overlapping membership is explored in more detail in chapter seven.

In Manningham and Girlington 23 of the 32 organisations (72 percent) had a volunteer management committee running its affairs. In Royds the proportion was much lower with only 12 of the 32 groups (38 percent) using management committees.

⁹ There is no sense in which the term 'volunteering' implies either homogeneity of function or time spent volunteering. People volunteer within a set of personal circumstances and individual decision-making that makes any further distinction between different kinds of volunteering irrelevant for this study.

This difference is explained by two factors: first the greater numbers of small informal groups in Royds that had no management committee; and second, the higher number of community venues in Royds whose management committee was made up of representatives from groups using community buildings. The latter were referred to by respondents as 'user committees' where the local authority, who owned the community venues, had established committees in order to consult with existing users.

The roles performed by volunteer management committees conformed to the activities identified by Harris (1996) as characteristic of these bodies. Committees were responsible for decisions regarding the running of the group including the recruitment of staff, financial reporting and funding applications. Whilst some of these activities were delegated to paid staff - such as the preparation of funding bids - committee members tended to see themselves as in control of paid worker activity. The fieldwork did not seek to generate any explicit understanding of the internal workings of committees. There is evidence that the functions attributed to committees may be differentially adhered to depending on organisational forms and the relationship between users, management committees and paid staff (see Harris, 1996). The findings from this study are based on self-reported activities and levels of committee control, and therefore should not be interpreted as evidence that all committees necessarily worked in the same way.

In both localities, three forms of active volunteering were identified: voluntary management committee members; general volunteering outside management committees; and volunteer/member roles that occurred in groups run by volunteers only. These three types are not mutually exclusive in terms of individuals who could play all three roles in different organisations. However, the features of volunteering that were most clearly distinguishable between groups in each locality did tend to be clustered around these three forms, and consequently it is on these three forms that the analysis concentrates.

SOCIAL NETWORKS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS - RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

The available evidence suggests that volunteering in community groups is not prevalent. Studies that have sought to measure rates of volunteering in community groups have tended to indicate that this is a minority pursuit, ranging from 49.9 percent of people involved in the EFILWC cross-national survey (Chanan, 1993) to only 26 percent involved in McGregor *et al.*'s (1992) survey of the Craigmillar estate in Scotland.

These studies would seem to indicate that community groups are producing variable levels of social capital through volunteering in different localities. In the EFILWC study, rates of involvement in community groups varied from 29.9 percent in Oliviero do Douro to 79.4 percent in Thamesmead (Chanan, 1993). The factors associated with these differing levels of participation are rarely explored, and are most commonly associated with a lack of awareness of groups (Chanan, 1993; McGregor *et al.*, 1992; Smith 1998) or the non-availability of groups (Chanan, 1993).

The availability of community groups is a factor that has been associated with measurements of social capital. Smith (1998) found that there was approximately one voluntary organisation for every 215 people in his survey of Newham, which he interprets as evidence that a considerable amount of social capital should be exhibited. Similarly, the ACU (2000:10) argues that a concentration of many organisations in a locality almost certainly gives rise to a wider range of opportunities and higher levels of activity. In contrast, Marshall (1995) has argued that the number of organisations operating in a locality is not indicative of the quantity of activity that is taking place.

The data collected in this study does not allow for any generalisable statement to be made regarding rates of participation in community groups based on resident survey data. However, data gathered on the numbers of volunteers used by community groups suggests that only a small minority of local residents were involved in community group volunteering (see Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 below). Furthermore, the data revealed differences in available opportunities for volunteers in different kinds of groups.

This evidence supported the argument made in chapter three that different kinds of voluntary activity have different implications for social capital and some organisational forms may not encourage volunteering as much as others. This claim was based on the social capital literature that points to the way in which different kinds of networks can have different kinds of benefits, thereby drawing attention away from the idea that all networks necessarily create social capital. The findings reported below suggest that the social networks that underpin the concept of social capital are the same networks that can act to exclude significant proportions of the population from volunteering.

The data showed differences between groups that employed paid workers and those that were volunteer-only organisations. The evidence suggested that paid workers were less keen to recruit more volunteers than they could manage. This had a potentially negative impact on the generation of social capital through opportunities for volunteering. In contrast, groups run solely by volunteers were keen to recruit more members and had a potentially unlimited membership. In these groups, it was not the opportunities open to volunteering that created problems for recruitment, but perceptions of these groups as 'cliquey' that limited their expansion of members. The differences between paid worker/non-paid worker groups tended to match with the distinctions made in chapter five where paid workers were most commonly found in multi-purpose and hybrid organisations whilst volunteer only groups were more likely to be small single purpose groups.

Paid workers and approaches to volunteering

The effect of paid staff on volunteering in community groups has been given little attention. The EFILWC study treated the influence of paid workers as neutral (Chanan, 1993), whilst others have either ignored the issue (Smith, 1998) or simply identified the kinds of groups using paid staff (Fearnley and McInroy, 1999; Reynolds *et al.*, 1994).

This study contends that, in fact, the attitude of paid workers towards the recruitment of volunteers partly explains the apparently low levels of volunteering in community groups that occurred in both localities.

Table 6.2 shows the numbers of volunteers used by community groups. Given the overall population in each locality, these numbers are low. The evidence suggested that not only were there small numbers of volunteers used by community groups that employed paid workers, but that paid workers were ambivalent about recruiting more volunteers. This ambivalence impacted negatively on opportunities for volunteering in both localities.

Table 6.2

The numbers of volunteers used by community groups that employed paid workers

	Less than five	Five to Ten	More than Ten
Manningham and Girlington (N=16)	3	12	1
Royds (N=10)	4	4	2

Thirteen of the sixteen organisations in Manningham and Girlington that employed paid workers said they did not need anymore volunteers. The three paid workers that did express a desire for more volunteers did so in the context of developing additional services:

‘If we had more volunteers to run things it would be good for the club. The lack of volunteers we get here hampers our progress and makes it hard to develop new activities’ (Peter, paid worker).

‘We have a small number of heavily committed volunteers who can’t do it all. We’ll need more people to help out when the lunch club starts and if we don’t get them it just won’t happen’ (Bev, paid worker)

‘We’d like more people to help out, of course we would - it would mean that we could run extra sessions and organise new activities.... it would be good for the older ones I think’ (Laila, paid worker).

In Royds ten organisations were run by paid workers. Of these five expressed a need for more volunteers.

All five were seeking volunteers to help run activities for young people and three expressed concern that it was young people that put people off volunteering:

‘We really do need more people to help out - especially with the kids. But people don’t want to work with them. I’ve had two or three who’ve come once and then not come back. You’ve seen what they’re like. It’s hard to persuade people they’ll get anything out of it’ (Sally, paid worker).

‘We always need more help. The kids need more people to organise things for them and I’m only one person. We’ve got some now doing football but the girls could do with something too’ (Steve, paid worker).

Thus, paid workers who expressed a need for more volunteers did so in the context of developing services.

Organisations that did not actively recruit more volunteers were not those with particularly high numbers of existing volunteers. Two factors appeared to affect this ambivalence towards recruiting more volunteers. First, a desire to recruit people who will remain committed and, second, a desire to recruit people with skills:

‘Its difficult to get the right sort of people. Commitment is a problem with volunteers. They think they can drift in whatever time they want. We like them to show some commitment because we need to have so many workers to each child and so if they don’t turn in it can be a problem’ (Andrew, paid worker).

Half the organisations that wanted to recruit more volunteers only wanted people with existing skills, as the following quote shows:

‘It would be easy if I just wanted people to hang round doing their own thing but we need people with skills who can just get on with it. I just don’t have time to train people’ (Kate, paid worker).

Thus, those groups that were seeking to recruit more volunteers were doing so in order to develop additional services, whilst the majority were not keen to recruit volunteers that lacked commitment or skills to immediately contribute to the working of the group. These groups exhibited characteristics towards volunteering that have been associated with mainstream voluntary sector organisations as

‘hierarchical, externally directed and essentially serving the policies and practices of the organisation rather than the needs and choices of the participant’ (Chanan, 1992:10).

In seeking explanations for the ambivalence of paid workers to the development of volunteering opportunities, two issues are relevant. First, paid workers in community groups are often working alone and are under pressure to perform. The concern expressed by the majority of those who were happy to retain a small number of existing volunteers was that they lacked the time to train or manage volunteers. The difficulties associated with the administration and training of volunteers was mentioned by 17 of the 26 organisations using paid workers across the two localities. These problems were summed up by a worker in Manningham as follows:

‘I should say yes - that we do need more volunteers - but to be honest I haven’t got the time to train new people or even to go out and find them. It’s just not worthwhile for me to spend my time training new volunteers when the group needs to find funders and complete contract paperwork and do all the activities. I suppose I have to say it’s my fault that we don’t have more volunteers. But I’m just not that bothered’ (Thomas, paid worker).

Second, the service delivery emphasis of funding has been identified as a barrier to the establishment of more developmental work with volunteers (Chanan, 1992; Duggan and Ronayne, 1991). In part the service delivery emphasis of community group activities limits opportunities for volunteering where sessional workers are ‘bought in’ by community groups to provide specific activities (see chapter five). Service delivery also affects attitudes towards volunteering where this is seen by groups as a route to expansion of services, rather than as a positive aspect of community sector operation in its own right.

In contrast to the perception of community sector activity as participatory and volunteer-led the majority of groups in this study used relatively small numbers of volunteers, the recruitment of which was based on the needs of service delivery aspects of community group development. The evidence from the groups that employed paid workers suggests that opportunities for volunteering in community groups are not only related to the numbers of organisations operating in a locality. Some paid staff adopt passive roles towards the recruitment of volunteers which reduces opportunities for the development of social capital through volunteering.

The influence of paid staff goes some way to explaining the limited numbers of volunteers used in multi-purpose and hybrid organisations. It does not explain, however, why those groups that were actively seeking more volunteers found it difficult to recruit them. These issues are explored further below.

The approaches to volunteering exhibited by paid staff can be compared with those organisations that were volunteer-led. Not only were volunteer-led groups more likely to have higher numbers of volunteer/members but they also exhibited high degrees of interest in recruiting more people to the group.

Volunteer-led organisations

In small single purpose organisations the role of 'user and member' were conflated. Rochester (1999) calls these 'small member/active groups' thus drawing attention to the way in which users were also active volunteers. These organisational forms offered social capital generating capacity where they encouraged face-to-face interaction amongst individuals who were sharing responsibility for service development and extension. Table 6.3 (overleaf) shows that volunteer-led groups had higher numbers of member/volunteers than those with paid workers.

Table 6.3**The numbers of user/volunteers in volunteer-led organisations**

	Less than 10 users/volunteers	10 to 20 users/volunteers	More than 20 users/volunteers
Manningham and Girlington (N=8)	5 (62%)	3 (38%)	0
Royds (N=17)	7 (42%)	5 (29%)	5(29%)

Every volunteer-only organisation said that they would like to recruit more members. For the small social groups in Royds recruiting additional members was seen to offer the group more stability and more available help to those involved in organising activities, as the following quotes show:

‘We’re always happy to have more people. It takes the pressure off Mary if there’s more of us. And we take more money as well if more of us turn up’ (R2, older person’s discussion group A).

‘Oh yeah - the more the merrier. Some of them are getting on a bit now so a few new ones would see us alright for a few more years’ (R7, older person’s discussion group B).

In Manningham and Girlington the small residents associations that were running on single streets saw more members as an opportunity to put pressure on the council for changes:

‘If we could get everyone involved it would give us more of a chance and I could get on with other things. Its hard work trying to get them together and if not everyone is there then you never know if someone is going to object to what we’ve decided to do’ (Hamida, volunteer).

‘If you can say you speak for everyone - I mean that you’ve got everyone on your side - then they have to listen don’t they. But if they can go to one or two houses and someone says they’re not bothered it can muck it up for the rest of us’ (Luke, volunteer).

The volunteer-led groups adopted more positive attitudes towards recruiting more members. Their volunteering was perceived differently and associated more with 'helping' than providing services as these women from the older person's discussion group reflect:

R1: 'We're not really volunteers are we? We just help out now and then'

R3: 'Yeah - Mary couldn't manage on her own so we all muck in'

R7: '.. I s'pose we do volunteer to help out - but does that make us volunteers?'

Consequently when these groups were asked about how they recruited new members they were vague about how this could be achieved:

'People know we're here. They can just come along' (R2, older person's discussion group B).

'We're not going out and knocking on doors to drag 'em in' (R1, older person's discussion group A).

In fact, the majority of people involved in these groups were already known to another member. The most common method of recruitment was word of mouth. The groups were aware that this might put newcomers off joining as this member explained:

'Some people think they wouldn't be made welcome and that we all know each other and that. But its not true is it? It's a good bunch we've got coming now and more people would really enjoy it I think' (R7, older person's discussion group B).

The perception of these social groups as exclusive was also expressed by older non-participants. In the street survey four older residents said they would like to join a lunch club but had not done so because they did not know other people who already attended:

'It would be nice to go up there for lunch now and then but we don't know anyone who goes up there do we? And a lot of them can be hard work - you know it's OK if your face fits' (R13, resident, Royds).

Thus, small social groups seem to offer the most potential to generate social capital through informally run activities reliant upon face-to-face interaction in non-hierarchical structures. However, the recruitment methods used by these groups relied upon word of mouth and, despite claims that they were keen to find new members, most relied upon existing members to bring new people along.

In comparing groups with paid workers and volunteer-led groups it would appear that the latter offer more opportunities for volunteering through their positive commitment to recruit more members. This is in contrast to the paid worker groups that were mostly not actively recruiting volunteers. On the face of it therefore, volunteer-led groups appear to offer greater opportunities for the development of social capital. However, volunteer-led groups grew through word of mouth recruitment methods that were likely to maintain and perpetuate access to these groups by certain sections of the population. Thus, both types of organisational form could be seen to limit opportunities for the development of social capital through volunteering.

Recruiting management committee members

A third type of volunteering, management committee membership, was prevalent in both areas. The democratic procedures used to elect members was in contrast to the mechanisms for recruitment used by groups for the forms of volunteering described above. Officially management committees are elected at Annual General Meetings (AGMs) to which the existing committee, centre users and the general public are invited.

However, in common with previous studies of management committees, this research found that the apparent democratic accountability surrounding the annual election of committee members existed only on paper (NCVO, 1992; Smith, 1998). The formal elections belied the existence of insider networks that were dominated by people who were known to be 'committee' people:

‘I think mostly committees work through word of mouth so somebody will know somebody who thinks they have a particular expertise, or perhaps a user of the service that have particular things to say that need to be said, and therefore they’re invited’ (Marie, committee member).

Thus, the availability of management committee positions to the uninitiated were limited. This finding was reinforced by evidence that AGMs were not well attended by people with no prior connection to the group (see also Smith, 1998). Although AGMs were ‘open to the public’ the reality expressed by all committee members was that some centre users and existing committee members were usually the only people to attend. The survey data collected for all groups showed that the numbers of people (except existing committee members) attending AGMs in this research ranged from 0 to 30. The latter was exceptional and the average attendance across all organisations at the most recent AGM was 8. In most cases organisations were pragmatic about attendance and argued that one person was better than none, although all groups said they would like to see more people attending these annual meetings.

However, strategies designed to encourage people to stand for membership were negligible. Only one group offered users the opportunity to sit in on management committees for a year before deciding whether or not to stand. None of the groups had developed ways other than formal AGM opportunities to encourage the non-invited to stand. Unsurprisingly, therefore, it was said:

‘There aren’t any committees I’ve ever been to where an unknown person stands up at the AGM and says “I want to join”’ (Marie, committee member).

The evidence suggests that there are limited opportunities for people to access group decision-making unless they are invited to do so by existing members, and the formality of AGMs does not encourage people to participate.

This opening section has argued that access to volunteering as a route to the generation of social capital is not straightforward. Three factors have been identified that inhibit opportunities for people to access volunteering: the influence of paid workers; perceptions of small groups as exclusive; and patterns of recruitment to management committees that deter inexperienced people from standing for election.

These findings suggest that community groups do not necessarily generate opportunities for the development of social capital and that explanations for non-participation that focus on individual apathy and a lack of social capital are too simplistic.

The evidence from the recruitment methods used by volunteer-led and management committees also reflects one of the central paradoxes of the social capital debate regarding the relationship between social networks, volunteering and social capital. Both these forms of volunteering relied upon word of mouth and existing social networks to recruit new members. To this extent they were exhibiting recruitment methods commonly found in voluntary activity more generally (see Davis Smith, 1998; Lyn and Davis Smith, 1990; McGregor *et al.*, 1992; Silburn *et al.*, 1999).

The conundrum for social capital and volunteering is that whilst volunteering is seen to increase social networks and re-connect people to social life, the easiest way to do this is through existing social networks. Thus, those who have few local contacts or are not part of informal social networks that include active volunteers may find themselves doubly disadvantaged in terms of access to social capital through volunteering opportunities. On the one hand, they are less likely to find it easy to access volunteering that would increase their social networks, and on the other hand, without these social networks they are unlikely to be asked to volunteer.

One of the groups of non-participants explained their inactivity in these terms. These respondents were relatively new to the area. Davis Smith (1998) argues that people new to an area are less likely to volunteer than 'more established' residents. This is interpreted as evidence that 'newcomers' are people who know fewer people in the neighbourhood and are therefore less likely to know what opportunities for volunteering are available. These individuals did explain their inactivity in these terms, as the following example reveals:

‘Well I’m not really bothered about getting involved - I don’t really know anyone around here yet. But then I suppose that if I did help out I’d get to know more people. It’s a bit chicken and egg really in’t it?’ (R12, resident, Royds).

However, the interesting characteristic of these individuals was their previous experience of volunteering. They had been involved in activities that had generated social capital which was lost once they were removed from the social networks that sustained their involvement.

One respondent had been instrumental in establishing a tenants association in her previous estate. She was used to dealing with public officials and campaigning for the rights of tenants. When she moved to Royds she lost these connections and had found it difficult to access new volunteering opportunities, although she recognised the benefits of getting involved:

‘I know that unless I go up there and make an effort I’ll never get to know anyone. But it’s just easier if you know someone else’ (R7, resident Royds).

Thus, not only are the social networks that underpin the concept of social capital the same networks that can act to exclude significant sections of the population, but these networks are context specific. The evidence suggests that high levels of social capital in one locality are not transferable.

SOCIAL TRUST AND COMMUNITY GROUPS - EXPLAINING WITHDRAWAL AND NON-PARTICIPATION

High levels of trust, reciprocity and resulting positive community identity underpin the idea of cohesive local communities (Campbell *et al.*, 1999). Trust and co-operation are perceived as values that turn people from self-seeking individuals into members of a community. However, identifying the nature of causality between volunteering and social capital has proved illusive. For example, the strengthening of trust and social capital may occur as a result of joining voluntary associations, or it could be the prior existence of trust that facilitates the formation of voluntary association (Brown *et al.*, 2000).

It was argued above that the opportunities for volunteering among community groups relied upon the pre-existence of social networks as recruitment mechanisms to volunteer-led groups and management committees. This does not necessarily explain why people withdraw from active volunteering or how far an absence of social capital among non-participants can explain their inactivity.

The concept of social trust is used here to explore the patterns of inactivity that were found to occur in both areas. There are two key aspects to this inactivity. First, there is evidence that trust between some members explains why others were found to withdraw from active volunteering. Second, the lack of reciprocal trust between leaders and members in some groups threatened to lead to social capital 'leaking out' of the community sector if leaders withdrew from active roles. These two aspects of withdrawal from active roles suggest that different kinds of groups produce different kinds of social trust, and that it is presumptuous to assume that all kinds of activity is based on internal trust between members.

The third aspect explored here relates to non-participant residents explanations for inactivity. There was evidence that people who lacked social trust and whose connection to their locality had been damaged over time were the most disillusioned and least likely to volunteer. Another set of respondents exhibited high levels of social capital in informal settings and suggested they would be more interested in volunteering.

The evidence from participants and non-participants suggests that social trust is related to aspects of social capital generation in differential ways. On the one hand, community groups that exhibited high levels of internal trust also generated core insider groups whose knowledge and commitment could be putting others off from taking an active role. Where core insider groups did not exist, and groups were reliant upon individuals for carrying out the bulk of administrative tasks, leaders were more likely to become disillusioned and blamed a lack of reciprocal trust for their over-burdened state. Similarly, among non-participant residents there was evidence that social trust could generate positive feelings towards volunteering and local activity that was at odds with the lack of social trust felt by those whose relationship with the locality had been damaged over time. Yet it was the latter group of non-participants who potentially had the most to gain, personally and socially, from attempts to generate social capital.

Social trust and committees

The evidence from committee members suggested that what might be called the 'thick trust' that kept core members together may have inhibited others from being involved. The clearest expression of this occurred in management committees where individuals retained their formal position on the committee but did not engage with the practical manifestation of this.

The signs that this was a widespread element of withdrawal came in interviews where active committee members identified a 'core' group of individuals that were responsible for 'doing all the work'. Thus, despite 'official' records stating that the committee had twelve elected members it was often the case that only between four and six people were active volunteers. This feature of committee operation was mentioned in every interview with committee members and in all but one with paid staff. Thus, the overwhelming majority of groups stated that they were actually run by a core of committee members and that the remaining elected members were relatively inactive.

Different kinds of explanation for patterns of inactivity were adopted by some committee members. In each case, these explanations indicate the ways in which the activities of core insider groups may be acting to deter others from more active participation. First, where committee membership is most likely to be drawn from known individuals (see above), outsiders may feel unwelcome and withdraw as the core insider group takes over. For example one respondent said:

'There is always going to be core of people who know what is going on and are committed to the place year after year' (Christine, committee member).

Second, the following quote reveals how missing meetings can place people at a disadvantage if they do not know what is happening:

'You can't sustain people coming to meetings once every two or three months and saying "what's happening now". There has to be some continuity so inevitably you end up with a core few doing all the work' (Terrence, committee member).

Whilst this respondent saw the failure of everyone to attend as a reason for the development of a 'core' group it also has ramifications for those who find it difficult to attend meetings regularly. A lack of up to date knowledge may compound feelings of isolation from the core insider group.

Third, the way committees are run can act against those with no previous experience. The following quotation reveals the difficulties people have in understanding committee procedures as well as the reasons why existing committees prefer people with experience:

'Sometimes people join a committee and they don't really know what it is. They've never been in groups where you have an agenda, where there are external pressures about having chairs and secretaries and financial reports. And so they either get bored, or they don't understand what is happening or it wasn't really what they thought it was in the first place. The ones who pop up at the last minute and fill a vacant place are the ones who tend to drop out. Or it takes a lot of staff or other management time explaining why things are happening and why things are important' (Marie, committee member).

Management committee volunteering was consequently not only restricted in terms of access, but also difficult to sustain for those who had made an attempt to break into new social networks. The individuals who made up these core groups of active management committee members exhibited high levels of internal trust with other core members both within and across organisations as the evidence from chapter seven will show in relation to overlapping membership of committee members in community groups.

Whilst core committee group members displayed high levels of internal trust that could be interpreted as evidence of exclusion for those who remained outside these networks, the activities of individuals who took responsibility for running groups revealed how a lack of social trust could lead to disillusionment with volunteering and activism within localities.

Group leaders and disillusionment

Community groups that were not run by committees relied upon the efforts of a small number of individuals who took the bulk of responsibility. In Royds of the seventeen groups run by volunteers only, fourteen identified a specific individual who was perceived by members as 'in charge' of the group. Although members were active in helping to run sessions and would take over activities on an *ad hoc* basis, there was a sense that these groups did rely heavily on the commitment of one or two individuals to maintain the group. In Manningham and Girdlington four of the residents groups similarly identified an individual leader.

It was among these individuals that evidence emerged regarding the difficulty that they had in maintaining enthusiasm to continue with their volunteering. One of the resident group leaders in Manningham and Girdlington described his experience as follows:

'I don't want to run it anymore. I want someone else to take over. You end up doing everything for them and it becomes insane..As far as they were concerned I'd set myself up as top-dog on the street so they expected me to perform. And what I was trying to get across was like, empowerment is about you finding out how to do things for yourself, and if you can't be bothered then why should I be bothered' (Luke, volunteer).

This respondent expressed the views of two other resident group leaders who felt that they were over-burdened with responsibility for carrying the group on. They shared a sense of disillusionment with the benefits of their volunteering deriving from a belief that there was a lack of reciprocity being exhibited by their neighbours, as Mohsin explained:

'I do everything for them. Without me there would be no group, no litter picked up, no parties. And yet they just won't help out. It is crazy - we are all in the same boat, I have done enough. And I will not do any more for them' (Mohsin, volunteer).

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People who ran small single purpose groups in Royds suffered similar feelings of being let down by the majority of other members. In one case, a lunch club had closed down because the individual running the group had fallen ill and no-one would run the group in his absence. In another group, the person in charge was an elderly lady with mobility problems. She explained her decision to stop volunteering with reference to the lack of support she had received from other members as follows:

‘I did it all for years. But I was younger then. We just can’t get enough young ones to help out. And I can’t do it all anymore. I feel terrible - but why didn’t someone else come along and do it? So we’re not going to have anything anymore - just because I’m not there. It’s a real shame, that’s what it is’ (Beryl, volunteer).

These individuals were displaying negative perceptions of their volunteering in terms of the lack of reciprocal trust that had failed to develop within groups that left some with far more responsibility than they could continue to manage. The social networks generated in these groups were not enough to maintain groups over time if members failed to generate the social trust and reciprocity that would have reduced the responsibility felt by a few overburdened volunteers.

The examples of core committee members and disillusioned group leaders reflects the way in which aspects of social trust are differentially distributed among different kinds of organisations and reinforces the general claim made in chapter three that it is inadequate to conceive of volunteering as a route to social capital and generalised trust.

Social trust and non-participation

The third aspect of social trust discussed here considers the way in which aspects of social trust and reciprocity could be seen to affect non-participant’s views regarding volunteering. The first set of respondents exhibited aspects of co-operation, reciprocity and social trust that operated a level below formal volunteering. In both localities there was evidence that community groups were unable to mobilise the ‘latent’ social capital that was exhibited in informal social networks.

In Royds four respondents who had positive perceptions of the locality had chosen to remain on the estate or to buy property in order to stay close to relatives and friends. These individuals all explained their decisions to stay in the area in terms of informal networks of help and coping.

‘I wanted to come back here to be close to my mum. She looks after the kids for me and I’ve got mates here that I’ve known for years. It was hard living in Heaton cos I didn’t know anyone so when this place came up to buy we decided to move back’ (R9, resident, Royds).

‘I really like living here - its not like they say it is. All me mates are here and my family and that. I couldn’t move away now.... everyone helps out with things you know - like the kids and that. We had a whole group of us in here decorating when we moved in. It was great - we wouldn’t have that anywhere else would we?’ (R6, resident, Royds).

In Manningham and Girdlington similar aspects of helping and reciprocity were found to occur within extended families, and around religious groupings among the Asian population. These were frequently referred to be respondents who were keen to stress the importance of family and informal activity in the area:

‘There is an awful lot of activity within the Asian community that’s not about Western European committee steered activity. There’s a lot of things structured through the family and the mosque - cooking vast meals for family celebrations, helping each other out and the caring between family members’ (Neil, committee member and local resident).

‘The groups are important but religion and caring in the family is also important. We’re different in our outlook in the respect of our families and our elderly people - we look after them in our own homes’ (Iqbal, paid worker).

'The mosques raise money for overseas aid - there's a lot of that kind of activity. And the women are clearly linked into networks of caring..the meals and cooking and celebrating festivals is all organised at another level (Shirley, committee member).

In the street survey Asian respondents were unanimously positive about the locality. The freedom of religious and cultural expression available in the area was highly prized. An Asian woman explained:

'I can go to the shops and buy native vegetables and we are close to the Mosque and our neighbours. If we moved away I would have to come back here for shopping and to see my family. We are happy here' (R2, resident, Manningham).

'When I got married we could have moved to a better area but than I would have had to come back to worship and my wife would have to come here to buy food. There's no point in moving away. We have everything we need here. And this is a view that most people have. You don't find many people moving out of the area at all' (Ajit, community worker and local resident).

These individuals were expressing an attachment to their locality in terms of social networks and reciprocity that could be interpreted as evidence of social capital. The respondents from Royds who fell into this category were also those who expressed interest in becoming more involved in volunteering.

'I'd like to do something with the kids. I was wondering about a rainbow group or brownies for the younger ones. I suppose if they went I could go along too... Its good to do something isn't it? Its just the kids that's the problem - I could only do something if they were there too' (R3, resident, Royds).

'I'm doing a leisure management course and it would be good to set something up. There's not much going on round here for people my age [19] so I'd definitely be interested if they started something' (R8, resident, Royds).

These respondents who are positive about their locality exhibited characteristics associated with social capital through informal networks and patterns of reciprocity. In Royds this was also found to be related to an interest in volunteering - although these expressions of interest were often qualified in terms of wanting someone else to set up the activity, or that they did not have time to get involved. Similarly, informal networks generated reciprocity and social trust among non-participants in Manningham and Girdlington, and although these residents did not express any particular interest in volunteering, they did express interest in using community centres and attending activities. Only two non-participant Asian respondents in Manningham and Girdlington said that they were not interested in any form of community group activity. Of the remainder, women were interested in cookery, sewing and English classes and men expressed interest in supplementary religious lessons for their children and employment training.

This suggests that there are levels of latent social capital operating in informal social networks that community groups are failing to mobilise. This finding is of interest in the context of the increasing amount of attention paid to the way in which informal activities underpin the development of more formal volunteering (Burns and Taylor, 1998; Cattell and Evans, 1999; Chanan, 1992), to the extent that Burns and Taylor (1998) have argued that it is through support for formal activity that informal, mutual aid activities can be nurtured. Thus, previous studies have begun to develop a model of a mutually beneficial relationship between mutual aid and informal coping strategies in deprived areas, and formal community group development and maintenance. This might be extended to include the benefits of social capital to hypothesise that the generation of social capital in one sector may assist in the nurturing of social capital in other spheres of social life. The evidence from this research suggests that this was not the case. Despite evidence of social capital in informal settings, community groups appeared unable to mobilise this to any great extent as the limited opportunities explored earlier revealed.

A second group of non-participant respondents presented the opposite extreme to those who were linked to local social networks. These residents had become increasingly socially isolated over time and felt disconnected from the social networks they had once been part of in the locality. In Manningham and Girdlington white residents reminisced about the past and their involvement in local social groups and community centres.

One was a keen dancer and had run dancing lessons and social nights in one of the community centres. He explained his withdrawal from volunteering as follows:

‘It all changed when the centre started doing stuff for the Asians. No-one wanted to go there anymore and a lot of people moved away so I packed it in. It’s a shame cos I think there’s some who’d like a night out now and then - but I wouldn’t do it at the centre now. Its all changed hasn’t it? Everything’s for them now’ (R2, resident, Girlington).

‘There’s nowt for us round here now is there. We’re the minority now and so everything’s done for the Asians... I got new neighbours a couple of weeks ago but they haven’t spoken to me and the other side works nights so... well let’s just say I don’t really get out much anymore’ (R3, resident, Girlington).

‘[This street] was the hub of the bub for the African Caribbeans at one time. It all went on round here - parties, street life, pubs and clubs. It was great when I was a kid. But now its all gone. No-one’s interested anymore. We used to do all sorts but we don’t know anyone anymore. Its all gone’ (R1, resident, Manningham).

Similar expressions of regret for a more active past were expressed by elderly residents in Royds. They remembered the estate as a place where they had been pleased and proud to live when it was first built and how their children had played together. These residents now felt isolated and removed from social networks on the estate:

R10, Royds: ‘We don’t get out much anymore. Don’s got a bad hip and I can’t walk far. It never used to be like that though did it?’

R11: ‘She’s not telling you the real bit - she’s has some trouble at the shops and the kids bother ‘er. We don’t *see* no-one anymore, we don’t *go* nowhere anymore...’

R10: ‘We can’t complain though - we’ve had a good life all in all’

In common with white residents in Manningham and Girdlington these elderly residents were socially isolated from many of the activities that were provided locally in community groups. The negative perceptions they had of their neighbours and other residents reinforced their sense of isolation. Any reciprocity or social trust they may have once had was gone.

Yet these were the kinds of disaffected views of the locality that proponents of social capital would like to see reversed. The different experiences of these residents suggests that social capital is not something that can be easily generated once it has been destroyed and that despite the best efforts of some people, there remain those for whom the present provides a painful memory of a once active and neighbourly past.

Thus, the basic idea that co-operation and reciprocity can be generated through voluntary activity is at odds with the evidence regarding people's withdrawal from active volunteering roles. The establishment of trust can generate insider networks that may explain the withdrawal of others from volunteering. Similarly, the changing environment in which people live can be seen to have affected long term residents of estates and inner city areas who feel increasingly shut off from the networks that once enhanced their social and personal lives. A lack of reciprocal trust was also seen to create imbalances within community groups that left some group leaders bereft of support and disillusioned with their voluntary activity. Yet there was also evidence that informal social networks were a form of support for some people who were more positive about the locality. These individuals were more interested in taking an active role in community groups - either as volunteers or as users. As non-participants, however, these individuals had so far remained outside any active roles. The evidence presented in the earlier discussion suggests that they may remain inactive given the limited opportunities open to residents in these localities to access volunteering through formal groups.

The final section in this chapter returns to the active roles that individuals played in community groups to consider some of the ways in which the benefits of social capital was differentially distributed.

SOCIAL BENEFITS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS - DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TYPES OF ACTIVITY

In so far as community groups in this study were providing services for local people they were demonstrating the productive aspects of social capital. Rochester (1998) calls these the 'public' benefits of community organisations such as: the improved provision of services and facilities; cultural and environmental improvements; reduction of anti-social behaviour; contribution to regeneration of local economy; and enabling excluded groups to play a greater role in social and public life. In addition, community groups can offer member benefits such as: personal education; social contact; personal development; information and advice; and access to services (Rochester, 1998).

That these positive aspects of volunteering and community group activity exist is not being questioned. Rather, it is the way in which social capital can be differentially distributed between different types of active roles that is of interest. In chapter three it was argued that social capital may remain 'locked' within particular sections of a population or associated with particular forms of volunteering which may provide clues regarding the potential for community groups to generate greater levels of this complicated resource. This final part of the discussion considers the evidence that access to social capital was differentially distributed across users, volunteers and committee members in community groups.

Social capital and users

Respondents in all the discussion groups with users of centres were positive about the activities they had undertaken and the opportunities to make new friends and extend their social networks.

At a volunteer-led luncheon club for elderly people, users were positive about the social opportunities that coming to the group had brought to them. These were framed in terms of reducing isolation and loneliness and meeting new friends. One respondent summed up the group discussion as follows:

'I think what we're all saying is that we like coming here. It can get lonely being in all day on your own and some of us don't have family around through the day. The older ones can get a hot meal and some company and that's good for us all in't it? Mabel is 91 and she still walks down here - so its exercise for 'er as well. We wouldn't come if we didn't like it' (R2, older person's discussion group A).

The Asian women attending English classes were enthusiastic about the opportunities that their lessons had brought them. Learning English had given them independence and confidence, as one woman explained:

'And it is good to have an interest. Before this class I could not speak any English and I was shy and have problem at hospital and .. problem with speaking English, you know, this times it is better now. It is good' (R7, Asian women discussion group).

The young men at the youth club were involved in a variety of activities which had led them to develop new skills and interests:

'I get a lot of work to do here with the projects that we're doing... We're working on our Keystone folders and we're doing a project at the Farm to design something... Its made me meet a lot more people in the youth organisation. Its given me confidence in many ways' (R1, young person's group A).

'I've made new friends being here. Before I was on my own or in the arcades but now there's always something to do. And its good being with your own people. There's less hassle' (R4, young person's group A).

These users exhibited the kinds of personal satisfaction and enjoyment of activities that reflect the productive aspects of social capital. However, the benefits that individuals derived from their involvement in these groups were negotiated by cultural, social and gendered norms.

In Manningham and Girdlington opportunities to access community groups was difficult for Asian women who could not attend mixed-sex groups:

‘In other centres I think they have mixed classes and we are not allowed to go to mixed classes. We are only allowed to go near to our house and with each other’ (R6, Asian women discussion group).

A father in Girdlington explained that he would not let the girls go to the youth club:

‘It is not for them to go there. We do things different to you and this would make my girls different so they do not go’ (R4, resident, Girdlington).

Cultural norms also left some Asian women without opportunities to attend community groups. The Asian women’s discussion group explained that some were not able to attend the classes because of their families as the following discussion revealed:

R3: ‘Because some people it depends on the family. Some in-laws they let you go right, some are nice people. But others...’

R6: ‘But some do not like them to go’

Interviewer: ‘Is that a problem?’

R5: ‘Yes..some are strict’

R3: ‘Mine are nice they say off you go, but some say you cannot go out and if she go they have fighting. So sometimes they cannot go’.

R4: ‘No we don’t have any problem. Thank God’

In the elderly luncheon clubs it was the apparent exclusivity of social networks that had developed around the groups that put some people off being involved (see above).

Thus, the non-use of centres was not necessarily related to a lack of interest or apathy on the part of individuals, but was evidence of wider social and cultural practices that deterred some people from being involved.

Whilst the productive aspects of community group activity were demonstrated by users, there was less evidence of user involvement in decision-making exhibited by the groups. Campbell *et al.* (1999) have argued that the provision of services by community-based organisations is not sufficient for the development of social capital and that more attention should be paid to the ways in which users and volunteers are involved in decision-making. In both localities in this study, users derived benefits from social capital based on use of services, but were not necessarily active in decision-making. Access to committees by users was difficult given the recruitment methods and opportunities that have been described above. These characteristics suggest that there are three ways in which users are limited in accessing more active roles.

First, management committee recruitment practices have been shown to deter those who are not already known to committee members and to seek skilled individuals who can strengthen committees through human capital resources. Second, as we have already seen, users of groups employing paid workers were unlikely to be presented with many opportunities to volunteer, thereby further limiting opportunities for direct involvement in decision-making. Third, few users attended AGMs and therefore did not take up the opportunity to vote for changes in the group's management. The lack of interest shown by users in AGMs and committee membership was commented on by some committee members as evidence that people were simply not interested in the way organisation's were run, or by whom, as long as the services continued to be provided as the following quotations reveal:

'I suspect that most people see it as service provision and are not aware that it is a community provider' (Neil, committee member).

'They want more things to happen but they don't want to do anything about it. People don't want to give' (Judy, committee member).

'The more we do for them, the more they expect and they say the workers should do it and that if you're a volunteer you should be paid' (Wendy, committee member).

'Well they never want to be involved in the preparation of the food, but when the food is ready they are all willing to eat and are prepared to decide how much they should have' (Terrence, committee member).

These views were expressed by people in organisations that employed paid workers. There was a tension between the direct service providing role that these organisations adopted and the drive for more active participation on the part of users. On the one hand, direct service provision reinforced the passive recipient status of users, while on the other this passivity and apathy on the part of users was used by paid workers and committee members to explain why people did not want to be more actively involved in running groups.

In volunteer-led groups, these distinctions did not occur. Opportunities for individuals to be more actively involved in running groups were greater - although this did not necessarily mean that people took up the challenge and the perceived apathy of other members has already been shown to have made some organisations difficult to run long term (see above).

In terms of social capital, users revealed contradictory positions. Individuals derived benefits from attending groups that were potentially contributing to a growth in human and social capital resources. Yet the availability of more formalised volunteering opportunities remained limited. The service-delivery bias in some organisations meant that users were defined as 'passive' and a self-fulfilling cycle of non-involvement had developed in groups where volunteer management committees continued to benefit from the social networks that occurred around their active involvement, whilst users were blamed for their apparent dis-interest in being more actively involved.

Volunteers and social capital

Most studies of volunteering have highlighted the way in which individuals benefit from involvement. There is a potentially vast amount of literature that has sought to understand and explore the individual benefits of volunteering from those that have focussed on motivations for volunteering (Thomas and Finch, 1990); volunteering and empowerment for women (Bagilhole, 1996; Graham, 1983); or the role of volunteering amongst unemployed people (MacDonald, 1996).

The issue that unites these studies is the emphasis they accord to the development of 'human capital' through volunteering. Thus, volunteers are seen to develop social skills, confidence and work experience that can help them individually. Coleman (1988) refers to these aspects of social capital as 'private benefits'. The interviews with active volunteers in this research revealed similarities in terms of the development of 'careers' in volunteering that suggested individuals were gaining valuable personal skills and human capital resources. In most cases these individuals had continued as volunteers in active roles and had progressed from 'helpers' to committee members and even paid workers in community groups. Accessing volunteering opportunities was therefore a route to the development of human capital resources that could be utilised by community groups in decision-making structures.

'Its got to go down as experience for me really, cos I haven't worked for years...when I feel confident - I did actually go for a job at the council I felt so confident a few months back ...that's why I do it - to get confidence and to get a job' (Veronica, resident director).

'In 1996 my life changed cos what I learned was that once you get involved in one voluntary group you get to meet the others and you all help each other out....So I went to learn to be a cycling proficiency teacher and just met loads of people.. and that kind of snowballed into youth work and community work and courses and training courses in typing and English. I've just completed a counselling course and I absolutely love it. I'm not the same person anymore, I'm more confident, I can talk to anyone - it really changed my life' (R5, resident, Royds).

'I was out of work when [she] phoned me. We set up a group for unemployed men and she asked me to join this survey of people in the area. So I did and from then [the group] was formed and I got on the committee and I ended up as chair. I'm employed by [the group] now as a co-ordinator....At the beginning I found it awe inspiring and I never thought I could do anything like that - but I have done. I've really enjoyed it and I've learned a lot' (Arthur, paid worker).

These individuals had all discovered the private benefits of volunteering through their involvement. It was not the case that organisations 'sold' volunteering to people as a means of developing these human capital resources. In fact, only three paid workers (two in Royds and one in Gillington) identified the development of human capital as an objective in the use of volunteers. One paid worker explained his role in assisting residents to contribute to a more vibrant community sector:

'Training is about developing skills and knowledge in a hands on way. It's anything that enables people to run activities for themselves. My job is to help people achieve that and let them get on with it' (Steve, paid worker).

Only one of the groups described any formal management of volunteers. In this organisation, the human capital generated by volunteering was well recognised and encouraged. In common with many studies of the voluntary sector, this respondent identified the importance of volunteering as a route to labour market participation and further education:

'We become victims of our own success. We encourage volunteers so much that they gain confidence and want to do other things - college courses and so forth - and we lose them..... Its worth emphasising that our volunteers come in with little or no skills and have actually been given the skills to go on and do other things' (Andrew, paid worker).

The development of human capital resources did occur amongst volunteers, but this was not widely perceived as an objective by paid workers and access to these opportunities remained limited.

However, the development of human capital resources through volunteering did offer some volunteers the opportunity to become more involved in group decision-making as they were invited to become management committee members. Seven of the volunteers interviewed had progressed from occasional volunteering along a career path that led to formal management committee involvement, and even paid work. There were many examples of this career style journey from volunteering to paid work given in interviews with volunteers. Andrew's story is representative of many others:

'I started here as a volunteer - I was made redundant at the bakery where I worked and came here for something to do; decided that I liked it and I wanted to do this job full time and have a complete change of direction. My children were all grown up and didn't need me around as much. Volunteering here gave me confidence and I started a course at 48 years old in health and social care. I came back here afterwards when the lady before me went on maternity leave and never came back. I've been through it myself - being the shy volunteer on the first day and that helps you to understand how people feel... Now I sit on a few committees locally' (Andrew, paid worker).

Volunteers in community groups could develop the kinds of human capital resources that led them to access more formal decision-making structures in community groups. In these examples, the social and human capital resources in community groups were being used in mutually reinforcing ways so that the human capital developed in volunteering was contributing to the overall social capital within the group as volunteers moved into decision-making positions. In contrast to the passive role of users in relation to decision-making, volunteers adopted more pro-active positions. The differences between the skills developed by users and those developed by volunteers were related to their knowledge of the community and voluntary sector.

Users were developing human capital resources that were related to personal development. Volunteers were combining these personal development skills with an increasing knowledge about the way that community groups worked - a quality that management committees were keen to attract as the final part of this discussion shows.

Committee members and social capital

Active committee members developed social capital through social networks derived from committee membership. It was argued in part one that the mechanisms for recruitment to management committees deterred people from becoming involved unless they were already known to existing members. This manifested itself differently according to type of group however, particularly in Manningham and Girdlington where black groups were more likely to find it easier to recruit black committee members than white organisations. Fearnley and McInroy (1999) similarly found that groups associated with ethnic minorities had higher levels of representation by ethnic minorities on their committees. This study found that Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups did not perceive themselves as unrepresentative and were pragmatic about the way that their management committees functioned. Thus, black people were more likely to be management committee members in black groups.

‘We have Asian and white committee members. It is not a problem. The important thing is getting the right people for the job’ (Seema, committee member).

‘Our committee is all Bangladeshi’s. We have a female and young people involved’ (Laila, paid worker).

‘You can see from the report [the organisation’s annual report] that we have a good mixture of people on the committee. There are Asian business people involved and some female members’ (Simon, paid worker).

Another organisation was more directly pragmatic in terms of its ability to recruit more ethnic minorities to its committee. The chairperson said:

‘For this management committee I’ve been recruiting people personally. More professionals and people who know what’s involved before they come along. They know it will involve weekends and that. We’re achieving more that way’ (Terrence, committee member).

In contrast, organisations established by white professionals and activists were more concerned that their committees should 'represent' all sections of the population - and frequently this meant seeking greater involvement by Asian people.

'We are still trying to achieve [representativeness] and we could be better'
(Neil, committee member).

'One of the things we have problems with on management committees is getting Asian members to turn up and be involved' (Paul, committee member).

This does not sit easily with evidence from race specific organisations who managed to recruit and retain Asian volunteers. It has already been shown that methods of recruitment and selection of volunteer management committees can operate around exclusive networks that rely upon word of mouth and reputation. It is also accepted that recruitment methods of this sort can create homogeneity amongst volunteers so the lack of Asian volunteers in white-led organisations should not be a surprise. Evidence also suggests that Asian volunteers prefer to volunteer in groups run by and for ethnic minorities (Bhasin, 1997).

The gendered dimension of management committee volunteering was an issue raised by all kinds of organisations in Manningham and Girdlington. The involvement of Bangladeshi and Pakistani women in male dominated settings is difficult for many given the cultural mores surrounding female participation in male activities. Consequently, women are unlikely to join committees where men meet and so female representation is generally poor outside 'women-only' groups. One organisation had sought to improve female representation after the council criticised the male domination of the committee by setting up a female-only subgroup that reported into the main committee. In another organisation the single female committee member was described as a 'token effort' by the female paid workers. Thus, opportunities for Asian women to access volunteer management committees is limited both in terms of cultural mores and the recruitment mechanisms that limit opportunities.

Social capital generated through management committee membership in Manningham and Girdlington was consequently differentially distributed around ethnicity and gender. The cause of this differential distribution was multiple and related to cultural mores, organisational features that limited opportunities to those already known to be active, and preferences of some ethnic minority groups to volunteer for particular kinds of organisations.

The second aspect of differential distribution of social capital in management committees related to the skills base that many groups sought to develop. In doing so, management committees were seeking to draw on existing human capital to strengthen the committee. Evidence of this practice came from existing management committee members who understood that the reasons they had been invited to stand for election was because they had some skill to offer:

‘I’m a maths teacher and so people inevitably think you’ll be a good treasurer. Over the years I’ve been asked to stand on loads of committees so now I suppose I have particular skills that are in demand’ (Christine, committee member).

‘I worked in accounts and so they asked me to be treasurer until X came back after her baby was born. Fifteen years on and I’m still here!’ (Judy, committee member).

Half the respondents had been asked to participate because it was recognised that they had some kind of skill that was needed. These included accounting, legal and secretarial skills. In Manningham and Girdlington it was not therefore surprising to find a number of committees dominated by white professionals or semi-professionals (see also Fearnley and McInroy, 1999). In Manningham and Girdlington the non-white population is less likely to have the kinds of skills that committees are seeking. The problem was summed up by one respondent who said:

‘There is still a tendency in Manningham for the largely white professionals to take over. Partly because it is easier for white professionals to operate than it is for Pakistanis to do so and also because it is hard to work with people who have been disenfranchised for the greater part of their lives’ (Robert, committee member).

Opportunities to volunteer in management committees was consequently related to levels of human capital. The patterns of recruitment adopted by management committees to fill gaps in expertise have been criticised as ‘inappropriate and misguided’ (Gann, 1996) where it is argued that few of these skills - accountant/treasurer; solicitor/legal advisor - are transferable between sectors.

A second reason why individuals were asked to join committees related to their knowledge of the community sector. This was particularly the case for ‘career’ volunteers whose knowledge and expertise in relation to the voluntary and community sector were highly prized:

‘We need people like Sheila around here. She knows so much about the groups and she’s been volunteering for years. Someone like that would be great to have on your committee cos she can give you information and help the others out’ (Steve, paid worker).

‘It was obvious that Kim should be a committee member. He’s been around forever - and he knows all the workings of the group and the history and that. Mind he took some persuading before he said yes. Its crazy having people like that with all that knowledge and not using it’ (Paul, committee member).

‘I s’pose I’m known round here as someone who gets things done. And once you’ve got that kind of reputation people want you to be involved in their group and so it goes on. Its not that I can do anything in particular - I just know a lot about this place and the people’ (Marie, committee member).

Thus, the ways in which management committees utilised human capital resources to strengthen their membership contrasted with the way that the organisation's activities were perceived as a means of developing human capital in individuals.

The differential aspects of social capital in relation to active participants can be seen to operate in a number of ways. First, users reflect most clearly the productive aspects of social capital through the benefits they derive from joining groups and attending activities. Indirectly community groups are contributing to an overall generation of human capital through users, but they seemed less likely to seek ways to mobilise this to benefit the group. In some cases the reverse was true as service-providing organisations maintained a perception of users as passive and dis-interested which further separated the 'active' from the 'passive' roles in community group participation.

The personal histories of the volunteers showed how the benefits of volunteering were more likely to be translated into active decision-making roles in community groups. Groups were better at mobilising the human capital generated through volunteering, but remained relatively inactive in terms of strategies to develop and extend opportunities for more people to participate in voluntary activity. Finally, the example of active committee members in non-white and white groups revealed the complex way in which cultural differences could underpin differential access to the benefits of social capital and how committees were more likely to draw on pre-existing human capital resources to encourage more members.

SUMMARY DISCUSSION

This discussion has sought to unravel three aspects of the concept of social capital as these were found to relate to voluntary participation in community groups. The picture that emerges is complex and contradictory, perhaps reflecting some of the continuing lack of understanding regarding how social capital might be generated or maintained. It has been argued that low levels of volunteering could be explained in terms of limited opportunities, rather than in terms of individual apathy or a lack of generalised trust associated with poverty and social exclusion. Subsequently, the analysis suggested that the relationship between 'trust' and the generation of social capital was differentially manifested across organisational forms, with high levels of internal trust creating core insider groups that could deter others from more active participation.

In organisations run by volunteers, it was the perceived lack of reciprocal trust between leaders and members that left the former feeling disillusioned and over-burdened. In part three it was argued that even within active community group roles, social capital could be differentially manifested, further drawing attention to the need for caution in associating all forms of volunteering with the generation of productive social capital.

Community groups were clearly demonstrating the potential benefits associated with social capital. Users and volunteers stressed the positive outcomes of their participation in community activities. The activities of committee members in organising, fundraising and developing services through which these individuals could access such benefits were also demonstrating the productive aspects of social capital. Yet these active residents were in a minority and there remained significant barriers to increasing volunteering in both localities.

Overall, a view emerges of a community sector that has developed around established social networks and the necessary drawing in of human capital resources to strengthen management committees and give groups access to services they might not otherwise be able to afford. The development of volunteering in groups has led to the generation of new forms of human capital around knowledge of the local community sector, and offer another resource that community groups can draw on to support decision-making structures. In volunteer-led groups, the dominance of limited numbers of social networks acting as a source for the recruitment of new members is similarly of concern if this is evidence that community groups are generating social capital for a minority of well-connected individuals.

Of particular concern are those aspects of non-participation considered in the preceding discussion which draw attention to the way in which the apathy and lack of community interest described by active community group participants is at odds with the complex ways in which some residents were excluded from opportunities to volunteer. These non-participant residents showed how the generation and decline of social capital can occur simultaneously within the same locality. Thus, it is inadequate to conceive of places with a vibrant community sector as necessarily generating widespread social capital.

The first group of non-participant residents had experience of volunteering and consequently human capital resources to offer local groups. For these individuals, it was a lack of social networks that limited their ability to participate. Given the way in which these people were used to active roles and had volunteered in the past, it is likely that they will find opportunities to become more actively involved relatively easily. The failure of community groups to reach these residents so far is testament to the limited social networks that most groups used to draw in new members and volunteers.

A second group of non-participants revealed the way in which some established residents had developed informal social networks that gave them a greater sense of belonging and capacity to cope with day-to-day problems. Once again, it was the failure of community groups to engage these individuals in any formal volunteering rather than evidence of any apathy on their part that explained this inactivity.

A third group of non-participants are of more concern in terms of debates regarding the widespread benefits of social capital. These individuals were particularly isolated from social networks, social trust and any of the benefits that greater involvement may have offered. This isolation was compounded by a long term residency in an area that they no longer wanted to live. The withdrawal from social life, negative perceptions of the area, and an unwillingness to consider any possible benefits that more active involvement could bring them placed these individuals at the furthest point from any social capital generating activities of any residents. These individuals are of concern because they revealed the extent of the 'social capital gap' that had developed in both localities between the most active residents and sections of the population and the most excluded residents.

The evidence from the non-participants suggested that it is necessary for research to consider more carefully whether the active/inactive distinction that is most frequently made in relation to volunteering is adequate for examining access to social capital. Furthermore, even within the active category, the preceding discussion has shown that access to social capital generating activities can be differentially distributed both within and between community groups.

Consequently, it can be argued that concentrating on formal volunteering as a route to generating social capital in deprived areas risks reinforcing patterns of exclusion that are currently operating to limit widespread opportunities for active participation. The social benefits offered by community groups are clearly demonstrated, but so too is the unequal distribution of these across the population. The risk is that those who remain actively involved will be able to generate greater levels of social and human capital, thereby increasing the distance between the involved and the dispossessed.

This distance between those involved and not involved can also characterise relations between community groups. Chapter seven explores how community groups work together and the implications of partnership working for local community sectors.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONS: EXPLORING NEW LOCAL GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION

This third and final stage of the analysis concentrates on the way in which community groups work together in localities and the consequences of this for the role that community groups can play in new local governance. It was argued in the opening chapters that community groups are increasingly drawn into the kinds of partnership working embraced by new local governance mechanisms, and in chapter three theories of inter-organisational relations (IORs) suggested there may be some negative outcomes for community groups involved in partnership working.

New local governance rests upon an assumption that inter-organisational working can create layers of inter-locking bodies that can enhance the flow of information and resources vertically in order to create better delivery and implementation of social policy (see for example Carley *et al.*, 2000; Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Maclellan, 2000). Underpinning the drive for partnerships and inter-agency working is an economic and political shift away from the notion of central government as the dominant source of solutions to social problems. Increasingly this has led to calls for localities to be given greater freedom to manage resources and be involved in decision-making as a route to greater prosperity (Carley *et al.*, 2000; Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Taylor, 2000a). These ideas are increasingly influencing regeneration policy through the development of elaborate structures linking the neighbourhood to central government.

The regeneration of deprived areas now rests upon a complex series of IORs involving public, private, voluntary and community bodies. At the level of the locality it is widely held that locally organised activity provides the most promising basis for the development of local governance structures in order to build capacity within neighbourhoods and contribute to neighbourhood renewal (Gilchrist and Taylor, 1997; Skelcher *et al.*, 1996; Taylor, 2000a).

Some have gone so far as to suggest that participation in the process of decision-making might be the main opportunity for community organisations in the future, rather than providing services (Bemrose and MacKeith, 1996).

The evidence from this study shows that IORs between community groups does not necessarily create the conditions under which neighbourhood management can flourish, and that the development of umbrella bodies does not necessarily create conditions under which community organisations can work together. In the main, this is because organisations strive for independence and autonomy that IORs can undermine as highlighted in chapter three.

Most organisations were found to work together in order to exchange resources. Others chose not to be involved in any of these relationships. The evidence also pointed to the way that groups could be excluded from inter-organisational working by the development of focal organisations that can monopolise networks and resources. Many of these findings are corroborated by evidence from other studies that have looked at particular aspects of inter-organisational working - most commonly inter-agency partnership working. There is less evidence of the way in which inter-organisational working between community groups both affects, and is affected by, the development of these partnerships in a locality.

The following discussion draws on theories of IORs that were introduced in chapter three. The discussion is separated into two parts. First, the analysis draws attention to the kinds of IORs that were found to exist in the two case study areas and how 'focal organisations' operated. Second, the discussion explores the way in which the norms of working associated with partnerships could be seen to affect community groups in the two localities.

INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

There is little existing research evidence regarding the kinds of IORs that develop between community groups in localities. This research provides some exploratory examples of the kinds of resource exchanges that were taking place between the groups in each locality. Consequently it reinforces the assumption that there are a series of pre-existing networks within localities that can provide the basis for more formalised partnerships to emerge.

However, resource dependency theory draws attention to the way in which some organisations operating at the centre of resource exchange networks are more likely to access local coalitions and partnerships. The following analysis considers the relevance of these ideas in order to raise questions about the assumptions regarding the involvement of community groups in new local governance mechanisms and partnerships.

In seeking to identify focal organisations, the analysis begins by exploring the kinds of IORs that were found to occur in the two case study areas. As predicted by the literature, there was evidence of both voluntary and mandatory IORs in both places. A third 'quasi-mandatory' form of IORs was also identified which provides some evidence of the increasing importance the concept of partnership holds within the community sector.

Voluntary inter-organisational relations

The data revealed a high degree of inter-organisational working between community groups in both case study areas. In Manningham and Girdlington of the 32 organisations included in the survey, only 6 reported that they had no links with other organisations locally. All of these were small resident associations in single streets. In Royds only one organisation failed to identify any formal links with other groups. This had received funding from the regeneration partnership but was otherwise a self-contained service provider.

These groups were working together to exchange resources. There were three kinds of resource exchanges mentioned by groups that gave them opportunities to extend provision, to secure resources the group could not otherwise access, or to share skills and information (see also Deacon and Golding, 1991; Mordaunt, 1992; Wilson, 1996).

Table 7.1 (overleaf) shows the number of organisations mentioning these types of exchange in interviews. This gives an indication of the prevalence of resource exchange between community groups. It also indicates some differences between the two localities that are explored below.

Table 7.1**Types of resource exchanges mentioned by community groups¹⁰**

Type of resource exchange	Manningham and Girlington	Royds
Joint funding applications	14	4
Sharing information and skills	22	18
Extending provision through joint projects	15	9
Sharing premises and facilities	14	13

These voluntary IORs did not occur in *ad hoc* ways across the localities, rather they were constructed around spatial areas and interest groups. In Royds the spatial aspects of inter-organisational working were dominated by estate boundaries. In Manningham and Girlington the spatial configuration was more complex, but clusters of inter-organisational working had developed around four main geographical areas.

Voluntary IORs had also developed around particular user groups. In Manningham and Girlington organisations providing services to women had developed IORs to extend provision. In Royds groups providing services to elderly residents also worked together to offer day trips and special events. In both areas, youth centres worked together to run joint activities and organised trips. These IORs allowed centres to avoid duplication, and some saw it as a way of breaking down enmity between groups of young people. These clustered activities were the basis for information exchange and the development of activities that individual organisations may not have felt worthwhile to develop on their own. They reflect Wilson's (1996) view that organisations develop co-operation in order to develop a greater scale of operation and to secure economies of scale in activities.

¹⁰ Organisations could be involved in more than one type of resource exchange and hence these numbers are indicative of the relative prevalence of types of exchange and not how many groups were involved in each type.

In addition to voluntary IORs, groups were also drawn into 'quasi-mandatory' IORs based on the increasing awareness by groups that unless they provide evidence of joint working in funding bids, they are unlikely to be successful. These quasi-mandatory IORs differed from voluntary relations in that the former were used to access funding from outside the locality rather than sharing resources that already existed.

Groups themselves were differentiating between links they had developed voluntarily and those they felt they had to enter into, as Marie explained:

'Well of course we have those links with groups that have always been there through our workers and users and now we have to work with some groups to get money [funding].... I'm not sure we would have done this unless we had to - you can't really tell. But we didn't have such close ties with them before this' (Marie, committee member).

The development of quasi-mandatory IORs was more widespread in Manningham and Girdlington than in Royds. Only four organisations in Royds identified the importance of joint working to secure funds compared with fourteen in Manningham and Girdlington. In part these differences can be explained with reference to the greater number of multi-purpose organisations in Manningham and Girdlington that developed flexible funding arrangements (see chapter five).

In Royds, however, community groups had been afforded a degree of security from the competitive funding market through the availability of a 'Community Chest' fund administered by the RCA which enabled small single purpose groups to access funding. It might be argued that the protection offered by the Community Chest funding was also contributing to a degree of dependency on the RCA as a funding source that meant that community groups in Royds were not developing the kinds of joint-working arrangements that were increasingly common in Manningham and Girdlington. It might be argued that the voluntary IORs that organisations have relied on in the past are likely to become more formalised in the future as groups draw on these to develop joint funding bids. The evidence from the Royds community groups suggests that they are vulnerable in the long term if they fail to develop competitive funding skills.

Mandatory inter-organisational relations

In both case study areas the regeneration partnership was a mandatory form of inter-organisational working. In both localities, relations between community groups and the regeneration partnerships were dominated by resource procurement issues. There were three manifestations of this found to occur.

First, in common with many similar area based partnerships (Mayo, 1997) both partnerships were formed to secure resources for the locality through competitive bidding to central government. Both partnerships had extended IORs in the aftermath of failed bids. In the inner city area the original bid had only included Manningham. Girlington representatives subsequently joined the partnership in order to access SRB monies, whilst the Manningham representatives could use Girlington to bolster their overall bid. In Royds unsuccessful bids by individual estates led to the development of IORs across the estates, and the formation of the RCA, to access regeneration funds.

Second, community groups perceived the partnership as a source of funds. Nineteen organisations in Manningham and Girlington said they would, or already had, applied to the SRB for funding. In Royds every organisation interviewed had received funding from the RCA in the previous four years, and accounts from the RCA confirmed that every organisation on the three estates had received some monies since the RCA was established. There was clearly potential for resource dependency to enter into the relationship between community groups and the partnership boards. However, in these case studies, resource dependency was not creating power imbalances between community groups and partnership boards in a homogenous fashion. Levels of dependency on regeneration partnership funding depended on the capacity of organisations to access other sources of funding.

In Royds some organisations were in receipt of external funding. These were all groups that pre-dated the establishment of the RCA and who were clear about the way that the RCA should be supporting local activity rather than seeking to control it as the following quotation reveals:

'I think what Royds needs to remember is that we were here doing all this work before Royds came onto the scene and we're hopefully going to be here when the Royds is finished and in order to do that we will need Royds support to give us that push into the future' (Andrew, paid worker).

In Manningham and Girdlington there was less dependency on the regeneration partnership and most groups saw this as a source of additional funding rather than one that they would rely on as a sole funder.

Third, there was evidence that conflict relating to the allocation of resources by the partnership occurred between partnership board members and between the board and community groups. Mayo (1997) found that the availability of small grants through the regeneration programme led to conflict between organisations over their allocation and that some organisations felt they had wasted time on developing applications that were for inadequate sums of money. In Manningham and Girdlington the latter was certainly true for those who had already applied for funds. The funding process was seen to be complicated and overly bureaucratic given the relatively small amounts on offer. There was also some frustration in Manningham and Girdlington that the amounts of money available for community groups would either be small or non-existent because many of the major funding decisions had already been made, as the following quotations reveal:

'My understanding is that of the £9.7 million, £9.3 million has already been given away in promises' (Terrence, committee member).

'These pots of money just go round in a circle - they get passed from one government agency to another and the majority of it will never get to the likes of us' (Neil, committee member).

'The TEC has been given a large chunk of the money already... and they don't have to work with voluntary groups if they don't want to. So it's a problem' (Idrees, committee member).

The way in which the partnership boards operated as a source of locally managed funding for community groups may have implications for the development of new local governance mechanisms that embrace locally managed resources. On a positive note, locally managed resources can provide an important source of funding for groups that might not otherwise be able to access funds. More negatively however, the dependency that Royds groups had on the RCA for funding also creates power imbalances that were not evident in the voluntary IORs. The capacity to fund independently gave the RCA a source of power over local groups reminiscent of the kinds of power that have been discussed in relation to resources in regeneration partnerships more widely. This means that in negotiations or sub-groups involving RCA and community organisations, it is the former that potentially holds power as the primary source of funding. As organisations locally have become increasingly unused to applying for external funding without the help of RCA, the resource dependency that has developed between RCA and local community groups is likely to become even more entrenched.

Thus, locally managed resources can be a positive influence on the development of diverse services. But the power imbalances that can result from one organisation having control over resource issues is a warning to those who would hand over resources to any single local body, unless organisations can retain the independence and autonomy to access their own funding separately from the management body.

Inter-organisational relations and organisational independence

Whilst the inter-organisational literature points to the importance of establishing resource-exchange relations, it is also underpinned by a basic premise that organisations prefer to remain independent and autonomous. It is this drive for autonomy that has been identified as a major barrier to inter-agency working, for example in social services (Hudson, 1993).

The community groups in this study were no less keen to retain their independence regardless of inter-organisational working. Of the 18 organisations that identified the need for partnership to procure external resources, 15 also mentioned their desire to remain independent. Frequently this was expressed in terms of organisational 'identity' or working together yet remaining 'separate' from other groups.

In addition, most groups involved in IORs felt that they had a choice regarding whether or not to remain involved in the exchange - even if these had been running for several years:

‘We always have a choice - it wouldn’t be right if we felt forced to hire the rooms or run the group from up there. At the end of the day we could close down tomorrow if we need to - if people stopped coming or we couldn’t afford to hire it [the room]’ (Andrew, paid worker).

Thus, the majority of organisations did not perceive IORs as permanent or restrictive. As Wilson (1996) points out, co-operation can create efficient use of resources but does not have to impair flexibility because ‘co-operation is not for life’ (Wilson, 1996:89).

These different types of inter-organisational working between community groups reflect the resource dependency literature’s main assumption that organisations will work together where necessary to procure resources but that they prefer to be independent and autonomous. Analysing the kinds of IORs that have developed in the two case study areas also draws attention to the way in which community groups are affected by institutional norms - such as partnership working - that can have both positive and negative consequences. Here it is important to note that the procurement of resources is a major part of day-to-day work for community groups. Generally speaking they are highly dependent on external funding for their survival, yet this dependency can also create opportunities for some to remain independent of regeneration partnerships.

This study also sought to identify how far IORs between community groups could affect the likelihood of some organisations becoming more centrally involved in local partnerships than others. This is the subject of the next part of this discussion.

FOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND INTER-ORGANISATIONAL LEADERS

In chapter three, resource dependency theory was used to show how ‘focal organisations’ and inter-organisational leaders who were central to resource-exchange networks were more likely to be involved in partnership working. This theory is partly supported by evidence that it is ‘the usual suspects’ that are most likely to be involved in local regeneration partnerships (Russell *et al.*; 1996; Taylor, 1997), and by studies that show how local umbrella organisations can provide external agencies with an easy route into the local community sector (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; McArthur, 1995). The ‘usual suspects’ and easily identifiable umbrella organisations might be conceptualised as ‘inter-organisational leaders’ or ‘focal organisations’ in terms of inter-organisational theory.

Whilst there is evidence that these processes do occur in localities, this study was interested in identifying how focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders might develop in relation to strategies for new local governance. Focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders were identified in both case-study areas, although their involvement in local coalitions and partnership boards was not the linear process that has been identified in either the inter-organisational literature or regeneration research.

Focal organisations and regeneration partnerships.

The resource dependency literature defines focal organisations as those that sit at the centre of resource networks. Two criteria were applied to the data collected in this study to identify focal organisations. First, focal organisations had to show evidence of multiple IORs with others including a range of types of relations. Second, focal organisations had to be widely known in the locality. This was determined by the number of times a group or individual was mentioned in interviews or documents. There was also a sense of perceived influence around the organisations that emerged as ‘focal’. This emanated from both within the organisations themselves and from other interviews. Given that the literature argues that focal organisations are associated with perceived influence this validated the identification of the four focal organisations in this study.

Two focal organisations were identified in Royds. Estates Advice Services Group¹¹ (EASG) operated at the centre of a web of IORs across one of the estates. The community development worker was instrumental in maintaining these relations and with developing new projects. Action For Residents (AFR) was based on another estate and saw itself as an ‘umbrella’ group for activities taking place estate-wide. These activities were spread through various buildings on the estate although AFR also had its own building where it ran specific services. On the third estate, there was no evidence of a focal organisation *per se*, although the community centre acted as a central resource for groups that wanted somewhere to meet. The residents association had performed a focal role in the past, but because the centre was owned by RCA its role was less clear at the time fieldwork occurred.

Similarly, there were two focal organisations operating in Manningham and Girdlington. For Young People (FYP) is a youth-based organisation in Manningham. Over time, the group had been responsible for the development of at least six other organisations that operated locally. These developments gave FYP a unique position at the centre of a web of IORs that spread through the area and increasingly across the city. The leader of FYP was particularly influential - although this influence was perceived negatively by many of those outside the network of groups most closely associated with FYP. Together For Girdlington (TFG) had been established through Task Force money and was based in Girdlington. Over time the organisation had been responsible for the establishment of a diverse range of projects and was perceived by many as a key local organisation. Again, the leader of this group was perceived to be influential by many other organisations. Neither organisation held a monopoly over provision in either area. Organisations with whom they had established links over time were not likely to see themselves as ‘dependent’ upon TFG or FYP yet without these organisations operating in complex networks, many groups would have found future developments more difficult. The centre of Manningham lacked a focal organisation. Although there were large multi-purpose organisations operating here, none exhibited the breadth of networks that the focal organisations were able to do.

¹¹ The names of the organisations have been changed.

The key difference between focal organisations and other groups was the nature of IORs that they had developed. The basis for these exchanges was multiple and reflected historical, cultural and paternal aspects of development. These organisations had similar management structures and provided services in similar ways to other groups. However, they differed in terms of their values and purposes, seeing themselves as enablers of new and multiple projects, as the following quotes from the four focal organisations reveal:

‘I’ve always made links and tried to use those links to put people in touch with one another. And that’s the best thing that [we have] done - to stick with it and be flexible and be able to move to where we are needed... we’ve always tried to encourage people into partnership and most of our projects are done in co-operation with others’ (Shirley, committee member).

‘The best thing is to develop projects - together, to do it together and to then let people go on and develop their own things. I’ve given you six so far, six things that we have done from here that are Bradford wide.... We have always developed new projects and we have not done work that anyone else has done cos we don’t believe in duplication’ (Iqbal, paid worker).

‘It’s important to let people get on with it. I can help them to get the skills they need to go off and do their own thing. Not run everything from here, but keep links out into the estate so people feel they’ve got our support’ (Steve, paid worker).

‘We’ve started lots of things from here and so its nice to look back and know that [we have] given people a chance to get things.. like the playgroup.. that wouldn’t have been here otherwise’ (Judy, committee member).

Focal organisations were not found to be as clearly involved in regeneration partnerships as might be expected given the inter-organisational theory’s emphasis on the role of these in local coalitions, and regeneration research that has identified the key role played by the ‘usual suspects’ and local umbrella forums.

In both localities focal organisations had been instrumental in the development of the successful SRB bids. In Royds, the two focal organisations had played a central role in the development of the RCA, whilst in Manningham and Girlington the focal organisations had been part of a small group of individuals that had eventually been co-opted to the Manningham and Girlington SRB Partnership as ‘community representatives’.

Thus, in the early stages of the regeneration bid preparation focal organisations were central. However, when the fieldwork took place for this study, there was evidence that focal organisations in Royds had become estranged from the RCA over time, although in Manningham and Girlington they remained directly involved.

Two explanations can be offered for these different relationships between focal organisations and the regeneration partnerships. First, that over time focal organisations have felt overburdened with involvement with the RCA board and that the current lack of direct involvement reflects individual ‘burn-out’ (see for example Taylor, 2000b). While this was certainly a feature of experience for some resident directors, none of the focal organisations suggested that they had suffered from this. Instead, focal organisations tended to be critical of the RCA and the way that it was currently being managed. One of the groups said:

‘I try to keep my distance from Royds. We are totally independent from them and are working on our own projects’ (Steve, paid worker).

In all the interviews with staff and committee members of these focal organisations criticisms of the RCA were common. They all shared a desire to remain separate from the RCA and tended to be critical of the way that the RCA was able to control resources and access to funding. The degrees of resource dependency and potential power imbalances that result from the strategic position of the RCA makes it feasible that focal organisations have sought to remove themselves from direct involvement in order to maintain organisational independence and autonomy.

In Manningham and Girdlington the regeneration partnership was not a focal organisation for community groups in the locality. Community groups were not dependent upon the partnership for resources beyond specific applications related to the programme, and the partnership had no 'capital' funds available to develop community centres or community enterprises in the way that the RCA had been able to do. Thus, in contrast to focal organisations in Royds, the Manningham and Girdlington groups could maintain their organisational independence and have direct involvement with the board. It could be argued that this was because the partnership was not in competition with focal organisations and nor could the Manningham and Girdlington partnership board exert overt resource power over the community representatives involved.

Although based on limited data, these findings suggest that where regeneration partnerships are also focal organisations there is a greater risk of resource dependency and power imbalances between them and other community groups, and other focal organisations may seek to distance themselves from the regeneration partnership as a means of protecting their independence and autonomy. Consequently, the findings suggest implications for the way in which local governance strategies superimpose new layers of community activity on those that have existed for many years. The Royds case study suggests that not all organisations will be willing to cede long term control over resources or decision-making to an imposed umbrella body. Those that are in the best position to distance themselves from such bodies are key focal organisations that have operated in localities for many years. The drive for organisational independence and autonomy can consequently be seen to undermine attempts at greater co-ordination locally, and can lead to competition and conflict between focal organisations and umbrella groups.

Focal organisations and local coalitions

During the fieldwork there were examples of 'local coalitions' operating in both case-study areas, often described as 'steering groups' by participants. Focal organisations in both case study areas were central to local coalition building and were able to influence decisions internally and externally as the following examples show.

Focal organisations in Royds tended to adopt alternative and opposing positions to the RCA in local coalitions. An example of this occurred in a Steering Group that was responsible for the development of a new community centre on one of the estates funded by the RCA and the NLCB. Membership of the steering group included AFR (the focal organisation) as well as the RCA and other groups that were not part of the AFR main network. AFR members were critical of the fact that the RCA had announced that it would be selecting the members of the management committee that would eventually run the centre:

‘We’ve worked hard on this project for the last two years and now they’ve decided they will run it and they will be in charge. Well it’s not fair - this village hall is for the people of this estate, not for Royds [the RCA]’ (Bob, steering group member).

AFR was able to use its IORs to secure a majority on the steering group as one respondent explained:

‘Officially only one member of each group is allowed to sit on it [the steering group] but we wear different hats so I go as AFR, X goes as Sandale Centre and Y as youth’ (Judy, committee member).

These members of the steering group were in dispute with the other members who were more positive about RCA’s involvement and saw this as inevitable given that RCA was part-funding the project. This example also showed the way in which IORs to secure funding could turn sour once decisions about management and delivery of services became a priority. The RCA was able to exert its authority based on its control over finances, whilst the AFR was able to oppose decisions by securing a majority through networks of overlapping membership between it and other organisations in the area.

In Manningham and Girdlington focal organisations were able to use their influence on the partnership board to help secure successful outcomes for local coalitions. An example of this occurred in a Steering Group formed by groups using one of the community venues after the Church owners decided to sell the building.

The groups came together to try and secure the building's future - preferably through a funding bid which would allow them to own and run the building as a Development Trust. The focal organisation, TFG, was instrumental in providing access to funding knowledge and links with the regeneration programme which led to the SRB being approached as a partner in a funding bid to purchase the building. Without the focal organisation and its representation on the partnership board, it was widely accepted that the other groups would not have been able to access the SRB funds so readily, as one member explained:

‘What they don’t seem to realise is that we need [Shirley] and the SRB on this group. Without them we will never be able to get funding to buy the building. You need the movers and the shakers in this game..’ (Paul, committee member).

Thus, focal organisations not only played key roles in local coalitions, they could also use their inter-organisational links to secure benefits for other groups. This latter finding was supported in the inter-organisational literature that suggested that individuals at the centre of overlapping membership networks - so-called inter-organisational leaders - would be positively correlated with local coalition building. The analysis for this research also wanted to identify whether inter-organisational leaders were also more likely to be involved in regeneration partnerships.

Inter-organisational leaders and regeneration partnerships

This study was able to consider whether inter-organisational leaders were more likely to be involved in regeneration partnerships as ‘community representatives’ than other residents. It was also anticipated that there would be overlap between inter-organisational leaders and focal organisations. To a certain extent both hypotheses were supported by existing evidence. Studies that have identified the ‘usual suspects’ among community representatives point to the way in which some individuals are perceived as central to community group activity (Taylor, 1995).

In identifying inter-organisational leaders, three sources of data were used: Annual reports from groups that listed management committee members; interview data from organisations; and interview data from committee members. The aim was to identify inter-organisational leaders within localities. These were individuals who belonged to multiple committees.

In Manningham and Girdlington every organisation could identify committee members who were active in other groups (this included groups outside the locality). A total of nine individuals were involved in committee membership for sixteen organisations. Three individuals sat on two organisations locally; two individuals sat on three organisations; three individuals sat on four committees and one individual sat on six committees.

In Royds all the organisations mentioned at least one individual who was involved with another group locally. Of the committee members interviewed, three were involved in more than five groups. On the whole, overlapping membership was confined within estates and there was limited evidence of individuals being involved in organisations on other estates.

The study attempted to trace the relationships between community representatives and community groups as well as seek evidence of overlapping committee membership between community groups. The results are not intended to reflect a complete 'network analysis', rather they point to the way in which complex networks of IORs contributed to the way in which focal organisations were able to maintain flows of information within localities, even when they were not directly involved in regeneration partnerships.

In Royds the estate-based focal organisations both maintained contact with resident directors through established IORs and inter-organisational leaders. Whilst neither group had any direct route into the regeneration board without one of their members standing for election, they maintained information flows and some influence through personal contacts with existing directors. These resident directors belonged to other community group management committees and user committees and played an important role in passing information to both their own groups and others. In Manningham and Girdlington a similarly complex pattern of overlapping membership and personal contact meant that focal organisations were able to maintain flows of information through many organisations that were not directly represented on the partnership board.

Inter-organisational leaders played an important part in information exchange in both localities. For most individuals involved in multiple committee membership sharing information was one of the main benefits of being involved in more than one group:

'Sharing these things is vital 'cos all groups go through similar crises - even simple things like writing job descriptions... Each group thinks they're the only ones who've ever got this problem but in fact everyone else has got a similar one and so I can say "we did that at X last year, why don't you check with them"..' (Marie, committee member).

Thus, focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders can be seen to play central roles in developing a network of links within neighbourhoods that appear to support the inter-organisational theory's claim that patterns of resource exchange can create high profile organisations and individuals who are more likely to be centrally involved in local affairs.

Taylor (2000b) highlights the criticisms levelled at the way in which

'the very success of the partnership ethos has introduced such a proliferation of partnerships at a local level which threaten to deliver, at best, fragmented holism' (Taylor, 2000b:1021)

What the overlapping membership thesis and focal organisation development do is show that there is a coherency across partnerships and local coalitions because the same people are involved in them all.

However, where the focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders in this study could be seen to have developed important resource-exchange networks, they were also able to exclude other groups and create barriers to more widespread IORs developing. Focal organisations could monopolise access to information. This happened in coalition building where focal organisations in receipt of specific information did not share it with others. Unsurprisingly, groups not privy to this kind of information were suspicious of focal organisation representatives. Some focal organisation networks perceived this as positive:

'The kinds of links I have with people do create a kind of exclusivity but it is the best way to get things done - and it's no different to the old school tie that runs government agencies' (Peter, paid worker).

Focal organisations can reinforce local rivalries through exclusion or an unwillingness to cooperate. This had happened to one of the Manningham groups which was increasingly isolated from any access to information or funding, all of which was monopolised by the strong network of groups working around the focal group.

Thus, the findings from this study reveal both positive and negative features of inter-organisational working and reflect the common view that whilst networks are important they can also exclude, and deepen existing divisions (Skelcher *et al.*, 1996).

Resource dependency theory offered a means to analyse the way in which IORs between community groups could affect the development of local coalitions and regeneration partnerships. Chapter three showed how resource dependency theory could help to raise questions about the kinds of IORs that created focal organisations, which in turn were hypothesised to be more involved in local coalitions and partnerships. The theory suggested that there would be a relationship between focal organisations and regeneration partnerships and that IORs through overlapping membership would similarly lead to the establishment of highly visible inter-organisational leaders well placed to develop and be involved in local coalitions. These findings have suggested a more complex set of relations between community groups, focal organisations, inter-organisational leaders, local coalitions and regeneration board membership. The development of partnerships and local coalitions revealed the way in which resource procurement is a central feature of IORs in localities. However, once the resources had been successfully secured, there was more likely to be conflict over how these were allocated and who would be in a position to manage assets in the long term.

This study contributes to our understanding of the way that community groups work together both voluntarily and with mandatory partnerships, and suggests that there is more work to be done in understanding how IORs can affect decision-making. It is not just personal networks that create patterns of exclusion from decision-making, but the very structures that encourage community groups to work together.

The final part of this discussion considers the way in which norms of working associated with formal partnerships could be seen to affect community group development. Once again, there is evidence of differential impacts on community groups which has implications for the development of new local governance structures.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP- THE EFFECT OF ORGANISATIONAL NORMS ON COMMUNITY GROUPS

The second part of this analysis is concerned with the ways in which norms of working associated with partnerships affect community organisations and community board members. The success of new local governance structures will almost certainly be judged partly on the extent to which they are able to draw in 'the community' into multi-layer partnership forums. It is therefore timely to consider whether any consequences of partnership working for community groups can be determined in advance of the inevitable extension of partnership working across social policy.

It is generally accepted that the 'community' is the weakest partner and that partnership working is most likely to place the 'community' at a disadvantage (Geddes, 1997; Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Taylor, 2000a). Thus, the groups and individuals involved in this study were those least likely to be perceived as influential according to previous studies. Many of these studies identify significant barriers to effective 'community involvement' on partnership boards. This study seeks to examine how far these disadvantages and expectations play a part in the way community groups approach partnership working.

In order to do so, the analysis is restricted to three norms of partnership working identified in the literature review undertaken in chapter three. First, the relationship between the drive for representativeness and community group involvement with the partnership board; second, the way in which the need for consensus based decision-making in partnership working affects community group involvement; and third, how far bureaucratic norms associated with partnerships disadvantage community group participation in decision-making.

Some of the findings contradict earlier studies. In part this can be explained by the differences between regeneration partnership formation and structure in these two areas, but there is also evidence that our understanding of community group participation in local decision-making has tended to over-simplify the complex processes that underpin 'community involvement'.

Representativeness

In chapter three it was argued that our understanding of the drive for representativeness in partnership board development could undermine the way in which community groups were able to reflect difference and diversity in their roles as community board members. This raised questions about who community board members were representing and how far they were seeking to represent sectional or particular interests.

There is an assumption within the regeneration and partnership literature that 'community representatives' have a constituency on whose behalf they have a right to speak. Those who argue that existing local organisational structures, such as umbrella groups, can be used to access representatives (see for example Hastings *et al.*, 1996) reflect the idea that community board members should be, or could be, representing different constituencies within a locality (see also Skelcher *et al.*, 1996). Thus 'community representation' can refer to the process through which diverse voices from within the locality are represented by individuals working on the partnership board.

However, the assumption that 'community representatives' use their position on the partnership to represent particular interests was not found to be the case in this study. Without exception, 'community representatives' identified with a wider set of interests than those reflected in the work of particular community organisations. The individuals that did come from community organisations were at great pains to distance themselves from any particular constituency, preferring to see themselves as representing the needs of everyone as the following selected quotations reveal:

'I'm not there for anyone in particular because we all signed up to Royds at the end of the day. I have to make sure I can serve all the estates and everyone on them' (Jane, resident director).

'I speak for everyone. I am not there to represent the Bangladeshi people. I've got specific skills to offer and I represent everyone in Manningham and Girdlington' (Iqbal, community representative).

'I came with a particular knowledge of Girdlington but I don't represent Girdlington. I represent Manningham and Girdlington SRB and have a responsibility for an overview of that' (Shirley, community representative).

Thus, any particularism reflected in community group activity is not directly turned into representation in local decision-making. This was true in both areas despite differences in the way that representation had been developed by the partnership boards.

In Manningham and Girdlington there was no attempt to create formal community representation on the board. The individuals occupying 'community representative' positions were those who had 'stuck with' the bidding process for regeneration funds over many years. It was argued that because representation in Manningham and Girdlington was 'pretty horrific and difficult given the degrees of in-fighting that go on' (Shirley, community representative and committee member) the individuals who had emerged as 'most committed' were the right people for the job.

In Royds an elaborate election process was designed to ensure equal representation on the board and sub-committees of each estate. It might be anticipated that these resident directors would be more likely to perceive themselves as representatives of particular estates even if they felt it was not their role to represent specific interests within the estates. In fact, five of the six resident director's interviewed saw themselves as working on behalf of all three estates:

'I am representing the Royds residents. A Royds director is a representative of his estate but he belongs to Royds' (Keith, resident director).

'I definitely represent all three estates. It might have been the people from here that elected me but my job is to make sure all three estates benefit' (Veronica, resident director).

This widespread acceptance by 'community representatives' that they could and should serve the needs of everyone reflects the way in which the drive for representation across localities has undermined any sense that particular interests have a right to be given a voice. The exception to this was a new resident director who expressed concern for the estate where she lived. However, the experiences of the other directors suggests that over time, resident directors tend to see their role in relation to all the estates.

Purdue *et al.* (2000) have argued that community representatives are not representative because they do not reflect the diversity of voices within any locality. In particular they were critical of the fact that community leaders active in partnership boards only had access to fragmented communities of identity that ignored the needs of black, gay, lesbian and disabled people.

This study suggests that even if community leaders had access to such diverse communities of interest, they would not necessarily perceive their role in regeneration partnership boards in terms of representing these sectional interests.

However, the way in which community board members perceived their representative role could also have been a reflection of the relatively narrow range of interests that were reflected in community group activity in both case study areas. Organisations in both areas reflected dominant population characteristics - even when they were attending to specific needs (see chapter five). Consequently, there is little incentive for community groups to develop around interest groups such as lesbian and gay groups, disabled people and even ethnic minorities, unless there is a spatial concentration of such groups in an area. In turn, there are fewer active residents working in and around particularist fields that they might then seek to represent at the level of regeneration partnership board. The way in which community groups develop around certain kinds of needs can consequently affect the degree of visibility that any particular social group can achieve. In this way, the community sector reinforces the isolation of marginalised and dispersed social groups through its spatially constructed response to local need.

Furthermore, some organisations remained outside the networks of focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders that may have increased the likelihood of their involvement as 'community representatives'. In Manningham and Girdlington the local African Caribbean population did not have a 'community representative' (although there were African Caribbean members on the board from the voluntary sector and private sector).

The community organisation for African Caribbean people was relatively isolated in terms of overlapping membership in the locality (it had no overlapping committee members) and had no relationship with any focal organisation. In Royds a community organisation dealing with drug use was widely criticised and feared by residents who believed this organisation was attracting drug users to the estate. This organisation would have found it very difficult to access the regeneration board through the election process. Without this legitimacy the organisation remained outside the main RCA decision-making processes and relied on informal and personal contacts with officials and directors to make its voice heard.

Thus, a combination of organisational factors partly explains the way in which community board members may have come to perceive their representative role. On the one hand the limited range of interests reflected in community group activity makes it difficult for some marginalised groups to gain a foothold in the community sector. At the same time, the IORs that lead to the development of focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders can exclude some sectional interests. Given the way in which individuals, community groups and partnerships are interwoven through networks of overlapping membership and focal organisations, any groups that find it hard to access these are likely to remain relatively marginalised in terms of local decision-making.

These findings suggest that it should not be surprising to Purdue *et al.* (2000) that community leaders were 'unrepresentative'. Similarly, Geddes (1997) who has argued that partnership boards have consistently failed to engage with the most marginalised sections of society, may find that it is not always the partnership that is to blame - community organisations themselves can reinforce the isolation and divisions within and between localities that are the main source of difficulty in achieving representativeness.

Given the difficulties that localities face in achieving representativeness among community board members, it is not surprising that some have questioned this as an aim altogether. Wilson and Charlton (1997) have argued that it is better to have committed individuals who want to be involved than to seek more widespread representation. More pragmatic arguments suggest that widespread consultation within localities should be used to identify diverse needs whilst the partnership board confines itself to the few (Taylor, 2000b).

The evidence presented here suggests that where community groups are instrumental in developing the skills and confidence necessary for individuals to participate this approach is likely to create the 'usual suspects' who find themselves criticised by residents and ignored by other partners who can accuse them of not being representative. These findings suggest that any form of local governance that rests upon pre-existing networks and IORs risks failing to involve excluded minority sections of the population - such as disabled people - because it inevitably reflects the patterns of marginalisation that IORs can create.

Consensus

The role of consensus in maintaining IORs between different stakeholders involved in partnership working raises questions regarding the way in which community groups and community representatives are willing or able to adopt opposing positions. In the past, community activity has often been developed in order to challenge local authority decisions or the perceived lack of responsiveness of the state (see chapter two). In the current political climate, these organisations are expected to work in partnership with authorities, and consequently to develop methods of working that are based on consensus rather than conflict, although some have argued that conflict can be evidence that partnerships are working well if diverse views are being aired and controversial issues are being addressed (Hastings *et al.*, 1996).

It was consequently of interest to examine how far consensus was a feature of partnership working on the part of community groups and community representatives, and whether or not the rhetoric of partnership was driving conflict and opposition off the community sector agenda.

It was argued in chapter five that whilst consensus had emerged around the aims of the regeneration programme in both areas, there were criticisms and opposition to the way in which these were implemented, and how these decisions were reached. This finding suggested that opposition and conflict to the regeneration programme existed in both areas, and consequently it was of interest to examine the ways in which consensus working and aspects of opposition were manifested within the localities.

Two manifestations of consensus and conflict were examined. First between community representatives and other partners within the regeneration partnership board; and second between community groups and the regeneration partnership.

Relations between community board representatives and other partners revealed patterns of difference between experienced board members, who appeared to have accepted norms of partnership working, and those community representatives who were perceived as relatively powerless. In Royds, ex-resident directors believed there had been a shift over time away from community representatives opposing decisions and controlling the board, towards greater consensus over decision-making. In the early years of the RCA, community representatives had a difficult and conflictual relationship with the local authority. This was not surprising given that the local authority's power had been diminished when the 'community' was given lead status by Government Office to run the SRB programme. Many of the directors referred to these difficult relationships with the local authority:

'Our relationship with the council is better than it was. At one time it was all out war. They didn't like what we were doing.... we had people overseeing [parts of the programme] from the council that weren't very good. So now we say "if you can't do the job you go and we'll get someone else to do it".. the council had to put in for the contract and they didn't get it. We're not people to be messed about with. We have a job to do and we'll do it' (Keith, resident director).

In its relations with the local authority, the resident directors had adopted a common strategy which had enhanced their legitimacy and influence. Both Geddes (1997) and Crook (1996) have suggested that community representatives should adopt such positions more widely. However, in the case of the RCA and the local authority, it was the control that the community had over the allocation of resources that allowed them to oppose the local authority rather than simply the weight of their common view.

However, some directors believed that the ability of community representatives to present this kind of collective opposition to other partners had become diluted over time. Two ex-directors argued that this was because the RCA had become professionalised and that paid workers now controlled the overall agenda, instead of community representatives, as Bob explained:

‘I don’t think the directors make as many decisions as they used to cos there’s that many staff’ (Bob, ex-resident director).

The power of professionals was seen to undermine the community-led aspects of the RCA and there was some evidence that resident directors voted with majority decisions because they did not understand the board proceedings, reflecting Bewley and Glendinning’s (1994) finding that individuals felt uneasy about querying decisions made in the context of procedures they do not fully understand, as the following resident directors explained:

‘You have got power in a sense [over officials] cos they come to the board with a proposal and if you don’t like it you reject it.. But ..when it comes to a board and you’re getting a professional agency that doesn’t give it in lay man’s terms - its all big words - you don’t know what you’re voting for. So a lot of them go with the majority vote instead of what they think’ (Jane, resident director).

‘They give you advice that you have to take because you don’t know any better’ (Tim, ex-resident director).

In this respect, evidence of consensus working in the Royds board reflected the relative powerlessness of community representatives compared with other partners (Hastings *et al.*, 1996). However, there was also evidence within the Royds board that not all directors were equally powerless. Some directors were seen to have more insider knowledge and access to decision making than others, as one of the new directors explained:

‘There’s certain resident directors that’s privy to information’ (Jane, resident director).

The insider/outsider status of community representatives in Royds is reminiscent of Skelcher *et al.*’s (1996) finding that the most successful community sector partners were those who had access to informal networks that operated behind the scenes of formal board meetings. In Royds the small insider group of experienced directors were committed to the notion of partnership working and more supportive of the professionals who were blamed by others for diluting the power of the community board members overall.

‘We have good institutional directors which people don’t realise. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes. They can give us professional and expert advice that we don’t have. We have to work together if this is going to work.... we know what we want, but when someone tells you it’s a fact that the houses are not secure we have to listen.. Its called working in partnership’ (Simon, resident director).

‘We’ve got fantastic staff down at Sunnybank. We need to work with them and the institutional directors to make improvements. Its no good saying we should ignore these people - they’re the ones with the expert knowledge. We have to work in partnership with them - not ignore them or do our own thing’ (Andrea, resident director).

Thus, differences between community representatives were found to exist between those who lacked experience and knowledge of the partnership process and those whose approach suggested a degree of institutionalism around consensus based decision-making and partnership working.

The same process of institutionalised attitudes towards partnership working were found amongst the community representatives in the Manningham and Girdlington board. In Manningham and Girdlington there were no examples cited during the fieldwork of any collective opposition to board decisions being mounted by community representatives, although there was evidence that individual board members had left meetings over disagreements regarding the funding of certain projects. In Manningham and Girdlington the data suggested that there were two reasons why community representatives did not act collectively to oppose decisions. On the one hand the community representatives did not see themselves working as a unified group:

‘That will never happen - its just not realistic. There are differences between people that being on the board won’t change. But as long as we’re all working to the same end, it won’t matter’ (Shirley, community representative).

The board members in Manningham and Girdlington were acting as individuals and this may have contributed to the lack of collective opposition they mounted. On the other hand, the community representatives were experienced in the art of partnership working and had been involved in the regeneration programme since its inception. These individuals were committed to the idea of partnership working and consequently may reflect the way in which norms of working become institutionalised over time. The community groups they were attached to were embedded in patterns of inter-organisational working that may have contributed to the way in which they approached the work of the regeneration partnership. They explained their commitment to the idea of partnership clearly:

‘Most of the voluntary sector are in-fighting. Fighting with each other, We don’t believe in that...we work with council and politicians hand in hand....Working together - working in partnerships is the future for us and all the other voluntary groups. If you can’t work together you are nothing’ (Iqbal, community representative).

‘We work in partnership. That’s what we do. Simple. You just achieve more if you work in partnership. You can’t escape from that fact’ (Shirley, community representative and committee member).

These findings suggest that attitudes towards the partnership board by community representatives, and the apparent lack of collective opposition mounted by representatives may be indicative of an increasingly institutionalised approach to the norms of partnership working, particularly by experienced community representatives.

In the RCA, new directors who were less experienced and had limited knowledge of the decision-making process, were more likely to exhibit features associated with the relative powerlessness of community representatives. These contradictory findings suggest that the lack of opposition mounted by community representatives can be a result of increasingly institutionalised norms as well as community powerlessness.

Thus, the consensus that appeared to exist between community representatives and other partners reflected aspects of institutionalism that may explain the apparent lack of conflict within the Manningham and Girdlington partnership board. However, consensus between community representatives and other partners in the Royds board was more indicative of findings that have stressed the relative powerlessness of community board members.

The evidence from the board members themselves suggested that there was unlikely to be high degrees of opposition to the regeneration board decisions emanating from within the board itself. Consequently, the role of community groups who were not involved in the regeneration partnership were potentially providing a mechanism for the development of opposition from outside formal decision-making processes.

It was shown in chapter five that a lack of consensus existed between community groups and the regeneration boards over the way decisions were reached, although there was consensus over the aims of the regeneration programmes as a whole. However, rather than seek to oppose decisions or gain access to the board by getting more directly involved, the majority of the community groups in both localities were ambivalent about their role in seeking to exert pressure on the board to make changes to the programme implementation.

Community groups were unanimous in their criticism of some aspects of the delivery and implementation of the regeneration programme in Manningham and Girdlington. The kinds of criticisms that groups made were related to the allocation of funding associated with the board and with the way that community representatives had been chosen. In Royds criticisms of the RCA were similarly associated with funding issues although not with community representatives. Instead, groups were critical of the way that the RCA could control resources within the locality and ignore the work that other groups were already actively engaged with.

Responses by community groups to these criticisms were three fold. In Manningham and Girdlington only two groups had tried to get representatives sent to the board, and both had failed. It might have been expected that more groups would have sought representation on the board given the extent to which groups were critical of the existing representatives but may also indicate the relative unimportance attached to the regeneration board by most groups. This was borne out in evidence regarding the attitudes that the majority of groups in Manningham and Girdlington had towards greater involvement with the regeneration board. Those organisations that did not feel their group's aims matched with the regeneration programme were not interested in being involved, as these respondents explained:

'Well it doesn't really affect us because we're not a training group.... we're interested in what's going on with the one-stop-shop so I suppose of anyone from [SRB] is there we'll see them but apart from that they can get on with it' (Christine, committee member).

'There's no sense that they've tried to involve all the centres or anything... and we tried to get a rep. onto the board but we never heard anything back from them.. so I suppose we'll just carry on as normal and pretend its not happening' (Marie, committee member)

Similar attitudes were expressed by other advice centres, small resident associations and environmental projects that did not perceive any links between the work of the regeneration programme and their organisation.

In Royds responses to negative perceptions of the RCA similarly failed to attract direct opposition. Groups in Royds did not mention sending representatives to the regeneration board as a response, probably because of the election processes that link board access to individual residents rather than to interest groups. However, groups were found to ignore RCA developments and to develop alternative projects. The groups that were able to ignore the RCA were those that had access to external funding opportunities. This issue was addressed in the preceding discussion. Of particular interest was the way in which some groups in Royds were seeking to develop alternatives to RCA sponsored programmes.

One organisation was involved in the development of a health project that had developed in response to the perceived failure of the RCA sponsored Healthy Living Centre to live up to expectations:

‘I was asked for my input originally but my input said “it’s a load of bollocks really”... The only reason its been devised the way it has is because they adapted the original plan for a community centre to attract this new money. Now its just a health centre - that’s all it will be. I understand the background and how its supposed to work but I’ve stayed away until its finished. ... in the long run it will just be a health centre - all the practitioners will be there but none of the community involvement that was what a Healthy Living Centre was supposed to be - no church, youth or groups will be up there.....So what we’re going to do is have .. a new group, [an estate project] where individuals like the nurse and family worker can work. The HLC should have been for general health - not just access to practitioner health. We’re looking for HAZ money for sessional workers - like a dietician, school nurse, family worker and healthy co-operative shop to try and get away from the idea of only going when you’re sick’ (Steve, paid worker).

In Manningham and Girdlington the SRB programme had not been established for long enough to identify how far groups might follow similar trends in developing alternatives to the regeneration programme projects. Only one respondent mentioned future developments that might be an indication that this could occur in future:

'We'll have something for unemployed people here eventually. The SRB won't be giving us funds but we can get those from somewhere else' (Terrence, committee member).

Thus, the evidence suggests that a lack of opposition to board decisions by community groups or any active attempt to change the direction of the board is not indicative of apathy or powerlessness. Instead, community organisations could be active in ignoring the regeneration programme and developing the kinds of alternative projects that they have historically been associated with.

Community groups, through their responses to the board, were not demonstrating any widespread commitment to the notion of 'partnership' or to the norms of partnership working that might have been anticipated. They were not seeking to access the board in order to influence decisions, but neither were they mounting campaigns against board decisions. Instead, as will be discussed in chapter eight, they were able to develop alternative projects that may ultimately be detrimental to the extent to which the regeneration programmes in each area are able to mount holistic responses to social problems.

The evidence regarding the development of consensus working between community groups and the regeneration programme in each area draws attention to some important aspects of the way in which the norms of partnership working affect the community sector.

Within the boards themselves it was argued that institutionalised approaches to consensus decision-making existed among community representatives who demonstrated commitment to the notion of 'partnership' working and were relatively experienced in working with other agencies. It has been argued that evidence of consensus within partnerships may indicate the relative powerlessness of community representatives (Hastings *et al.*, 1996). The findings from this study suggest that, in fact, aspects of consensus decision making are entering into a discourse of partnership working that community representatives and other partners are bringing to the process, despite evidence that consensus working was associated with powerlessness among new directors in Royds. However, the way that community groups dealt with those aspects of the regeneration partnership that they opposed suggests that groups may be operating against these norms.

Most groups outside the regeneration decision-making process had not adopted directly oppositional positions to the board, and neither had they sought to become involved in order to alter decisions. Instead, groups either ignored the programme altogether, or developed projects that offered alternatives to those established by the regeneration programme. The lack of direct opposition to the regeneration programme exhibited by community groups was not evidence of a relative lack of power. In contrast, community groups that could subvert the holistic intentions of the regeneration programme were demonstrating their ability to act autonomously and independently of established norms of inter-agency working.

Bureaucracy

The third, and final norm of partnership working considered here relates to those bureaucratic structures and rules of engagement that dominate formal organisations. It has been argued that these structures place community groups and community representatives at a disadvantage because these local people and organisations are not used to working in this way and are not so skilled as private or public sector partners at using these structures to their advantage. Consequently, it has been found, community organisations can mimic the style of the partnership in order to access decision-making more effectively (Davoudi and Healey, 1995; McArthur, 1995). The evidence from this study presents a mixed view regarding the extent to which bureaucratic norms influenced or affected community groups and community representatives.

In both localities, the regeneration partnerships were established on formal bureaucratic lines. In Royds the RCA was formally constituted. A series of sub-committees responsible for different parts of the programme fed into a main management board, creating a complex internal structure governed by bureaucratic rules. In Manningham and Girdlington a similarly complex series of sub-committees feed into the main decision-making board. In both cases, these organisational forms for the partnership board itself were strongly influenced by the local authority that had high levels of involvement in both original bids for SRB status.

Similarly, community organisations in both areas exhibited hierarchical group structures. Usually this meant that an elected management committee controlled decision-making with volunteers and users having little access to these structures (see chapter six).

Evidence that groups are formally constituted does not necessarily mean that they adopt the associated rules. It may be, therefore, that community groups will use the necessary devices to access funding and engage in decision-making but they remain committed to more participatory style of working. There was less evidence that this was occurring in either case-study area. Some organisations talked about the need to involve users in their management committee and the issue of 'representativeness' was particularly contentious in Manningham and Girdlington. This suggests that groups were adopting management committee rules of engagement and that they were not reverting to more participatory styles in 'private'.

In terms of new local governance the implication from these findings is that the community sector has developed norms of working that are required for involvement in partnerships and multi-agency working. These bureaucratic norms were associated with the requirements of external funding bodies, particularly in terms of demonstrating accountability and legitimacy of the organisation. One respondent questioned the relevance of these formal structures for the effective delivery of services:

'I think that the fact that informal networks are so strong leads to a lack of formalisation. Whether people need formalised procedures is another matter. In terms of being able to access funding you need it - but whether you need it to deliver services, you probably don't' (Neil, committee member)

It was certainly the case that less formalised group activity existed in both case-study areas. If the new institutionalism literature is right, we might expect to see these small groups becoming more formalised over time as part of a drive for organisational growth and maintenance, as the above quotation implies. However, there was also evidence that small groups could be protected from the need to formalise their internal structures in order to access funding. These examples were all found in Royds.

The RCA provided a cushion against the need for groups to formalise by providing small grant funding through the Community Chest. In addition, focal organisations could apply for funding to support smaller groups that were linked into their networks.

The AFR, for example, ran bingo sessions and a lunch club that did not need to access external funding while they could use AFR as a source of formal help. In these cases, inter-organisational working could benefit small organisations and allow them to maintain the 'flat' structures and participatory mechanisms they found the most useful for organising their activities.

In the main, however, external funding requirements have already created situations where bureaucratic organisational structures are the norm for community groups. In less formal activities, the lack of bureaucratic structures might be an impediment to organisational growth if small groups find it difficult to access funding. Those with links to formalised organisations through IORs, however, are effectively protected from the need to adopt hierarchical structures internally.

Thus, we might argue that community groups can and do adopt hierarchical and bureaucratic organisational forms that should not hamper their capacity to engage with decision-making in partnerships. However, as we have seen, representation by community groups in partnership boards is not as straightforward as is often presented. Many groups were not involved in board membership at all. The way in which community representatives experienced bureaucratic norms on the partnership board differed in each area, and reflected different aspects of the community representation debate that has developed in research evidence in the past.

In Manningham and Girdlington the community representatives on the partnership board were all highly skilled in bureaucratic norms and procedures. Through paid work experience they had all been involved in committees in the past; and as community group activists each had been involved in negotiations and fund-raising with external agencies and partnership working. One of the paid workers in the SRB management team argued that they had the 'the right people for the job' because they were people used to working in these kinds of committee structures, they were skilled fund-raisers and had been able to 'get up to speed' quickly. As Taylor (1997:31) puts it, these were 'the usual suspects' who 'could hit the ground running'.

In contrast, the RCA Board was constantly changing its membership and bringing new people in. There was evidence of distinct change in the way people were helped to understand the bureaucracy and rules that they had to work with on the RCA board. When RCA was first established, and during the previous bids by individual estates, residents involved with developing regeneration programmes were involved in training and capacity building exercises. These individuals were the first RCA board and had the benefit of months of working with council officials and community development workers. Over time, the make-up of the board has changed and there is no longer any training given to new resident directors. Without exception all the directors talked about the 'steep learning curve' and months of hard work they had to put in just to understand what was going on in meetings. These experiences are reminiscent of early regeneration research that identified the skill and knowledge deficit that placed many community representatives at a disadvantage in partnership working (Hastings *et al.*, 1996; Kumar, 1997; McArthur, 1993, 1995; Wilson and Charlton, 1997).

It was argued above that the adoption of 'consensus' style working was in part due to the relative lack of experience of some RCA directors. Ex-directors were highly critical of the lack of training and consequently waste of skills that characterised board membership in the RCA. Bob argued that this worked to the advantage of paid staff:

'It's a waste of people's knowledge and experience. We have always failed in that - even when I was there. It's a crying shame. It hasn't got the best out of people who have come off. It hasn't used them like it should of. And a lot of that is up to the officers. They're not going to make a deal out of having experienced directors if those directors get in the way of what they want to do' (Bob, ex-resident director).

'Unless you give people adequate training then you've not really gained. One of the problems I have with Royds is that the resident directors don't get training. They're expected to pick it up as they go along. Which means that as they reach the end of their two years service they're just starting to get deep into it and they come off and someone else goes on and has to start from scratch' (Tim, ex-resident director).

Taylor (1995) argues that the most effective partnerships were those with long traditions of local organising that had provided people with the skills, confidence and experience to participate. There was evidence that both case study areas had been able to draw on individuals with these kinds of skills at the outset of the programme. However, the Royds case study reveals the way that over time these patterns can change and experience and skills can be replaced with a lack of training and an over reliance on paid staff.

This discussion of the way that bureaucratic norms can affect community groups draw on much of the evidence presented in previous sections. It is clear that community groups in these two localities did not generally reflect the kinds of 'flat' participatory structures with which they are often associated. In reality, most community groups had developed hierarchical and formal patterns of working that were perceived to be important for accessing external funding. In turn, the ability to access external funding was seen to be an important route for groups to achieve the autonomy and independence which they desired.

The development of these organisational forms preceded the development of regeneration partnerships in both localities. The extent to which the bureaucratic norms associated with these affected or influenced community groups was consequently negligible. However, the structures that organisations had developed did place some organisations in an advantageous position at the start of the regeneration process. It was argued above that focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders with skills and networks were those most likely to be involved in regeneration partnerships at the outset of the projects. The organisational forms these groups had developed through hierarchical and bureaucratic structures legitimised their involvement in the partnerships and gave leaders experience and skills deemed important for partnership working.

Thus, in Manningham and Girdlington community group structures were in place that could generate the skills and expertise necessary for individuals to become 'the usual suspects'. In Royds more democratically organised structures of representation led to individuals being placed at a disadvantage because they lacked knowledge of these bureaucratic rules and structures.

CONCLUSION

This chapter began by arguing that mechanisms for new local governance rely upon the willingness of organisations to work together. The patterns of vertical and horizontal links perceived as central to the development of holistic and meaningful change at the neighbourhood level are designed to bring the local, the regional and the national together in complex inter-organisational networks of information exchange and policy implementation.

At the foot of these links lie community groups whose involvement in decision-making structures at the local level is now seen as a permanent and positive development for new local governance. It was consequently of interest to examine the kinds of commitment to inter-organisational working that community groups demonstrated and the ways in which the 'local' might contribute to these ever-increasing partnership forms. In addition, there has been a tendency within the regeneration literature to assume that if the membership and mechanisms for partnership working could be made more equal then partnership working could offer a route to positive policy implementation and delivery.

The findings from this study suggest that the relationships between partnership working and community groups is not so simple and that it is not just the norms of partnership working that can act to exclude organisations from decision-making. Patterns of inter-organisational working between community groups were found to create focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders whose capacity to access decision-making structures was greater than for other groups. At the same time these focal organisations could choose not to be involved in regeneration partnerships, and in some cases were responsible for opposition to the regeneration boards within localities. Other organisations chose to ignore the partnerships altogether and some were developing alternative projects that were in direct competition or conflict with those proposed by the regeneration boards.

Resource dependency theory proved to be a useful mechanism for exploring these relationships. The types of inter-organisational working demonstrated by community groups suggested that they were well versed in the benefits of working collaboratively. As predicted by the resource dependency literature, groups were found to work together to exchange resources.

These voluntary IORs were mutually beneficial and none of the groups identified any negative implications of working together in this way. These beneficial resource exchanges were, however, underpinned by a commitment to retaining the autonomy and independence of their organisations that was also found to be an important feature of the relations between mandatory (partnership) inter-organisational forms and community groups.

This evidence does not suggest a passive community sector waiting for an invitation to decision-making structures. It does, however, reflect aspects of resource dependency theory, that organisations will work together to exchange resources, but that they also strive for independence and autonomy. Where mandatory partnership working threatens to undermine this autonomy or independence it should not, therefore, be surprising to find community groups opting out of these processes. The existence of 'the usual suspects' on the Manningham and Girdlington partnership board was evidence that focal organisations and inter-organisational leaders were able to dominate access to local coalitions and partnerships. It was not simply a case of the most experienced individuals being 'invited' to participate, however. The patterns of inter-organisational working suggested that the source of these reputations and high profile individuals lay within the community sector itself.

This finding has implications for the development of new local governance structures if key organisations in localities choose *not* to be involved. In addition, some community groups were found to act in opposition to the regeneration programme by developing alternative projects, or by ignoring the regeneration programme altogether. To some extent then, the community sector exhibits a healthy cynicism towards the role of local regeneration partnerships. Where they can, organisations seek funding from these bodies to expand services in the locality. Yet at the same time, their decisions not to be active in the regeneration programme could have negative consequences for the overall programme's success. This issue is discussed further in chapter eight.

In chapter three it was argued that new institutionalism theory drew attention to the way in which meanings, forms and procedures within organisations come to be taken for granted and what the consequences of these are (see for example Bielefeld, 1992). The research questions referred to the way in which community group acceptance of norms of partnership working might undermine traditional characteristics associated with community activity.

Specifically, the research sought to understand how community groups dealt with the apparent need for representativeness, consensus and bureaucratic norms of working. Contradictory evidence emerged regarding the impact these norms have on the behaviour of community groups in relation to regeneration programmes

In the case of bureaucratic norms, it was argued that these are increasingly becoming norms of working for community groups based on the needs of funding bodies. These developments preceded the establishment of partnership working in both areas, and the evidence tended to imply that in this respect it was community groups and community representatives who were able to draw on skills and experience of bureaucratic norms to reinforce their positions on partnership boards rather than the existence of the board influencing the way groups and representatives acted.

The issue of representativeness revealed some important findings regarding the extent to which community groups are actually 'represented' on partnership boards as most community representatives identified with 'everybody'. Furthermore, it was suggested that the drive for representativeness may be thwarted by the kinds of particularism in relation to needs that community groups were identified with in chapter five.

It was with the example of consensus working as a norm of partnerships that the most interesting differences emerged regarding the impact of partnership norms on the activities of community groups. Here there was more evidence to suggest that processes of institutionalism have led to the adoption of consensus attitudes, particularly with regard to the notion of working in partnership, on the boards themselves. However, community groups that were critical of the way the boards operated had not campaigned against the board or tried to access decision-making structures to influence decisions. Instead, organisations either ignored the regeneration programme or developed alternative projects that they believed to be more in line with local needs. The latter may be a positive step for localities, and reinforces the need for organisations to maintain independence and autonomy in order for them to act in this way.

Overall the findings with regard to inter-organisational working undermine some of the commonly held assumptions regarding the relationship between the community sector and partnership working. In particular, they draw attention to the way in which inter-organisational working, whether voluntary or mandatory, has both positive and negative repercussions. It may be time to re-think the assumptions that underpin the drive for partnership working, and consequently some of the assumptions that drive the regeneration policy agenda. A contribution to this debate is made in the following penultimate chapter which seeks to draw together the policy implications emanating from this research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND REGENERATION POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY AND INTEGRATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws on the findings presented previously to address directly the role of community groups in area-based regeneration. In doing so the discussion revolves around two underlying themes that lie at the heart of long term change in deprived neighbourhoods- the need for 'integration' in programme implementation and to create long term 'sustainability'. This is based on assumption that the success, or failure, of regeneration programmes rests on their ability to create long term change - to effectively 'turn places around' and alter the fundamental social and economic structures that have led to social exclusion, isolation and marginalisation.

In the 1990s it was recognised that despite targeted approaches to urban regeneration, the same kinds of localities continued to experience the downward spiral of decline associated with concentrations of poverty and deprivation. Areas of inner London, parts of the North East and North West of England as well as parts of major Scottish cities had been the target of regeneration policies since the 1960s. By the 1990s these places appeared to be no better off, relatively, than they had been when area-based regeneration strategies were first launched (Fordham, 1995).

Thus, regeneration strategies were re-cast in ways that were intended to produce durable, lasting change (sustainability) through multi-faceted time-limited strategies, managed by multi-agency partnerships (integration). These time-limited strategies were intended to 'catalyse long term qualitative change' (Fordham, 1995:8) by providing the grounding for communities to take ownership and responsibility for future programmes and initiatives.

The search for integrated, or holistic, approaches to regeneration has formed part of the regeneration policy agenda since the 1970s. Conventional wisdom suggests that where places are subject to multiple problems, multiple solutions are required. Thus, 'joined-up' policy making and the drive for multi-agency partnerships are seen as the appropriate mechanism for achieving holistic regeneration (Carley and Kirk, 1998). Clearly this rests upon an assumption that regeneration programmes should have a sense of the 'whole' - that is, how they link into multiple social problems and what the long term effects of programmes will be.

Sustainability in regeneration policy is both linked to notions of durability and sustainable development. Slatter (1999) explains sustainability as follows;

'Community involvement sustains projects without using a lot of resources; sustained projects are ones that stay relevant; relevant projects meet real needs; sustainable development is about meeting real needs without using a lot of resources' (Slatter, 1999:10).

The issue of sustainability in relation to regeneration policy has concentrated on 'durability of impact' (Fordham, 1995). This can have various aspects: On the one hand, time-limited regeneration programmes should create lasting change through the initiatives that are followed through the programme, so that places are 'independent from further special funds' (Fordham, 1995:6). On the other hand, it is feasible that sustainability can refer to the process through which places are able to identify and secure further finance in order to take the regeneration programme forward - but through community based organisations rather than imposed partnership forms.

The assumptions that underpin these twin themes can be described as follows: Multi-agency responses to multiple social problems should create definitions of social problems that reflect locally defined needs. Delivering the appropriate solutions to these problems will be more likely to create lasting change because residents will believe in, and support, the changes that occur. Multi-agency partnership forms are the most appropriate delivery mechanisms for holistic regeneration policy because they bring together all the agencies that have a stake in regenerating localities - including local residents.

The time-limited nature of regeneration policy means that these partnerships will not necessarily last forever and so 'exit' strategies need to be implemented so that a successor body from within the locality can develop or emerge to take the changes forward and build on these in the future. Crucial to the success of this strategy is building capacity within localities to take responsibility for successor organisations so that expert stakeholders can withdraw.

The inter-related themes of sustainability (or durable impact) and integration are explored in this chapter in the light of findings presented in earlier chapters regarding the role that community groups can play in regeneration policy decision-making and delivery. The chapter is organised around the three themes used throughout this study: need, social capital, and collaborative working.

INTEGRATED REGENERATION POLICY, SUSTAINABILITY AND NEED

As we have already seen, the relationship between integrated regeneration policy, sustainability and need rests upon two central assumptions. First that multiple social problems require multiple solutions that should be identified and delivered through partnerships that include community organisations and local residents. Second, if the appropriate solutions to these problems are identified, it is assumed that local people will be more likely to take 'ownership' of the programme and support its development and sustainability long term.

Both the SRB programmes in this study exhibited some aspects of a holistic or integrated approach to regeneration. The RCA had developed an integrated programme based on economic, social and physical regeneration, although the latter was emphasised as the main objective of the strategy and used the major proportion of resources. However, there is a view expressed by resident directors that it is the social and economic programmes that underpin the long term success of the whole programme.

Andrea summed up the views of resident directors in Royds as follows:

'Its never been a view that just physical regeneration would work. You had to look at the social and economic. Anybody can do up a house - Estate Action was done all over. But because they're not improving the social and economic infrastructure the physical stuff is just bowing and bending and caving in' (Andrea, resident director).

Thus, in the RCA example, a large scale physical regeneration programme was underpinned by smaller, but equally important, economic and social regeneration projects.

In Manningham and Girdlington there was less explicit evidence of integration in terms of applying social and economic projects to the whole scheme. However, the Manningham and Girdlington SRB was seeking an integrated approach by linking into new national programmes for unemployed people (the New Deal) and the SRB bid had made it clear that economic regeneration was the route to long term change in social and physical aspects of neighbourhood decline.

Thus, despite different kinds of approaches, both Manningham and Girdlington and Royds SRB's defined the 'problem' in similar ways - resting on an assumption that economic and social regeneration were important for long term sustainability and therefore, the appropriate solutions to local problems were rooted in delivering change in the social and economic aspects of local life. The preceding chapters have indicated aspects of the role that community groups might be expected to play in these processes.

In Royds, the RCA perceived the community groups as central to the development of their social programme and consequently funded the expansion of local organisations and supported the development of new organisations. However, the community groups did not necessarily support the RCA programme for change. Examples were given in chapter seven of opposition to the RCA mounted by focal organisations in Royds, and claims for independence given by other groups. There was, therefore a sense in which the community groups did not feel part of the RCA and the lack of co-operation exhibited by some groups suggested that the holistic and integrated programmes initiated by the RCA did not reflect integration and holism across organisations.

Similarly, the residents did not perceive the social and economic strategies as important. No-one mentioned these in interviews and without exception every resident saw the RCA as a manager of the physical regeneration programme. The link between the RCA and housing was so central in people's minds that some were unsure about the difference between the RCA and the local council in terms of responsibility for their housing needs.

In Manningham and Girdlington the role of the community groups in delivering the programme was more limited. The importance placed on external agencies as key deliverers of project objectives meant that some community groups were angry that they would not receive any money from the programme. It seemed that 'community ownership' was not a priority for these organisations.

Despite consensus over the aims of the programmes in both areas (see chapter five), there was less evidence of any holistic or integrated approach to the programmes being adopted by community groups. In Royds the drive for independence among some organisations undermined attempts to create integration across different kinds of service providers. In some cases this had led to community groups opposing RCA ownership of projects, arguing that the 'people' should have control of new community centres, and in others groups had plans to develop projects in competition with those established by the regeneration board. In Manningham and Girdlington groups were found to ignore the SRB and did not see any likely relationship between them and the SRB developing in future.

The evidence suggests that whilst SRB programmes can develop the kinds of holistic approaches to local regeneration that are accorded so much importance in the literature, there is some way to go in developing any sense of integrated or holistic approaches to social problems across the community sector and the SRB partnership boards. We might question therefore, how easy it might be to encourage the community sector to be involved in the kinds of integrated and holistic approaches that are assumed to be so central to addressing multiple needs.

At least three issues seemed to affect the likelihood of this occurring. First, the involvement of the community sector rests partly on how far some groups feel they have aims compatible with the overall programme. In Manningham and Girdlington advice centres felt excluded from the overall scheme objectives despite the fact that they might have played a key role in offering advice to unemployed people.

Second, the amounts of money available for community groups can affect their perceptions of the regeneration programme. In Manningham and Girdlington criticisms of the SRB were most often founded on the fact that there was little money available to support community groups to deliver parts of the programme. The application process was seen to be difficult and people believed the main decisions about how the money should be spent had already been made. In Royds a larger proportion of the money available for social and economic regeneration had been given to local groups. To some extent these organisations were contributing to the overall achievement of the SRB aims, even if they ultimately sought independence from the RCA. Smaller groups in particular were benefiting from the Community Chest, without which it may have difficult for some of them to survive or even be established.

Third, perceptions of the SRB partnership can affect how far groups and residents feel part of the programme and how far they want to contribute to the overall scheme success. In both localities the partnership boards were seen as another authority institution. This was particularly interesting in Royds where the status of the RCA as a resident led organisation is its most celebrated feature. This finding suggests that policy makers and commentators need to be more cautious in assuming that organisational forms remain static over time. The RCA is an institution and as such it has tendencies to grow and become oligarchical. Over time these trends have meant that as an organisation it is perceived as an authority one step removed from the day to day lives of residents and community groups, rather than as an integral part of community life.

There is little doubt that both these localities suffered from the kinds of multiple problems that politicians and commentators are keen to see addressed through holistic approaches to social policy. The evidence from this study suggests that aspects of holism and integration do not trickle down to the attitudes and perceptions of local residents or community groups.

This has repercussions for the sustainability of projects long term where the autonomy and independence sought by many community organisations may thwart attempts to maintain projects long term. The evidence on how community groups identify needs and seek to respond to these (chapter five) suggests that their aims and objectives are more likely to be associated with funding opportunities arising from outside the locality than with any strategic aims decided in SRB partnership boards.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SOCIAL CAPITAL

The link between long term durability of regeneration programmes and social capital can be framed in two ways. First, the generation of social and human capital is widely associated with creating durable community activity to sustain regeneration activity once time-limited projects have ended. Second, and more fundamentally perhaps, social capital is seen by some as the 'glue' that holds places together and creates the kinds of social cohesion that provide the impetus for local people to work together to solve social problems at a local level (Forrest and Kearns, 1999; Taylor, 2000a, 2000b).

It should be emphasised that neither SRB programme identified the generation of social capital as an objective. However, they each included objectives regarding the creation of more volunteering opportunities and the concept of 'community empowerment' was mentioned by resident directors in Royds and community representatives in Manningham and Girdlington. The rhetoric of community empowerment, capacity building and social capital all suggest the same kinds of long term objectives in relation to regeneration policy. That is, to create sustainable communities that are able to generate their own regeneration without the need for targeted funds.

Underpinning these developments there is an explicit, although usually unstated, aim of creating more volunteers and more community involvement. The emphasis in this study has been on the ways in which community groups can contribute to the generation of social capital through volunteering, although some comments can be made regarding the relationship between social capital and social cohesion.

The evidence in chapter six suggested that community groups' role in producing social capital was limited. The relatively small numbers of people engaged in community group activity suggested that levels of social capital generated were insignificant (see also Bennett *et al.*, 2000). More important were the benefits that people derived from social capital - particularly users who found community groups more sensitive to their needs and volunteers who were able to build human capital resources.

More fundamentally, the evidence suggests that the generation of social capital through formal volunteering is an illusion. There was little evidence of reciprocal trust being generated through voluntary activity where volunteers saw inactive residents as 'apathetic' and those not involved found it difficult to access active roles.

The relationship between social capital generation and social cohesion needs to be examined in more depth through empirical work that explicitly focuses on this issue. The findings in this study suggest that our conceptualisation of social capital needs refining since there was some evidence that social capital generated in informal settings was not linked to more formal activities, and that the community sector was not effective at mobilising these forms of latent social capital. This might mean that the apparent link between social cohesion and social capital is also an illusion. The theoretical material did suggest that this might be the case, identifying as it did the context specific nature of social capital which indicated that social capital generated in one setting would not be transferred to other settings.

There is also a paradoxical relationship between social capital, human capital and patterns of potential migration that may affect aspects of sustainability. The generation of social capital can be seen to have created virtuous circles of social benefits for users and volunteers. These social benefits can open up choices to people in the form of employment opportunities and greater confidence. However, it is possible that the choice they make is to leave the locality. This might mean that overall levels of social capital remain static as there is no necessary growth in overall human capital resources in the locality; or it may lead to an overall reduction in social capital as those most likely to become involved in community activity leave. There is clearly a need for more research to examine the patterns of out-migration from deprived localities.

Although this paradoxical relationship works in terms of a logical assumption that those who can will leave these localities, the evidence also suggested that a significant minority of residents want to stay. People's connection to the locality was identified as one factor that appeared to affect resident perceptions of community involvement. Of particular concern are those residents who do feel trapped in places where they no longer want to live. The social exclusion and isolation of these people should be a priority for those whose objective it is to turn places around.

There is consequently mixed evidence regarding the role that community groups play in creating the virtuous cycles of social capital production on which sustainable regeneration programmes appear to rest. The positive contribution that community groups make to generating social benefits for users and volunteers is matched by relatively low rates of participation and exclusive patterns of involvement that limit opportunities for the majority of people to become more actively involved.

Balancing the benefits that community groups bring to localities through service provision against relatively low levels of volunteering and barriers to achieving more volunteering suggests that social capital generated by community groups may have an overall neutral effect. Furthermore, given the evidence from the development of the RCA, which has become increasingly institutionalised over time and is now perceived as something almost external to the locality, caution should be the watch word in assuming that the generation of social capital will create sustainable organisational forms that remain 'community based'.

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY GROUPS IN INTEGRATION AND COLLABORATIVE WORKING

The objective of creating integrated regeneration strategies that involve multi-faceted responses to social problems requires the bringing together of multiple stakeholders in consensus-seeking partnerships. Long term sustainability has been associated with leaving behind a community-based structure of collaborative working that can maintain the benefits of regeneration in the future. Both the SRB programmes in this study were managed through partnerships. These involved the usual range of partners, including community representatives.

Chapter seven identified a number of issues regarding the role of community groups in regeneration partnerships. Resource dependency theory suggested that pre-existing forms of collaboration between community groups could lead to the development of focal organisations that were influential in local coalitions and regeneration partnerships. There was evidence that focal organisations did exist in both localities, but the ways that they were involved in local coalitions and regeneration partnerships did not suggest that these organisations were necessarily aiming to contribute to an overall holistic view of regeneration. Instead, there was evidence that some focal organisations sought to retain their independence from the partnership board, particularly in Royds, and community groups did not appear to seek access to partnership boards as a means of influencing decision-making.

Furthermore, there was evidence that partnership boards may be thwarted in their attempts to include diverse 'voices' from within localities by the ways in which community representatives stressed their attachment to 'everyone' rather than to specific sections of the population. The difficulties of creating partnership boards that can reflect diversity and difference within localities should not be underestimated. The role of the community representatives in partnership boards has been underpinned by a belief that they are capable of defining needs, problems and solutions in ways that differ from mainstream service providers (Taylor, 2000a). The evidence presented in this study suggest many problems with these assumptions, not least the way in which community group definitions and responses to need were dominated by normative explanations and the influence of external needs-identifiers. This suggests that locally defined needs are as likely to be informed by the same kinds of dominant explanations as mainstream service providers. In addition, the extent to which community groups could represent the needs of particular sections of the population in these decision-making structures was limited in the context of generalised attitudes to representation expressed by community board members.

The lack of an integrated approach towards the regeneration programmes exhibited by community groups in both localities does not suggest that long term sustainability will be achieved in either locality through community based collaborative structures.

The assumption that groups can work together for common aims, or that there is some organisational form that can marry together diverse interests from within localities is not borne out by either theoretical models of inter-organisational working, or by the findings from this study. Organisations want to retain autonomy and independence. They do not necessarily want to be drawn into arrangements that detract from their main objectives. Entering into partnership may have entered the discourse of funding bodies and some community organisations, but community groups did not all want to be partners.

The continuing emphasis on partnership working and collaboration as the basis for successful regeneration strategies will inevitably mean that some community organisations remain outside the decision-making process. This also means that partnership boards must not be perceived as the only, or the most dominant, or the most legitimate voice in regeneration programme decision-making. The efforts of some community organisations to present an opposition to oligarchical partnership boards suggests that alternative mechanisms need to be implemented to enable those who do remain outside these structures a voice.

Taylor (2000a) and Carley *et al.* (2000) have argued that different kinds of community involvement are needed to ensure breadth of engagement with local people from consultation exercises to find out the views of residents through to local management of resources and the establishment of community regeneration organisations. To this list should be added forums for the involvement of community groups.

REGENERATION POLICY AND BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

The emphasis in this study has been on the role of the community sector in providing services and benefits to local people. It is also true to say that the community sectors in both localities were likely to benefit from the regeneration programmes.

First, community groups benefited from funding and allocation of resources in both localities. In Royds all the community groups had benefited from SRB funding, although it was pointed out in chapter seven that this could have negative consequences for some groups that had not developed skills and expertise in accessing external funds.

This negative aspect does not take away from the benefits that groups had received from the RCA however. Upgraded facilities like new kitchens, support for services such as playgroups, play schemes, services for older people and environmental improvements all contributed to the community sector in the three estates. In Manningham and Girdlington there was less direct funding likely to go to community groups, but some of these would benefit from being the sites for new Employment Resource Centres and the SRB was likely to be instrumental in helping efforts to keep the Girdlington Centre in local ownership and control.

Second, community groups benefited indirectly from the skills and knowledge that was being generated through community representatives at the partnership board level. In Royds, people who had been involved in the RCA were a potential source of new committee members, and volunteers. These individuals would have local knowledge across all three estates and expressed the feeling that their involvement had generated personal confidence and skills that could be beneficial to community groups in the future. In Manningham and Girdlington the community representatives were fewer, but each had significant networks of relations across the locality that could similarly be a source of increased knowledge and information. The development of a youth partnership board was providing potential for more widespread involvement of young people and youth group representatives.

The extent to which community groups acknowledged these benefits was limited. Their perceptions and experiences of the SRB to date had tended to veer on the critical side, and these positive benefits were not the focus of people's attention when talking about the regeneration programmes. In both localities it would seem that the opportunities that regeneration programmes present are overwhelmingly subsumed under a welter of criticism and negativity. It is not the place of this study to consider how far these criticisms are warranted, although it is certainly true to say that the individuals involved in the regeneration programmes in both areas were highly committed and positive about the contribution they were making, and hoped to make in the future, to local regeneration.

CONCLUSION

This relatively short overview of some of the main findings of this study in relation to aspects of integrated and sustainable regeneration programmes reflects the complexity and differential experience that underpins an essentially simple set of ideas. It would be hard to disagree with the idea that both these localities needed a multi-faceted approach to the solution of local problems. It would also be difficult to defend a position that said the 'community' should not be involved in that process. It is clearly positive to seek long term sustainable solutions to deep rooted social problems. The problem, as ever, is how social policy can operationalise these ideas effectively.

The organisational structures and mechanisms that regeneration policy are based on, such as partnerships and community involvement, are rarely criticised. Most commentators would like to see more 'community', believing that gaining the support and trust of local residents is crucial for long term regeneration of deprived areas. Duncan and Thomas (2000) sum up the views expressed by many involved in researching area-based regeneration policy :

'Regeneration programmes have been imposed on communities who have then become the recipients of activity, rather than active, equal partners in their own futures. It is becoming increasingly obvious that until trust, responsibility and decision-making are vested in local people themselves, regeneration programmes will continue to achieve only at best partial success' (Duncan and Thomas, 2000:3).

However, there is also an astonishing amount of evidence that supports the view that these kinds of regeneration policies do not work. The SEU (1998) argued that programmes like SRB had failed to create virtuous cycles of regeneration for many reasons, including the following:

'The lack of effective national policies to deal with structural causes of decline; a tendency to parachute solutions in from outside, rather than engaging local communities; and too much emphasis on physical renewal instead of better opportunities for local people. Above all, a joined up problem has never been addressed in a joined up way' (SEU, 1998:9).

The New Deal for Communities was an attempt to address some of these problems. Yet there is evidence that it too is failing to deliver on key objectives. A small survey carried out by Urban Forum (2000) found that many of the problems of the past remained: Government Office time scales were too rigid and too tight; communities remained on the outside, lacking skills and capacity to get involved in early decision-making; and a view from professionals that 'capacity building' extended only to the community's capacity to engage with the initiative, rather than a wider approach (Urban Forum, 2000). Similar criticisms have been levied at the way in which the New Deal for Communities has failed to engage with the plurality of interests in localities that cut across race and gender dimensions (Pierson *et al.*, 2000).

Chapter two argued that the same kinds of problems with engaging local communities in regeneration programmes had occurred since the 1970s. These latest reports suggest that even new programmes that have been heralded as the future for area-based regeneration are failing to engage local people yet again. Perhaps it is time to question the fundamental assumptions that guide these policies, and the way that they conceptualise and understand processes of neighbourhood decline (see for example MacLennan, 2000).

This study has tried to explore some of the structures and aspects of localities that underpin regeneration schemes in deprived localities. The view that emerges is of a complex configuration of competing narratives regarding the purpose, benefits and long term sustainability of regeneration programmes. In particular, there is a tendency for our understanding of community organisations, pre-existing networks and levels of needs to be static. The evidence in this study suggested that trends towards oligarchy emerged around community groups and regeneration partnerships. This meant that the partnerships were not perceived as belonging to the locality - even in Royds where the community-owned status of this regeneration programme has given it a degree of credibility at national level (Duncan and Thomas, 2000). This would seem to suggest that it is the imposition of mandatory partnership working that is the underlying problem, not necessarily the levels of community involvement that these achieve. With this view in mind, the final chapter rehearses the main arguments pursued throughout this study and seeks to locate these findings within the broad contexts that were first identified in chapter one.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

INTRODUCTION

“Voluntary and community organisations are key to Labour’s vision for Britain. From large national charities to local community groups and faith-based institutions, these sectors are a vital and diverse part of national life... Labour will build on its compact with the voluntary sector, as we develop more far-reaching partnerships for the delivery of services and the renewal of our communities. We will also build on our financial incentives for volunteering, by developing an effective infrastructure to support voluntary work in every community in Britain” (Labour Party, 2001:34).

This statement contained in the Labour Party’s 2001 election manifesto clearly identifies a commitment to enhancing and expanding the role of non-governmental organisations in the delivery of social policy. It is a reminder that the kinds of activities and groups that have been the focus of this thesis are likely to become even more important mechanisms through which policy makers will seek to implement social policy in the future.

The original aims of this thesis were to explore volunteering among social groups that had traditionally been shown to be least likely to volunteer. The community sector provided a route into the ways in which low income groups and ethnic minorities were involved in voluntary activity, whilst regeneration programmes have provided a policy context within which volunteering in deprived areas is accorded a central role.

The case study method that was adopted to explore community activity has enabled a relatively comprehensive view of community organisations in two different localities to emerge. This method proved to be successful in identifying local community sectors. The range of respondents interviewed and the depth of data made available has enhanced the overall analysis and findings.

The limitations of a case study approach based on two localities relate to a lack of breadth in coverage and consequently allude to the difficulty of generalising from the findings. Despite these limitations, which always present a risk in choosing depth over breadth in qualitative research, the data has provided a rich source from which to consider the main research questions.

The research questions developed from both existing literature and theoretical frameworks and centred around three main themes regarding first, service delivery and the ways in which community groups respond to local needs; second, volunteering and the ways in which community groups can play a role in the development of social capital; and third, partnership working and the ways in which community groups work together and with other agencies.

This final chapter seeks to broaden the discussion of these three themes in relation to each other and the implications that the findings have for developing a more theoretically based understanding of the community sector.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Service delivery and locally defined needs

Community groups do respond to local needs. They provide services for local people and are involved in seeking to expand the range of activities on offer. However, they do so in the context of pressures contained within local population needs and the availability of funding. In thinking about how community groups respond to local needs at least three issues have been raised that have implications for our understanding of the community sector.

First, different kinds of organisational form were found to influence the amount and variety of service provision offered by community groups. Multi-purpose and hybrid organisations were able to offer a range of services and activities thereby contributing to an overall sense of more activity taking place. Yet these organisations were also more formalised and more professionalised than small single purpose organisations. Small single purpose groups shared characteristics associated with more informal groupings - they did not have management committees and relied upon members to keep the organisation running.

These findings support the view expressed in chapter one that the community sector can be considered as diverse in form and function as the voluntary sector more generally. The community sector is not simply a sub-sector of the voluntary sector, but contains within it diverse forms and elements. Thus, it might be argued that in a model of community sector groups we should not just be looking for similarities between groups that can be used to define the community sector, but considering the ways in which diversity within the sector can create different kinds of pressures and constraints for organisations.

In seeking to understand these different kinds of constraints, it is useful to consider the position of community groups in relation to other spheres of social life (see Figure 1.1). The differentiated nature of organisational forms highlights the way in which diversity within the community sector leaves some groups closer to informal organisations whilst others develop organisational forms closer to mainstream voluntary groups. Small single purpose groups reliant upon a user/member base have more in common with the informal sector than larger, more formal groups. In contrast, multi-purpose groups, hybrid groups and larger single purpose organisations share similar concerns to mainstream voluntary sector organisations in terms of accountability and management issues that affect their funding capacity and long term viability. These differences in organisational form and function raise questions regarding the adequacy of treating the community sector as particularly different from the voluntary sector, when larger community groups share many of the same concerns, or of treating all groups within the community sector in similar ways.

The second issue raised by the findings on community group activities relates to the tension between particularism as a positive feature of the community sector, and the way in which this can reinforce social divisions. The capacity to respond to specific needs that may be marginalised in other sectors of welfare provision has been a celebrated feature of community and voluntary sector activity. However, the ways in which particularism can be manifested in localities divided across race, gender, age or territory tends to contradict the notion of community activity as a route to 'social cohesion' or a means of reducing divisiveness. The negative consequences of separatist tendencies along racial or ethnic lines has caught the attention of the national press in the aftermath of the riots in Manningham in July 2001. By coincidence the Bradford Race Review published its report on race relations in the City the week after the riots took place.

The Review team argued that the City of Bradford was gripped by fear caused by a basic lack of communication between parts of the population (Bradford Race Review, 2001). The ways in which community group use was found to be manifested across population groups in both Manningham and Girlington and Royds reinforces the notion that particularism in service provision can have negative consequences.

The contradictions inherent in expectations regarding service delivery and social cohesion raise important questions regarding the direction of support for community groups from public policy makers. In terms of anti-poverty strategies, developing local services and innovative responses is crucially important to improve the lives of local people. Yet these objectives need to be seen in the context of division and fragmentation between people who live in places. The problem is that poverty, unemployment and the struggle to survive are all issues that have bred contempt between social groups which exacerbate the very social divisions that a return to 'community' seek to change.

The third key point regarding community group activity relates to the notion of 'locally defined needs'. On the one hand, the influence of externally defined needs-agendas undermines the notion of 'locally defined' needs. On the other, there is little evidence to suggest that community groups are any more able to identify and respond to un-met needs than other kinds of welfare providers. Taken together, these findings challenge the assumption that community groups are necessarily closer to the needs of local people, especially in terms of identifying un-met needs and social groups whose needs are marginalised at the local level.

Thus, in terms of services and activities provided, the community sector is characterised by diversity in organisational form and function. Community groups can provide services for specific sections of the population, but in doing so they risk reinforcing existing social divisions. At the same time community groups can be constrained from meeting un-met needs by externally defined funding criteria and the influence of dominant discourses around deserving and undeserving social groups. Yet many groups provide important locally based access to services that would otherwise be unavailable to local people. The positive aspects of this work need to be supported without exaggerating the overall contribution to service provision that the community sector can make to welfare in deprived areas.

Volunteering and social capital

The findings revealed that people who live in deprived areas, who are on low incomes and are from ethnic minority groups do indeed volunteer. Their experiences of volunteering are not so different from those reported in previous studies in terms of personal satisfaction, learning new skills, and helping others (Thomas and Finch, 1990). It is the context within which that voluntary activity takes place that should be of concern to policy makers and academics, for the findings also revealed relatively low levels of opportunity for people to volunteer and be involved in local decision-making structures. Not only were opportunities to volunteer relatively small, but there was limited evidence that community groups saw any benefit in developing volunteering simply as an end in itself. Furthermore, the ways in which insider/outsider dimensions to volunteering were identified reinforces the notion that volunteering is a relatively exclusive form of activity.

These findings have ramifications for wider social policy in at least three ways. First, they suggest that the government's aim to increase the numbers of volunteers nationally rests upon assumptions that are not borne out by the evidence presented in this thesis. The mechanisms that are supported by the ACU (1999) to encourage more volunteering includes increasing the number community groups and increasing funding to existing groups. The former is problematic in the light of evidence that a greater number of groups does not necessarily lead to more volunteers. This is particularly the case where funding is tied to service provision. Emphasising services and project funding requires organisations to develop formalised structures to deal with funding bodies, decision-making and staff. Increasing professionalisation in the community sector, and the strains that go alongside maintaining funding to provide services may mean that fewer volunteers are involved, and that paid staff find recruiting and retaining volunteers is not worthwhile. The overall contribution of a community sector that primarily provides services is potentially one that generates only limited social capital and opportunities for widespread volunteering.

Second, the findings have revealed a lack of clarity regarding why more volunteering is required and how more people can be encouraged to volunteer. Neither the government nor the community sector is clear about the objectives associated with volunteering.

The ambiguity turns on an old, but still relevant, debate: Is volunteering supported as a means to an end (providing more people to undertake more voluntary work to benefit the locality) or as an end in itself (the outcome of increasing volunteering is less important than the fact that people are doing it)? There are elements of both approaches apparent in different aspects of policy for deprived areas. On the one hand a stress on improving local services and developing more self-help implies that volunteering is a means to an end. The emphasis on re-building community spirit and enhancing social capital suggests that volunteering is an end in itself - a way of bringing the excluded back into the mainstream. The latter is not easy to quantify, it is not easy to evaluate and it can hamper the service delivery functions that groups seek to perform. Hence, paid workers in this study did use volunteers but were concerned with expanding services, not with social inclusion. Furthermore, increasing service delivery and associated professionalisation also contradicts the aim of increasing user participation in decision-making. Groups are increasingly drawing on expertise that might be found outside localities, rather than developing user groups to inform decision making.

There is, consequently a potential contradiction between the aim of developing social capital as a means of challenging social exclusion and the aim of developing social capital as a means of producing local benefits. Arguably the groups in this study were much more likely to pursue objectives associated with the latter - the provision of services using a modicum of voluntary effort - rather than the former.

Third, the findings suggest that there is a need for much greater caution in assuming too much about the inactive/active polarity of volunteering. Choice is important in terms of understanding willingness to be involved. People can choose to live in relative isolation from their neighbours and bound their daily lives by the workplace and the immediate family home. Middle class suburbia may be the very epitome of chosen isolation and exclusion from social life. It is only in poor neighbourhoods that those who choose isolation over participation are branded as apathetic. Volunteering is not a panacea for social problems - either material, structural or personal.

It is to be hoped that the activities and commitment expressed by respondents in this study goes some way to dispelling the notion that low income groups and ethnic minorities somehow lack an interest or capacity to volunteer. Certainly it is the case that cultural, social and economic factors can reduce an individual's likelihood of volunteering - Asian women, young people and those whose primary goal is finding work or maintaining their family on low incomes do find it difficult to access volunteering. Yet it is also the case that opportunities for people to be involved are extremely limited in locally based organisations. The rhetoric of social capital has not reached those groups for whom survival and organisational capacity and viability is more important than developing volunteering as an end in itself.

Partnership working

It has been shown that many community groups do work together and with other agencies in sometimes complex patterns of inter-organisational working. It was also possible to identify 'focal organisations' and 'overlapping members' who were in a more favourable position than other groups or volunteers when it came to involvement in umbrella groups, regeneration partnerships and other multi-sector forms of working. A key issue, however, was the way in which community groups wanted to retain their autonomy. This hampered efforts at collaborative working if groups felt their independence was being threatened. In some cases, the community sector was found to generate opposition and alternatives to established programmes. This suggests that community groups can, and do, operate outside dominant mechanisms for local regeneration when it is possible for them to do so. Nurturing the independence of the community sector may be crucial if it is to produce the innovation and alternative responses to local needs that in the past it has been celebrated for achieving.

The findings also point to the importance of understanding processes of change within community groups. Organisational forms are not static and what constitutes the local community sector in one round of decision-making may change by the time new policies come into play. Local decision making structures should be aware of these changes and seek to re-assess common sense views of local community sectors regularly. Of particular concern are the trends towards oligarchy that were found to occur in many groups. This can contribute to a sense of 'them' (community groups) and 'us' (residents) which undermines the concept of community-owned services or locally defined needs.

More caution needs to be taken in assuming that the most visible forms of community activity are indeed the most widely supported.

As the rhetoric of new local governance, community involvement and partnerships becomes more entrenched in area-based regeneration policy, it is important that we do not lose sight of the effects on community groups. The drive for multi-sectoral partnership can take the 'community' out of the community sector.

Furthermore, new local governance and meeting the needs of partnerships can also act against the aim of encouraging volunteering, as skills and expertise in bureaucratic procedures are in greater demand than lay knowledge of local issues. Thus, partnerships are essentially a management tool. Community groups treat them as such and will move in and out of these structures as and when they need to. Far from developing coherence, holism and integration these new organisational forms may serve to undermine the development of new volunteering opportunities as the 'usual suspects' become more deeply attached to new networks of inter-organisational relations.

Despite these concerns, a key issue for the community sector in future will undoubtedly be how to engage with new local governance mechanisms. The development of various layers of decision making from neighbourhoods through to national government is likely to create new challenges for community groups and policy makers as institutional changes within government begin to roll out. Once again the community sector is trapped between two competing claims. On the one hand these mechanisms offer the potential for community groups to play a legitimate role in decision making. On the other, groups risk being incorporated into complex consensus seeking partnerships that make opposition and the presentation of alternatives difficult.

It may be possible to translate the way in which community groups ignored local regeneration partnerships in favour of independence to a more widespread dis-engagement by the community sector from these new local governance structures. Unless community organisations can see the gains from working in these structures it may be difficult to encourage them to be involved.

The difficulty of linking layers of governance into a holistic framework of decision-making should not be underestimated. Different research agendas have pointed to the problems that manifest themselves throughout these complex chains of command. It has been argued that there is a lack of opportunity for local activists to be involved in city-wide and regional partnerships because of the limited integration of neighbourhood level partnerships with those higher up the spatial decision-making chain (Carley *et al.*, 2000). Robson *et al.* (2000) have highlighted the problem that there is little indication of how RDAs will interact with either the voluntary or community sectors.

These findings have implications for the development of more and more complex forms of inter-agency and multi-sectoral working in social policy. Not only do they support the well-founded view that community and voluntary sector representatives are likely to be the least powerful members of any partnership form, but they question some of the fundamental bases upon which partnership working is established.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

To this point, the discussion has tended to treat service delivery, volunteering and inter-organisational working as separate aspects of community group functions. The reality, of course, is that all three occur simultaneously and theorising about the role of the community sector in area-based regeneration policy requires us to understand more about the contribution of all three of these functions. In turn this rests upon a clearer exposition of how policy makers perceive the role of community groups, and that is not clear or consistent across various elements.

At a normative level the links between volunteering, service delivery and involvement in decision-making are clear. Volunteers act collectively to provide services in localities. They therefore have a part to play in local governance structures to inform policy making in order for this to be more responsive to local needs. This simplistic model of the relationship between community activity and its role in local decision-making dominates the current policy context and clearly implies a link between: the identification of local needs; volunteering; and capacity to engage with local decision-making structures that have been found to be at odds with reality in many research studies including this one.

Seeking to understand why this might be the case and why the community sector continues to play at best a marginal role in area based regeneration policy is not an easy task. Some commentators have argued that we need to understand more clearly how places and people interact - why people leave localities and why they stay (Maclennan, 2000). Others have argued that regeneration policies need to understand the histories, structures and social relationships that make up communities (Forrest and Kearns, 1999), and the divisions that exist within them (Bennett *et al.*, 2000). Such endeavours would rest upon the assumption that places differ - that the context within which poverty and social exclusion are manifested matters in terms of finding adequate responses. These are valid claims in the light of evidence presented in this thesis that highlight some of the historical and contextual factors that underpin the development of community activity.

Alternatively we can attempt to understand the role of the community sector in area-based regeneration policy more theoretically. This thesis has sought to contribute to such a theoretical debate. By deconstructing the functions of the community sector it has been possible to identify sources of tension and contradiction regarding the role of community groups in area-based regeneration policy. Furthermore, it is important to identify the way in which the community sector represents different things to these different stakeholders. For residents, community groups may be the 'highest' possible level of involvement they can engage with at a local level. For policy makers, the community sector represents the 'lowest' level of engagement in decision making. Policy makers ambitions can be filtered through the community sector in terms of funding opportunities, in-kind support and pressure to conform to bureaucratic types that match public bodies. Resident ambitions can be filtered through groups in terms of demands for new services or pressure for local change. Given these differing perceptions and aspirations, it is not surprising that the community sector struggles to create an identity for itself.

In essence it seems to be the case that service delivery and partnership working 'win out' over volunteering, both in terms of choices made by community groups and incentives provided by politicians. Of course, within any locality the balance between these functions may differ. It is feasible that some community sectors have achieved a balance between these functions through diversity in form and function across organisations.

Some organisations are aware of the tensions between these competing aims and make choices about they will negotiate them. It is the general direction in which these trends may shift that should concern those who value the community sector's contribution. Achieving a balance between these functions will be important for protecting the independence of the community sector and enabling it to contribute to the sum of social life.

Of particular interest is how far the sum total of these functions has a positive effect on neighbourhoods. The notion that an active community sector providing lots of local provision causes a 'ripple' effect regardless of whether people are actively involved in these groups or not, is an important one in the context of how far support for the community sector makes a difference to localities. The evidence from this thesis suggests that community activity is necessarily exclusive thereby exacerbating the position of the most dispossessed who lack access to volunteering opportunities; who lack access to community based services because their needs are not prioritised by funding bodies or local activists; and who are further removed from even local decision-making bodies.

Whilst it is not fashionable to question the goal of participation and local decision-making, there is a real issue at stake concerning the development of area-based regeneration policy in future. No such policy will succeed if it is based on an assumption that local people know best and that they can effectively prioritise diverse needs emanating from within deprived localities. A culture of victim blaming continues to exist among residents in deprived areas where the plight of lone parents, drug users, homeless people, and ethnic minorities is still often explained in terms of traditional 'deserving' and 'undeserving' categories.

THE NEED FOR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING

Indications from this thesis suggest at least three areas where more research is necessary. First, in terms of the community sector itself, there is a need for a more theoretical approach to explore different kinds of community sectors in affluent as well as less affluent areas. This research has argued that there are institutional features of the community sector that act against greater levels of involvement. How far these features are related to poverty or social exclusion is unknown.

Second, the theoretical and empirical understandings of the social capital debate need to be much more rigorously thought through. In particular, evaluating the existence and effect of social capital in terms of deprivation and social exclusion requires deeper understanding of how places, people and poverty interact. In doing so we need to consider how layers of social capital interact and whether or not any 'ripple' effect does in fact occur.

Third, there is a need to understand more thoroughly the fragmented and differentiated nature of volunteering. In particular the relationship between active and inactive residents and whether or not there is a maximum amount of volunteering that can occur in any given locality are issues that would assist in furthering understanding.

All three of these could contribute to a greater depth of understanding regarding the efficacy of place based responses to poverty and social exclusion. One of the central difficulties with research in this field is the tendency to concentrate efforts on specific facets. To borrow government rhetoric on this issue, perhaps what is needed is a more integrated and holistic approach to the research we conduct.

CONCLUSION

It has long been argued that the local is an inadequate spatial level at which to deal with problems caused by globalisation. Consequently, commentators have been keen to stress the supplementary role of community based organisations in alleviating poverty (Donnison, 1993; Knight and Hayes, 1981; Willmott, 1989). Yet we are also witnessing a growth in the faith placed in neighbourhood level responses to both poverty and social exclusion.

If the locality is the most appropriate level at which solutions to poverty should be implemented, then we need to reconsider the most effective mechanisms through which to effect change. Community groups have a part to play in this - they do provide services, generate social capital and get involved in inter-agency partnership working. They play an important role in the lives of many people committed to improving conditions for their neighbours. The community sector's greatest asset has always been its position in relation to other spheres of social life. It has been able to supplement and oppose statutory provision. It has been a source of activism for campaigners and a life line for the most dependent.

The fact that the government recognises this role may also be positive for the development of the community sector, but contains risks that the community sector could be stripped of the independence and autonomy that lie at the heart of its historical success.

In area-based regeneration policy the role of the community sector has often remained hidden or subsumed within the rhetoric of 'community involvement'. This thesis has sought to uncover the role of the community sector in deprived localities that of themselves reflected diverse and relatively active community sectors. The messages that emerge are perhaps unpalatable - that community groups do not necessarily respond to locally defined needs, that they are not necessarily a source of 'social capital' and that only some organisations have the capacity or interest to engage in new local governance structures.

Adopting a critical approach to these issues is crucial if social policy is to progress. To suggest that the community sector does not live up to all the demands placed upon it should not mean that support for the sector is reduced. It simply means that greater clarity is required in how debates about poverty, deprivation and social exclusion are explored and where the most appropriate focus of attention should be placed. Protecting the rights of local people to act collectively is one thing, to expect them to produce answers to intractable social problems is another. Finding a balance between the two is, perhaps, a challenge for us all.

APPENDIX ONE
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Introduction

Purpose of research

Anonymity

Self checking

Name of group:

Name of respondent:

Position in the organisation:

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES PROVIDED AND FUNDING

Types of activities and services provided by the group

Who uses these services?

How are these services/activities funded?

Do you have a main funder?

If so - who?

How much does it cost to run the group for a year?

Does the group own the building?

If no -who owns? Do you pay rent?

When was the group formed?

Who formed the group?

Why was it formed?

Has the group ever been involved in any campaigning activity?

Have the group's aims changed over time?

RUNNING THE GROUP

How is the organisation managed?

Do you employ paid workers?

How many?

Do you have any volunteers? How many?

Do they all live locally?

What kinds of things do volunteers do?

Would the group benefit from more volunteers?

In what ways?

How do you recruit volunteers?

Do you have a management committee?

Who sits on the committee?

How many people sit on the committee?

Do they all live locally?

How are they elected?

Who attends AGMs and how many people attend? (last AGM and numbers).

What kinds of things do management committee members do?

Do individual committee members have specialist roles?

How do find committee members?

WORKING WITH OTHER GROUPS

Do you know many other local groups?

How do you know them?

Do you ever work with any of them?

Which ones?

Why do you work with other groups?

In what ways do you work together?

Do any other groups use this building?

THE SRB PROGRAMME

Have you heard of (SRB)?

What do you think the SRB programme is doing?

Is there anything else you think the SRB programme should be doing?

Was your group consulted or involved in planning the programme?

Does your group have a representative sitting on the SRB board?

Do you think local groups should have more of a say in the SRB programme?

Why?

Have you ever disagreed with anything the SRB has done?

What did you do about it?

THE LOCALITY

What kinds of problems do people who live in (place) have do you think?

How do community groups help people?

What do you think your group does (provides) that is most beneficial to local people?

What else would you like to do?

I have been trying to locate all the community groups in this area. LIST - ask them to check and add.

Is there anything else you think would be useful for me to know at this stage?

APPENDIX TWO

TOPIC GUIDES FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Not all the topics were covered in all the interviews. The selection of topics depended on the role the respondent played in the community sector and whether or not they were a resident. The order of topics covered also varied depending on the respondent.

Consistency was applied by ensuring that each role played an individual covered the same questions as other people in the same position. This meant that someone who was a paid worker, a committee member and a local resident was asked the same questions about their work as a committee member as someone who was only a committee member and not a local resident.

Introduction; purpose of research; anonymity

Descriptive data: (depending on respondent) to include name of group; name of respondent; position in the organisation; sex; age; ethnicity; employment status; living arrangements; length of residency/work.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

How and why organisations decide to run certain kinds of activities

Changes over time

Other activities groups would like to provide

The influence of funding bodies - what is it easy/difficult to get funding for?

What kinds of help do groups get apart from funding (community workers; in kind support; BiTC; resource centres; national bodies)

Policy on volunteers (recruitment and retention, training)

Views about community groups

What are they good at?

Are they important? Why?

How do people find out about community groups?

Do community groups bring benefits to the wider community - not just users?

BENG A VOLUNTEER/COMMITTEE MEMBER

How and why people came to volunteer (personal histories of volunteering)

What kinds of things people do as volunteers (how many groups)

What people like best/worst

What do friends and family think about your volunteering?

How do people get involved in management committee?

What is it like to be on a committee?

How are decisions made?

Do all the committee members make these decisions?

How important is the management committee to the running of the group?
Check other committees, other volunteering.

WORKING WITH OTHER GROUPS

Expand on information from survey

THE SRB PROGRAMME

Do people know about it?

Have they been involved in consultation exercises?

Do they know who the community representatives are? (show list)

Are the priorities right?

What else should the programme do?

Has it made a difference?

Any particularly good or bad things?

Should local people be involved in making decisions about how the money is spent?

How might this happen?

have you ever thought about getting involved in the board as a community representative?

Why (not)?

How are groups themselves involved in the programme?

Earlier schemes (selected respondents)

BEING A RESIDENT

How long have you lived here?

What is it like to live here?

Would you like to stay here?

What do people like/dislike?

Do people use community groups? (checklist also) (heard of/use)

What do people think local groups do?

What kinds of things would they like to be provided more locally?

How much say do local people have about what goes on?

Would you ever consider being a volunteer or getting involved in any local groups?

Why?

What do you think stops people from getting involved?

BEING A BOARD MEMBER (community representative; resident director)

How and why people got involved.

What board members do.

What's it like being on the board?

Who do you represent?

What kinds of influence can board members have?

The best/worst thing?

Has the programme been successful?

How does the programme work with local community groups?

What will happen when the programme comes to an end?

CONCLUSION: Summing up; any other issues.

APPENDIX THREE

TOPIC GUIDES FOR USER GROUPS

The topic guides were altered for each type of group in order to relate more specifically to the age of respondents and the activities/group they were involved in.

Introduction; purpose of research; anonymity

Living here

Do people like living here?
The best/ worst things?
How have things changed over time?
Things that people need? Problems?

Using the centre

How and why people came to know about the centre
What do people do? (list and like best/least)
Other things you would like to do?
How do people get to the centre? (How far away do they live?)
Do people know anything about how the group is run?

Members and other users

Do people know lots of other members?
Would it be better/worse if more people came?
How would they get to know about the centre/group?
What would you tell someone about the centre if they asked?

Benefits to users

Has coming to the centre been good for you?
In what ways?
What do family and friends think about the centre?
(childcare, partners, school friends)

Other centres/groups

Do people use other centres?
Do they know about other places where they could do similar things?
Discussion about community groups - good, bad, what do they do, are they a good idea
(why)

Discussion on volunteering

Does anyone volunteer?
Would they like to?
What do people think volunteers do?
Running the group (committees, member/users, young people).

APPENDIX FOUR

SRB PROGRAMMES IN YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE (1998)

The Table shows basic characteristics of all those SRB schemes in operation in the Yorkshire and Humberside region in 1998 that corresponded to one or other of the requirements for the study (see chapter four).

Bold indicates places that were identified as districts where more than one locality could be selected to reflect diverse characteristics.

Place	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4
Bradford	Three estates Integrated Resident-led		Five estates Housing/Ed. Some resident led	Inner city Ed./Training Ethnic minority
Wakefield	Mining community			Two estates Integrated
Leeds	Four areas Inner city Including Ethnic minorities	Three areas Housing based	Four wards Youth development	Two areas Integrated Ethnic minority
Catterick				Garrison wards Social and economic
Sheffield	Inner city Integrated Ethnic minority	Housing Young people Joint stock company pilot	Three areas Integrated	Number of areas Social and economic
Huddersfield	Inner city Integrated Ethnic minority		Inner city Crime and employment	
Bridlington			Two wards Housing and employment	
Lincolnshire			Town centre Jobs training and advice	

Place	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4
Doncaster		Town centre Economic		
Rotherham		Two areas Integrated Ethnic minority		
Dewsbury		Town centre Integrated Ethnic minority		
Keighley		Multiple areas Integrated Ethnic minority		
Hull		Housing estate Physical and social		
Scunthorpe	Town centre Integrated Ethnic minority			
Grimsby	Estate based Resource centre for voluntary sector			
Stainforth	Estate based ex-mining Integrated			
Halifax	Three wards Integrated Ethnic minority			

APPENDIX FIVE
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

The respondents were not all easily placed into mutually exclusive categories of volunteer/committee member/community representative/paid worker. Many people were active in more than one role and the topic guides were personalised in order to capture as much variety of an individual's experience as possible.

The table below details the pseudonym used for each respondent, whether they were working in Manningham and Girdlington (M/G) or Royds (R) and briefly describes the roles they undertook in relation to the community sector.

Name (pseudonym)	Place	Activities covered in interview
Ajit	M/G	Community worker, resident
Alison	R	Resident director, volunteer, resident
Andrea	R	Resident director, volunteer, resident
Andrew	R	Paid worker, ex-volunteer, resident
Arthur	M/G	Paid worker, ex-volunteer, resident
Beryl	R	Volunteer, resident
Bev	M/G	Paid worker, resident
Bob	R	Volunteer, committee member, resident
Christine	M/G	Committee member
Dorothy	R	Volunteer, resident
Evelyn	R	Paid worker
Hamida	M/G	Volunteer, resident
Idrees	M/G	Committee member, resident
Iqbal	M/G	Paid worker, community representative, committee member
Jacob	R	Paid worker
James	R	Paid worker
Jane	R	Resident director, volunteer, resident

Name (pseudonym)	Place	Activities covered in interview
Judy	R	Committee member, resident
Kate	R	Paid worker
Keith	R	Resident director, committee member, resident
Kerry	R	Committee member, resident
Laila	M/G	Paid worker, resident
Lewis	R	Committee member, resident
Linda	M/G	Committee member
Luke	M/G	Volunteer, resident
Malcolm	R	Committee member, resident
Marie	M/G	Committee member
Mary	R	Volunteer, resident
Mohsin	M/G	Volunteer, resident
Neil	M/G	Committee member, resident
Nirmal	M/G	Committee member, resident
Patrick	R	Resident director, ex-volunteer, resident
Paul	M/G	Committee member, resident
Paula	M/G	Volunteer, resident
Peter	M/G	Paid worker
Robert	M/G	Committee member, resident
Roger	R	Volunteer, resident
Sally	R	Paid worker
Seema	M/G	Committee member
Shirley	M/G	Committee member, community representative
Simon	M/G	Paid worker
Steve	R	Paid worker
Sue	R	Volunteer, resident
Tanya	R	Volunteer, resident
Terrence	M/G	Committee member, resident

Name (pseudonym)	Place	Activities covered in interview
Thomas	M/G	Paid worker
Tim	R	Committee member, ex-resident director
Tracey	R	Volunteer, resident
Veronica	R	Resident director, volunteer, resident
Wendy	R	Committee member, resident

APPENDIX SIX
FULL LIST OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

The following list shows all the activities mentioned by community groups. These were subsequently merged into six categories used in chapter five.

Activity	Number of groups providing in Manningham and Girdlington	Number of groups providing in Royds
Youth Activities		
General youth recreation	12	7
Study support	9	1
Issue based youth work	9	1
Playscheme	5	3
Residential/overseas (youth)	6	0
Playgroup	5	7
Counselling service (youth)	1	0
Breakfast club	0	1
Creche	2	1
Employment and Training		
Careers Advice	8	1
Job Club	8	2
ESOL/Literacy	7	1
Employment training	8	2
Computing facilities	7	1
Sewing/cookery	4	1
Formal education	2	1
Business development	1	1
Religious education	3	1
Housing		
Housing related	2	1
Residents association	5	2

Activity	Number of groups providing in Manningham and Girlington	Number of groups providing in Royds
Social activities		
Lunch clubs/cafe	2	11
Social clubs/games	2	9
Collective self help		
Savings club	0	2
Toy library	0	1
Second hand furniture	0	1
Environment, health and advice		
Advice services	6	3
Health and fitness	3	5
Environmental work	3	1
Newsletter/magazine	1	1

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