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The Contribution of Small-scale, Rural Festivals to the Social Sustainability of their Host Communities in Northumberland, UK

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Abstract

Small-scale festivals, as occasions for communal gathering and celebration, have long held a place in the respective local calendars of many towns and villages throughout the United Kingdom. By their nature, they are sites for social interaction, performance and participation on many levels. Some have an historic precedent going back several centuries, while a great many arose post 1980 as a result, in part, of the burgeoning tourism and heritage industries and the regeneration policies and development strategies of the pre-millennium era. The proliferation of the UK festival field raises questions of sustainability, purpose and effectiveness and of the need for greater social evaluation in response to a perceived over-emphasis on economic outcomes. While some cultural and developmental strategies do acknowledge the potential social impact of small-scale festivals, to date the emphasis has been predominantly upon the economic contribution with research into festival impact taking a particularly urban focus.

This research project examined the contribution of small-scale festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities within a rural context through a case study approach in Northumberland. A comprehensive overview of the dynamic of festivals within the county between 1980 and 2012 allowed for the selection of the four case studies. The mixed-method approach combined a review of the literature, archival and field research with a range of semi-structured interviews with festival and community stakeholders. Four principle indicators were identified through which to measure the contributions of the festivals to community social sustainability. These indicators are: contribution to community pride and localness, enhancement of knowledge and understanding, contribution to the continuity of local culture, and enablement of networks of connectivity. By examining these events through a lens of social sustainability, the thesis presents an argument, as outlined in the conclusion, which supports the potential for small-scale, rural festivals to make a positive contribution to their communities.

The findings within the thesis suggest that small-scale, rural festivals make a significant contribution to the social sustainability of their host communities through the networks of connections they enable temporally (with heritage), spatially (with place)

and socially (with the individuals and groups which interact with the event). In order for these festival connections to contribute to sustainability, these events must demonstrate a balance within these connections of both consistency and innovation and an accessibility and openness within the locale. It is this accessibility and the balance of consistency and innovation which ultimately determines the festival's contribution to the social sustainability of its host community.

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Abbreviations as used in the thesis to identify the primary interview data:

Case study festivals:

MG: Morpeth Gathering

OGF: Ovingham Goose Fair

HC: Haltwhistle Carnival

GF: Glendale Festival

Interview categories (used to reference interview quotations):

Orgs: Organisers

KFs: Key Figures

FG1:   Focus Group1

FG2:   Focus Group2

(Visitor and Strategic Decision-Maker interview categories: not abbreviated)

Abbreviations as used in the thesis:

ACE NE: Arts Council England North East

ACE: Arts Council England

ACRE: Action with Communities in Rural England

AHRC: Arts and Humanities Research Council

BAFA: British Arts Festival Association

CGTM: Constructivist Grounded Theory Method

DCMS: Department for Culture, Media and Sport

DEFRA: Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

FSIAS: Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale

ICH: Intangible Cultural Heritage

IFACCA: International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies

LADAs: Local Arts Development Agencies

LSP: Local Strategic Partnership

NCC: Northumberland County Council

NERIP: North East Research and Information Partnership

NHS: National Health Service

NSR: Northumberland Small-scale Rural

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

ONE: One North East

ONS: Office for National Statistics

RDA: Regional Development Agency

SIE: Social Impact Evaluation

SIPs: Social Impact Perception Scale

SWB: Subjective Well-Being

UK: United Kingdom

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

1   Chapter 1. Introduction

'Celebration can bind a community and it can also be the instrument that keeps community a fresh and constantly renewing experience […] responsive to the needs of the times' (Derrett, 2005:13).

'Sustainable development and community participation *must* go hand in hand' (Porritt, 1998:xi).

1.1   Introducing the Research Context

Festivals have been described as the gathering together of people within a community to celebrate and participate, 'the sense of community and celebration engendered by an occasion' (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006:3). Their sense of collectiveness and connectivity is recognised by Picard and Robinson (2006:12) who describe festivals as 'public and private expressions of ritual serving different groups with differing meanings [...] through which they create meaningful frameworks of their being together'. Gibson *et al.* (2011:3) describe small-scale, rural festivals as 'enjoyable, special and exceptional, sometimes the only time of celebration in small towns'. These events have been evidenced as being able to 'articulate a strong sense of being part of a community'.

This introductory chapter outlines the context of the research which concentrates upon a time span of approximately 30 years between 1980 and 2012. A definition of festival as used within the thesis is firstly provided giving both an overall understanding of what comprises a festival and a definition of a small-scale, community based rural festival as the subject under investigation. The chapter subsequently presents an overview of the four case study festivals including their geographical locations within the county of Northumberland in the United Kingdom (UK). Following this section, the significance of the research and its predominant themes are introduced including the potential social contribution of festivals and the concept of social sustainability. The Aims and Objectives and organisation of the thesis conclude this introductory chapter.

1.2   Defining a Small-scale, Rural Festival

In order to understand either the contemporary place or the evolution of the festival in its literary and academic context, an understanding of the definition of "festival" is imperative. Although there is no one definitive description, there are features which

appear repeatedly when referencing festivals. For the purpose of this thesis, the following description best defines what is meant by a festival: a short-term, transient and regularly recurring event with elements of performance and display at its heart. Such events occur, as Abrahams (1987) and Turner (1988) infer, in a liminality of space and time. The performance and display, the content of the festivals, varies hugely and likewise, the range of the audiences which might engage with such events. To many people the word festival suggests a large, world renowned event of perhaps several thousands of visitors, focused on popular music or culture such as the Glastonbury or Edinburgh festivals. These mega-events may attract large numbers and are often proffered as contributors to economic prosperity through tourism and regional development. However, these large scale festivals represent only one aspect of a very varied field. As Bowen (2013:n.p.) writes, 'there is something wonderfully wild-west, indefatigable and regulation–free about the UK festival scene […] not all festivals can set as their primary aim the creation of unique, important, high-end work that might set the arts elite a-chattering. For many festivals, being of the community, and being for the community is what it is much more about'. Picard and Robinson (2006:12) describe these festivals as 'public and private expressions of ritual serving different groups with differing meanings [...] through which they create meaningful frameworks of their being together'.

Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that 'most festivals are quite small and simply significant for local people and a scatter of visitors from afar' (Gibson and Connell, 2011: xv), comments reinforced by Finkel (2006) and Rolfe (1992). Although small-scale and, in particular, rurally located events make up a considerable percentage of the overall number of festivals, it is arguable that many such events fall below the radar of funders and researchers alike (Reid, 2007; Gibson and Connell, 2011). This paucity of research into the social impact of small-scale, rurally located festivals, despite their apparent proliferation, was a driver in the author's interest in this area of research, guiding the focus of the thesis towards festivals of this description and the selection of case studies in rural locations and small in scale (section 4.3.3).

In brief, a festival is defined as small if it attracts less than 10,000 visitors and income of less than £30K (British Arts Festival Association, 2008:8; Finkel, 2009:6). It may be considered rurally located if it is situated within a town or village having a population

less than 10,000 (Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), 2014) or one referred to as a rural town within strategic and administrative documents (Greater Morpeth Development Trust, 2010; Morpeth Town Council, 2014). In addition, the festivals identified as case studies within this research had to have originated or been motivated from within the host community locale (either as initial idea or through initial organisation) and have an organisational committee consisting or aiming to consist in the majority of local community members.

1.3   Northumberland: the Setting for the Case Study Festivals

The research took the form of a case study investigation comprising four small-scale, community festivals, defined as being locally originated, organised and attended events. Each case study was located within the county of Northumberland, the most northerly unitary authority in England, situated with Scotland to its northern border, the North Sea to its east, Cumbria to the west and Durham to the south (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Map of UK showing location of Northumberland (Newcastle University, 2004)

Northumberland is a predominantly rural county, described as the most sparsely populated in England (Vall, 2011). It contains a number of rural and semi-rural towns and villages spread across its 5000 square kilometres, many of which are host to an

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annual or biannual festival. These may be hub towns or villages where a sparse or widely spread population has the opportunity to gather for commerce, education or recreation (such as a festival), to reinforce communal values and cultural traditions (Duvignaud, 1976; Rolfe, 1992). The holding of a festival may provide such an opportunity for a community to come together and many rural festivals have historic precedence as annual occasions for communal exchange. More recently created festivals within Northumberland suggested community revival and participation within the locale as reasons behind their origins (Northumberland Strategic Partnership, 2002). Festivals were proffered as opportunities for regional regeneration, a means for increasing community involvement and sustainable development within the 'new rural development paradigm' (Shepherd, 1998:17,184).

The rurality of the county and the low density of its population appeared not to affect the festival dynamic. Festival dynamic is used here to mean the scope of festivals and changing patterns within that scope for example, festivals starting, restarting, continuing or ending. Between 1980 and 2012, the time frame of the research, 105 small-scale, rural festivals were recorded as being in existence, starting up or ending (Appendix 3). As is explored in detail in section 3.4.3, these festivals took on a diversity of forms and had a range of origins, inherent processes and heritage content, some historic dating back many generations while others were more recent. Some events in the county were recreations of previous festivals, reinvigorated either from within the community or by initiatives of development and regional regeneration.

Northumberland lies within the wider North East of England, a region which benefitted from regenerative funding and, particularly during the two decades before the millennium, witnessed regional investment for development through arts and culture. Strategic focus in the region, while seeking to promote the local heritage, aimed at attracting the outside visitor to the region and thus tended towards development and support for large festivals with often a national or international focus. Government regeneration and economic strategies were predominantly administered through the Regional Development Agency (RDA) One North East (ONE), including the implementation of cultural strategies influencing festival development. The impact of strategies within the region upon the Northumberland festival dynamic is examined in sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3. Attention is paid to the level and type of strategic

contribution made as evidenced within the literature, archival materials and through interviews with strategic decision makers and festival organisers. Perceptions of strategic influence are also identified amongst members of the place community and festival visitors through interviews.

Despite the historical and contemporary evidence of many festivals occurring in rural and semi-rural areas, the majority of literature concerning festival impact focuses on urban events. The gap in social impact research into rural festivals, identified by authors such as Wood and Thomas (2009) and Gibson and Connell (2011) is further explored in section 1.5.2. A paucity of research appears to be mirrored by a lack of strategic input towards rural and small-scale festivals. A growing rural emphasis at strategic level under the New Labour Government, whilst potentially bringing greater attention to festivals outside the urban sphere, tended to focus predominantly on economic regional development. Northumberland appeared to be no exception as evidence suggested that ONE focused its attention on larger, nationally significant festivals with the greater potential to attract tourists than smaller, community events (SQW, 2006; Anderson, 2007). This in part reflected an increasing reliance on tourism within the economy of Northumberland, which makes up 11.8% of the economy, 2.7% higher than the national average (Northumberland Tourism, 2014). As already noted, this tendency to overlook the smaller, often rural festivals reaches far beyond Northumberland and reflects a national and indeed international trend.

1.4 Introducing the Case Study Festivals

The four case study festivals are the Morpeth Gathering (MG), the Ovingham Goose Fair (OGF), the Haltwhistle Carnival (HC) and the Glendale Festival (GF). The cases had some common and some contrasting variables (section 4.3.3.1, Tables 4.1 and 4.2) and were distributed throughout Northumberland. Figure 1.1 illustrates the geographical distribution of the cases. Northumberland, small-scale, rural festivals are abbreviated to NSR festivals throughout this thesis.

Figure 1.2 Distribution of the case study festivals throughout Northumberland (Visit Northumberland, 2012)

The four case study festivals all had their origins predominantly within the hosting community and were each coordinated by an organisational committee (members of which are referred to as organisers where they participated in the interview process). The organisers varied in ages although the majority were of retirement age. All lived within the hosting towns/villages although for varying lengths of time with some considering themselves born and bred whilst others considered themselves relative incomers. The implications of being a local/insider or a non-local/outsider were considered within the research (for example, sections 5.5.3.1, 6.6.1 and 7.4.2). These organisational committees were made up almost entirely of volunteers, with one exception at GF who contributed to the festival organisation from her position within the 'independent, charitable, development [Glendale] trust' (Glendale Gateway Trust, 2015). Each organisational committee had a core team of members (for example, Chair-person, Treasurer, and Secretary) meeting throughout the year preceding the

festival to organise the event. The size of the committees could vary from year to year (usually between four and 12) and each festival committee varied in size from the others (section 4.3.3.1). Further details of the case study festivals' history, content and the socio-economic context of each host town/village are given in section 3.4.3.

1.5   The Social Significance of Festivals within a Sustainable Community

1.5.1   Festival Communities

Understanding the notion of community was critical to comprehending any social impact which a festival may make. Definitions of community have undergone various reinterpretations, becoming increasingly politicised (Watts, 2006). Smith's (2001:n.p.) analysis of community theory, explored in section 3.2.2, considering communities of 'interest, place or communion', was useful in understanding the network of connections flowing in and around a festival (or the type of festival community). It may be argued that there is no single type of community which is applicable to all festivals. Festivals may produce 'ephemeral communities in place and time', what Gibson *et al.* (2011:5) suggest are 'communities of interest' within 'communities of territory or place'. Wilks (2013:1) places emphasis towards understanding the temporary or transient impact of these events, the 'social interaction [...] with temporary communities, of varying degrees of cohesion being necessarily formed for the duration of the event'.

However, it is arguable that concentration on Wilks' (2013:1) 'temporary communities' of festivals is an outcome of research bias towards urban, large scale festivals. These latter forms of events, in particular the larger in scale, appear to have less of Gibson *et al.'s* (2011:5) 'place-based' community and more of a temporary community, a 'community of interest' drawn from a wider geographical sphere. Macleod (2006:232) explores the notion of the 'no place' festival, the epitome of the 'mega-event' having, as Quinn (2000) and Fabiani (2011) examine, little or no place attachment. In contrast, smaller and rural events are considered to have a greater affinity with place and a greater attachment to their hosting locale (Relph, 1976; Derrett, 2003; Derrett, 2005). Their potential to promote 'immaterial cultural heritage' as considered by del Barrio *et al.* (2012:236) may strengthen local place connections. If place plays a more significant role for these non-urban, smaller-scale events where, according to Derrett (2003), a

festival's relationship with its host locale is of a reflective nature, then it can be argued that the social impact of these events may be more than just temporary.

It must thus be considered, in particular in small-scale, rural festivals, that the interplay between the community of interest associated with the festival, and that of the community of place which hosts the event, may significantly influence the social impact of a festival and contribute to the sustainability of a community. In return, this benefits the survival and longevity of a festival. As Derrett (2005:2) states 'acceptance by the residents of the host community and buy-in by local and regional stakeholders enhance the potential for the festival to sustain itself'.

1.5.2   The Social Significance of Festivals within a Sustainability Framework

Sustainability, a concept whose origins are associated predominantly with the environmental movement and theories of development, is increasingly regarded from a socio-centric position with greater emphasis placed on the interconnectedness of the facets of the concept – environment, social, economic and cultural (Salvaris and Wiseman, 2004). As Stoll and Michaelson (2011:n.p.) describe, 'a sustainable view of progress is one that recognises well-being as the goal of societal progress instead of intermediate aims such as economic growth'. Recent political ideologies within the UK such as the Big Society and alterations to the Localism Act of 2011 reflect an increasing onus on the role of the individual in their community and the necessity of 'strong social networks' if these are to succeed (Stoll and Michaelson, 2011:n.p.). This in turn revealed the need to address certain questions fundamental to the research: if a sense of well-being and social connections are facets of a socially sustainable community, what constitutes a sense of well-being and what form do social connections take? If, as Macbeth *et al.* (2004: 517) state 'a community gathering to share a cultural event will contribute to the development of its social capital', how is this social capital produced and how does this contribute to a sense of well-being?

As evaluation has tended to focus on economic impact, only a small number of models for measuring social impact within festivals existed (Fredline and Faulkner, 2000; Delamere *et al.*, 2001; Small *et al.*, 2005). Although these were useful to inform and develop the research method used for this thesis, these models did not consider the social impact of festivals upon sustainability and thus were insufficient alone to

address the issue of festival contribution to a socially sustainable community. Considering the work of such authors as Maslow (1945), Max-Neef (1991), Tov and Deiner (2007) and Fiske and Fiske (2007) enabled the question of not only the social impact but its impact on community sustainability to be more fully addressed.

1.6   Research Significance

As mentioned above the predominant focus within festival research has been upon the economic impacts of events, revealing a paucity of investigation into the social value of a festival to the community which hosts the event. In particular, there appears little research into the impact of a festival upon the social sustainability of its host community despite calls within the literature for greater emphasis on festival social impact as outlined below. Research into rural festivals has been shown to be lacking (section 1.3); however the absence of research into rural festival impact within social sustainability is perhaps particularly surprising given the emphasis within rural development research upon social sustainability (Chambers and Conway, 1991; Lash and Urry, 1994; Shucksmith, 2000). This thesis aims towards addressing this gap by examining the form and values of connections attributed to small-scale rural festivals within the context of a socially sustainable community.

1.6.1   *The Festival Field within Existing Literature and Theoretical Perspectives*

The expansion and development of UK festivals since the 1950s and in particular since the 1980s, brought with it a rise in academic interest and the corresponding literature related to festive events. As a discipline, festivals and events occupy a 'broad spectrum', a theoretical and methodological field of study which, to quote Robertson *et al.* (2009) is 'still in the process of confirming and safeguarding its academic and professional legitimacy'. Wilks (2013:3-4) describes it as 'a developing canon' in which the study of the social dimensions of festivals lies at 'the crossroads of several disciplines' with a 'rich range of theory on which to draw for frame-works'. Arguably, this canon is one predominantly urban in its focus as witnessed by the rural festival gap noted in sections 1.3 and in 1.6.2. A review of the literature revealed further gaps in the field of festival research regarding the social impact of events with an increasing desire amongst authors to address this (section 1.6.2).

From within this broad spectrum of festival research literature, theories of social capital, well-being and social sustainability were drawn upon alongside theories of place, community and identity. Theories related to social capital were examined to identify 'the processes between people which allow the establishment of a sense of co-operation, goodwill, reciprocity, belonging and fellowship' (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006:2). More recently Richards *et al.* (2013) explored 'the social impact of events' through the framework of social capital in an edited book of that name. In her introduction to this book, Wilks (2013:4) points out the use of social capital 'to examine the social dimensions of events at the individual level (Bourdieu, 2002) or community level (Putnam, 2001)'. The work of Bourdieu was briefly explored with regard in particular to theories of time and space and in relation to the work of Rose (2002:100) who examined the ability of festivals to break boundaries. The work of Putnam (2001; 2003), particularly his theories on bridging social capital and bonding social capital and his emphasis on the value of networks and trust upon well-being, informed aspects of the method and the analysis of this research.

Community plays a significant part in the festival literature as authors present evidence for positive and/or negative impact on the host place and people (Derrett, 2005; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Gibson and Stewart, 2009) and of impact pertaining to scale (Macleod, 2006; Finkel, 2009). Relph's (1976) work exploring the spirit of place and the importance of memory, echoed by Hannon and Curtin (2009), informed the exploration of questions of identity and belonging within a community. Bauman's (2004) concepts of community identity and social change in turn contributed to understanding how a festival enhances or engages with the concepts of place belonging and identity.

The literature review revealed the significance of heritage within the festivals, in particular relating to the importance of place, identity and belonging (Duvignaud, 1976; Derrett, 2003; Arcodia and Whtiford, 2006). Heritage within festivals is understood as both the inherited form, the 'living expressions and traditions inherited by communities and transmitted to their descendants' (UNESCO, 2003), and the consistent and traceable processes within the festivals identified as the 'interaction between people and places through time' (Council of Europe, 2005:2a). Heritage content and processes can show consistency which may contribute to social

sustainability. At the same time, another contributing factor towards social sustainability is the ability of festivals to adapt to their community and to innovate (Fiske and Fiske, 2007; Larson, 2009). The literature reflects an apparent call for what Sachs (1999:32) describes as 'change within continuity, balance between respect for tradition and innovation'. These concepts of consistency and innovation were explored within the social sustainability literature, in particular the work of Max-Neef (1999), Arcodia and Whitford (2006) and Fiske and Fiske (2007). Abu-Khafajah (2007:26) summarises the balance between consistency and innovation as a critical component of sustainability, the 'ability to retain cultural identity and to allow change to be guided in ways consistent with the cultural values of a people'.

In seeking to understand the contribution of festivals to the social sustainability of a host community, concepts of well-being were sought. Stoll and Michaelson (2011:n.p.) point out that 'adopting a focus on well-being as the ultimate outcome is a crucial part of the sustainability agenda'. In seeking to define well-being, Deiner (2009) identified exponents of well-being in terms of evaluation and affect which could be summarised as "a meeting of needs". Maslow (1943) and Max-Neef (1991), had developed ideas which proposed a number of universal human needs, the satisfying of which would lead to greater well-being and a more sustainable society. More recently, authors examined components of well-being (needs to be satisfied) which included access to culture and heritage (Phipps and Slater, 2010) and elements of both individual and collective well-being (Prilliltensky and Prilleltensky, 2007). Festivals provide access to culture and heritage (Picard and Robinson, 2006; Duffy and Waitt, 2011) and may be inroads to a community, thus offering the potential to address an individual sense of well-being within a more communal notion of collective well-being (Derrett, 2005; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Gibson and Stewart, 2009).

1.6.2   Gaps in the Research

Despite recognition within the literature of 'the importance of acknowledging [festival] impacts' (Robertson *et al.,* 2009:157), many authors highlight a paucity of research into the social impact of festivals (Fredline and Faulkner, 2000; Moscardo, 2008; Reid, 2008; Rogers and Anastasiadou, 2011). Olsen (2012:1) refers to a continuing 'disregard [for] the festivals' social and cultural potential', within the 'well-established literature' on festivals and their values. The tendency to focus on economic evaluation at the

expense of 'augmenting social capital' (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006:1) is emphasised within the literature: Moscardo's (2008) study of the role of festivals within regional development argues for greater focus on the effects of festivals beyond economic. It has been argued that even with the increasing 'existence of social impact measurements' (Rogers and Anastasiadou, 2011:387), there is limited research on community response and the contribution of the festival experience.

Festivals have been identified as potential 'tools' in national and regional regeneration strategies within UK, European and Australian literature (SQW, 2006; IFACCA, 2007; Phipps and Slater, 2010). However it appears that there is little evidence of specific festival policy within the UK (IFACCA, 2007) and that both grey and academic literature focus predominantly on the economic impact of such events. The potential economic impact of a festival on a region, in terms of jobs created, tourism spend and what Picard and Robinson (2006:9) call 'symbolic repositioning in the face of de-industrialisation', has been documented within the literature, arguably emphasising the gap in the research regarding festival social impact (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Picard and Robinson, 2006; Moscardo, 2008). Although authors such as Richards *et al.* (2013) increasingly seek to address this gap, there remains a paucity of research into festival impact on community social sustainability, a fact some authors affiliate to the vagaries of political and social change and corresponding shifting definitions of sustainability (Shepherd, 1998; Salvaris and Wiseman, 2004). As mentioned previously, research into cultural regeneration and festival impact (whether social or economic) concentrates predominantly upon urban renewal and urban festivity, with possible exceptions within the field emanating from Australia (Reid, 2008; Phipps and Slater, 2010; Gibson and Connell, 2011). The research question in this thesis was influenced both by, what Gibson and Connell (2011: xvii) perceive as, the 'urban bias [which] infuses festival research', and by the predominant research focus on economic impact and lack of investigation into impact on social sustainability.

1.7 Introducing the Research Question

This thesis seeks to identify and examine measures of social impact within small-scale, rural forms of festivals, summarised into the following question:

What is the contribution of small-scale, rural festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities?

The rise in the number and variety of cultural festivals in the UK has been dramatic particularly since the 1980s. There are a myriad of festivals in the UK alone and amongst them, the range of longevity, location and scale is hugely varied. Some events trace their origins back many generations whilst others are newly created. Festivals are ubiquitous and occur in urban, rural and semi-rural locations although as the literature also demonstrates, research tends to focus on the larger, urban event. The rural festival "gap" was influential in the decision to focus the research question upon small-scale, rural festivals as the case studies. The expansion of the festival field and an increase in strategic interest in the potential of festivals within regional and community development were also influential factors when selecting the research question.

Within the literature, descriptions of festivals abound with associations with celebration, with community and with social togetherness. The very origin of the word festival, derived from the Latin festum, to feast, suggests communal participation (Derrett, 2003; Quinn and Wilks, 2013). And yet, as can be seen in section 1.6.2 above, research into festival social impacts, particularly upon community sustainability, is marked by its absence. The concept of sustainability and sustainable development is based on a number of pillars; environmental, economic and social. Whilst 'the importance of integrating these elements' is recognised, the research in this thesis focuses on the potential impact of festivals upon social sustainability, through the social connections which a festival enables or disables by its existence within a community (United Nations, 2007:10).

1.7.1   Themes within the Research

In seeking to determine the contribution of festivals to community sustainability it was necessary to identify forms of social connections which a festival may potentially enable or disable. Three predominant forms of social connections were identified through a review of the literature and existing models for measuring social impact. The first of these was **temporal connections** with **heritage** as emphasised for example, by Duvignaud (1976) and Arcodia and Whitford (2006). Duvignaud (1976:15) describes the 'producing and reproducing [of] culture from one generation to the next' as a vital element of festival process and content. Arcodia and Whitford (2006:2) refer to the value of 'historical continuity' at festivals as 'as essential to [their community]

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ideology'. Secondly, **spatial connections** were identified most notably with **place**, and also belonging and the significance of memory (Relph, 1976; Hawke, 2010) and the relationship between place and identity (Hannon and Curtin, 2009). Thirdly, the forms of **social connections** between **individuals and groups** were identified, in particular using the work of Putnam (2003) to identify connections as either bonded or bridged. These forms of connections, heritage, place and people became the sub-themes of the research through which the data was gathered. They were used as the framework for analysis within a broader conceptual model which considered themes of consistency, innovation and connectivity identified within the literature as necessary aspects of social sustainability (section 1.6.1).

In order to best conduct the research a Constructivist Grounded Theory Method (CGTM) (Charmaz, 2006) was selected as the most appropriate methodology, allowing for an ethnographic approach (May, 2011). This in turn utilised the researcher's anthropological experience in previous academic contexts (Black, 2011). The constructivist or interpretivist paradigm in which this methodology positions itself allows for the many standpoints within a multiple case study investigation. Grounding this interpretive data within the existing theories and literature was a critical aspect of the research method in order to ensure objectivity and reliability and to create a rigorous approach (Charmaz, 2006). A case study approach was chosen as it was considered to offer the opportunities to 'discover relationships, connections and cultures of connections' (Marcus, 1998:16) and, in the words of Brewer (2000:11), 'to understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given field'.

1.7.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of this research is to better understand the potential for small-scale, rural festivals to contribute to the social sustainability of their host communities through the forms of social connections enabled by and through these events. In addition to this intent, this thesis forms a body of evidence which could inform decision-makers within and beyond the academic sphere. This research responds to contemporary societal challenges, such as social inclusion and issues of sustainability, which comprise two of the three overarching themes for research impact at Newcastle University and have 'brought an enhanced sense of purpose and focus to research' (Newcastle University, 2014b:n.p.). The investigations in this thesis contribute to the

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university's vision for research impact, one in which 'we strive for world-class academic excellence – but excellence with impact - so that our high-quality academic work is responsive to large-scale societal needs and demands' (Newcastle University, 2014b:n.p.).

1.8 Research Aims and Objectives

In seeking to address the gaps acknowledged in section 1.6.2, the research goals central to this thesis examined what contribution is made by small-scale, cultural festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities. The following Aims and Objectives guided the research.

Aim 1: Investigate the scope and dynamic of small-scale, rural festivals in Northumberland between the years of 1980 - 2012 within the broader UK context.

Objective 1.1 Analyse (in brief) the historical context for festival development in the UK, within which to contextualise the contemporary festival.

Objective 1.2 Investigate the range and dynamic of festivals within Northumberland and define small-scale, rural festivals through a categorising of variables as listed in Objective 1.3.

Objective 1.3 Identify case study festivals having common variables of genre, frequency, duration, scale and origination and differing in longevity, geographical location and date held.

Aim 2: Examine policies and strategies within a North East regional context influencing the dynamics of festivals between 1980 - 2012.

Objective 2.1 Identify types of regional policies and strategies influencing festivals in general in Northumberland.

Objective 2.2 Identify regional strategies which influence specifically the case study festivals.

Objective 2.3 Analyse perceptions amongst case study festival stakeholders of potential strategic influence or input (including whether financial or non-financial input).

Aim 3: Identify determinants of social sustainability within communities and investigate those determinants indicative of potential festival impact on community social sustainability.

Objective 3.1 Evaluate current theory on social impact measures and sustainability, in particular in rural and semi-rural communities.

Objective 3.2 Investigate the development of a methodological tool for collection and analysis of data for the research question.

Objective 3.3 Identify key indicators of potential festival impact on community social sustainability.

Aim 4: Evaluate the impact of festivals on social sustainability in the host communities of the chosen case studies.

Objective 4.1 Determine the forms of festival connections between heritage, place and people.

Objective 4.2 Establish levels of consistency, innovation and connectivity within the case study festivals.

Objective 4.3 Identify and analyse the indicators of social sustainability within the respective festivals.

Objective 4.4 Identify and analyse impact upon social sustainability of variants of longevity and strategic influence within and between the case study festivals.

1.9   Thesis Organisation

The thesis is divided into nine chapters. The introduction chapter outlines the research question, its significance and place within the relevant field and how it seeks to address gaps in this field. It defines the notions of festival and of community as applied within the thesis (Aim 1), introduces the Aims and Objectives behind the research and indicates where these are met within the structure of the thesis (see below).

Chapter 2 examines the predominant literature, both academic and unpublished grey material, relating to the research question. Through the literature review, the aim was to establish an understanding of the current field concerning festival contribution to the social sustainability of hosting communities. Focus was directed towards theories in the field which considered social capital, place and community identity and heritage. In addition, analysis was made of the literature pertaining to social sustainability (particularly aspects of well-being and social impact at individual and community level). Theory relating to the contribution of social sustainability within a broader model of sustainable development helped to provide a framework for analysis of the data and a context within which to ground the findings (Aim 3, Objectives 3.1 and 3.2).

Chapter 3 presents the evolution and development of community festivals in the UK and particularly in Northumberland from a brief historical overview of festivals to the contemporary festival dynamic proceeding 1980 (Aim 1). The chapter contextualises this dynamic within an examination of prevailing cultural strategies, particularly regional development and culture-based regeneration, and considers the potential influence of changing public responses to leisure and heritage upon festival funders and developers, organisers and participants during these decades (Aim 2). The methodology used within this thesis is comprehensively described in Chapter 4, outlining the mixed-method approach taken, the paradigm within which it is situated, the validity, objectivity and limitations of the research.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 make an original contribution to the existing body of research, evidenced in the literature review, presenting and analysing the data gathered from the case study festivals. The analysis chapters are presented thematically using core themes established from addressing Aim 3 (to identify determinants of social sustainability within communities). These themes were identified as consistency (analysed in Chapter 5), innovation (analysed in Chapter 6) and connectivity (analysed in Chapter 7). The chapters are further divided by sub-themes used in the data collection to establish forms and levels of connections between respectively festivals and heritage, place and people. Chapter 8 discusses the potential contribution of festivals to community social sustainability (addressing Aim 4) through four principle indicators, identified through the research process (addressing Aim 3, Objective 3.3). These indicators are summarised as:

a. contribution to community localness and pride
b. enhancement of knowledge and understanding
c. contribution to the continuity of local culture
d. enablement of networks of connectivity

The chapter concludes by considering the impact of variable longevity of existence and evidence of strategic influence upon the case studies festivals (Aim 4, Objective 4.4).

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis with an overview and reflections upon the outcomes of the research findings and reassessment of the Aims and Objectives following the analysis. Consideration is given to possible future applications for the research findings and through recommendations for further research.

2   Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1   Introduction

The thesis research question: **What is the contribution of small-scale, rural festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities?** requires an in depth exploration of a range of complex issues and concepts. In order to gain an understanding of these concepts it was necessary to interrogate the 'rich range of theory' related to the potential social impact of festivals (Wilks, 2013:4). As a literature review, this chapter shows the relevance of previous research relevant to the thesis, and identifies the knowledge gaps in relation to research into festival social impact. Furthermore, it situates the research within the literary field through an examination of archival and contemporary literature, academic and statutory publications and unpublished (grey) material. The chapter puts forward a contemporary understanding of "a festival community", particularly in the context of the connections between community and sense of place (section 2.2) and examines the inclusion of heritage within festivals (section 2.3). The significance of place within festivals is considered within the literature, including the relevance of place to an event within an increasingly globalised world (section 2.4). Theoretical discussions are reviewed regarding approaches to determinants of social impact and the contribution of social sustainability within a broader model of sustainable development. Social impact within a festival context has been predominantly explored through theories of social capital and social connectivity with significantly little research undertaken as yet on the impact of festivals upon social sustainability. The chapter considers the concept of sustainability through measures of well-being, both universal and cultural adaptations, and the role of connectivity and human relations within a sustainable community (section 2.5). It concludes with a summary overview of the chapter.

2.2   Approaches to Understanding a Festival Hosting Community

2.2.1   Understandings of Community

In setting out to measure social impact upon a festival hosting community, an understanding was necessary as to what is meant by a community. Smith (2001:n.p) acknowledges different approaches to defining community, as being communities 'either of interest, place or communion'. Employing his approach and definitions to examine festivals, Smith's first definition, 'community of interest', could be seen to

refer to the organisers, participants and visitors who share a common engagement in the event. His second definition, 'community of place', could be taken to mean those who either reside, work or have regular associations with residents of the host parish, village or town, and the latter definition, 'community of communion', could refer to the less tangible 'spirit' of community which an event engenders. Fluctuations and changes in mobility patterns, population demographics and the development of 'virtual' communities through social media have all been influential in determining a greater rate of transience or 'fluidity' within many communities, part of our 'modern liquid times' (Bauman, 2004:62). Considering the focus on the social impact of festive events within this thesis, the first and second of Smith's definitions given above are particularly useful in understanding the context of community within the research question. In addition, the short duration of the festivals create a temporary, intensive gathering of people which may indicate Bauman's (2004:62) 'fluid' community owing to the transient nature and mixing of local and non-local visitors. This notion of fluid, temporary community is briefly explored at the end of this section.

Communities, whether bound together through interest or place, imply by their nature a sense of belonging, of association and a sense of being distinguishable from others. Cohen (1982:2) suggests this is a binary concept, one where a 'sense of difference lies at the heart of peoples' awareness of their culture'. In his later work, Cohen (1985:12) refers to who is 'inside' and who 'outside', or an ethnographic cultural distinctiveness. Festivals may contribute to this sense of belonging or collective identity but, by their very potential to express representations of identity (or who belongs), they conversely may exclude certain people from participation. Belonging and identity are key themes in determining the festival's social impact, as outlined in the outcomes of this thesis (sections 8.2 and 8.5).

A sense of identity and degree of participation in social networks, all contribute to an individual's perspective on belonging to a particular community and can be highly subjective (Putnam and Fieldstein, 2003). That sense of belonging within a community is mediated by membership of the numerous structures within that community: family, friendship and institutions. They are also influenced by external factors for example, provision of services or policies which are instrumental to that area. Using Bourdieu's (1990) theory of social stratification through fields, it is possible to see community in

this sense as a form of habitus or the conditioning structures which influence an individual's place in a field of power.

Applying Bourdieu's discourse on the accumulation of social capital to consider participation in festivals, it is possible to reveal how festivals may be potentially divisive within a community. The accumulation of capital may be dependent on where control of a festival's resources lies, in particular whether these resources are held within the community or without.

Lavenda (1992:77-80) suggests that festivals present a 'public presentation of the community' and thus an 'official, dominant' voice, determined by those who organise the event. How democratically these resources are managed within a community and the perception of this management by community members need equal consideration. Increases to the scale of some festivals can influence the type of community associated with the event. Festivals prior to the mid 20th century were often small in scale engaging the local populace almost to entirety, in 'an intensification of the collective being' (Duvignaud, 1976:13). These events could be defined by a common attachment with place, owing to the inclusion of the majority of residents. However, societal changes and developments, particularly population migration and expansion, led to an increasing number of external visitors and alongside this, pressures on the festival to increase in size and revenue. Intrinsic and extrinsic pressures influencing festival impact are explored in sections 5.4.3, 6.2, 7.4 and 8.6.2.

 Clearly the majority of contemporary festivals no longer 'demand the (almost total) participation of the whole community' (Metraux, 1976:8). As locals and non-locals engage with the event, the contemporary festival community can be seen to contain members who engage for reasons connected to place and those with wider interests. This pressure on scale, and increases in external visitors, may manifest itself in a diminishing of those involved with the festival from the community of place and an increase in those involved through community of interest (other than place). Arguably festival communities at large, urban and often commercial events are more transient and fluid than their smaller relations (Bauman, 2004). Having less of a connection or engagement with a place, the festival community present at these events may have

greater temporality and disperse more rapidly and make fewer continuous connections.

This notion of fluidity is not, however, absent from contemporary small-scale, rural/semi-rural festivals either. The smaller-scale festival communities are fluid in that they too contain a mixture of internal/external visitors who come together for a transient event, what Fabiani (2011:106) describes as a 'temporary' community. This sense of fluidity also refers to the perceived boundaries of a festival which are changeable and even potentially non-existent. Delanty (2011:196) refers to festivals as 'cosmopolitan cultural arenas – locally situated but not about boundaries', referring to their ability to embrace diversity. The notion of fluidity within a festival community may arguably be more significantly influenced by the need to find identity, and can be seen as part of a wider societal paradigm shift towards what Bauman (2004:12) calls 'liquid modernity'. In describing the 'liquid modern setting of life', Bauman places the 'longing for identity' at the top of individuals' 'life agendas', implying that the construction of identity is an ambivalent state, seeking greater freedom of choice but bringing concurrently increasing insecurity (Bauman, 2004:32). Festivals, in their myriad of forms and sizes, become aspects of this identity construction, for the organisers, performers, visitors and sponsors and thus at any one time are influenced by the agendas of these interacting elements. Their temporary nature allows the individual the chance to identify briefly with the festival offer, without arguably too long-term a degree of commitment.

2.2.2   Festival Communities

> 'Celebration can bind a community together […] an elixir that keeps community relevant and responsive to the needs of the times. Annual festivals create a community of witness that marks the passage of time and notes the changing of the guard as new power relations arise and old ones change' (Derrett, 2005:13).

Through whatever approach the festival is regarded it is widely agreed that a "festival community" exists, at least for the duration of the event. These festival communities have been described variously as 'collective effervescence' (Duvignaud, 1976:13, quoting Durkheim, 1954), an 'intensification of the collective being' (Duvignaud, 1976:13) and more recently a 'sense of community celebration engendered by an occasion' (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006:3). Gibson and Connell (2011:5) suggest

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festivals produce 'ephemeral communities in place and time', creating 'communities of interest' within 'communities of territory or place'. They argue that festivals provide a 'transient identity', uniting people temporally and temporarily and yet paradoxically, linking them to permanent organisations and institutions.

What is consistent is the sense of collectivity and coming together of a community of people, whether motivated by local or cultural interest, what Derrett (2003:40) describes as an 'opportunity for community cultural development'. She describes this sense of 'community [as] nearly an invisible phenomenon', perhaps the "community of communion" to which Smith (2001) referred. People know when 'it's not there', although they may struggle to identify what that means (Derrett, 2003:40). The communing or exchange between those involved creates the "glue" which holds a community together, however temporarily. In the case of a festival community this manifests itself in the cultural and social exchange or connections between organisers, participants, visitors, funders and supporters (the stakeholders), some receiving monetary reward but the majority being volunteers.

The relevant theory regarding these potential socio/cultural exchanges and connections is examined in the subsequent sections. The literature regarding forms of social connections, which may occur within festivals, is considered according to the thematic structure which formed the data analysis. Consideration is given to connections through heritage, through place and between groups and individuals within the immediate and wider festival community. The means of exchange which occur at festivals, and how this is influenced by the rate of change in the festival field (1980 – 2012), is discussed in section 3.3.3.

2.3 The Inclusion of Cultural Heritage in Festivals

The inclusion of cultural heritage in community festivals can be described as an intrinsic element of their nature, what Duvignaud (1976:15) calls 'the creation and re-creation of embodied beliefs [...] producing and reproducing culture from one generation to the next'. Arcodia and Whitford (2006:2) refer to the value of 'historical continuity' and 'enhancement of cultural traditions' as displayed at festivals, the continuity being an element which 'communities regard as essential to [their] ideology'. Derrett (2003:32-33) states how festivals 'provide authenticity and

uniqueness' and thus contribute to community development. International and national level support is in evidence for the importance of these connections and continuities between heritage, human values and sustainability (for example, the UNESCO *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO, 1972) and the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Council of Europe, 2005)). The Council of Europe (2005) recognised 'the need to put people and human values at the centre of an enlarged and cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage' and emphasised 'the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society'. The definition given in this latter convention described cultural heritage as 'a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time' (Council of Europe, 2005:2a). Whilst the focus within these conventions was initially upon tangible heritage, an increasing shift of emphasis highlighted the inclusion of the intangible heritage which, as is described below, plays a significant role in festivals.

Festivals in the UK prior to the mid-20th century were predominantly small-scale and locally based and as such, reinforced aspects of the indigenous culture through repeated acts and performances from one year to the next and often through locally specific celebration or commemoration (Rolfe, 1992). The referencing to former or traditional aspects within the host community was an intrinsic part of pre-1950s festivals. Traditional aspects of culture, to borrow from Hobsbawm (1983a:2), are characterised by 'repetition and invariance' and thus suggests continuity with the past. The emphasis on traditional elements within these festivals suggests an awareness of the importance of repetition and connection to place and a prioritising of maintaining consistency with prior events. Yet, as is examined further in section 2.3.2, 'traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented' (Hobsbawm, 1983a:1). Understanding of the notion of tradition, and thus of heritage, as potentially invented or constructed for social, political or economic

purposes, is important to developing greater understanding of a festival's impact upon its community.

The inclusion of heritage or traditional continuity and inheritance of practices and objects linked to the festive community continues to play an important role in many contemporary festivals, although it is arguable that the objective for its inclusion has changed. Heritage continuity is often placed upon the contemporary festival design by external agents including public institutions and development agencies, influenced in particular by the inclusion of heritage in strategic attempts to re-engage and regenerate communities. These strategic interventions to include heritage in festival formation may be influenced by economic development incentives or social motivations such as increased public well-being. Phipps and Slater (2010:28), examining the impact of festivals upon health and well-being, explore how 'access to culture and heritage' is a prerequisite of positive mental health through identity formation.

2.3.1 Intangible Cultural Heritage

Festivals consist, in the majority of their content, of intangible displays and performances, differing from museum and gallery exhibitions which focus predominantly on tangible and static presentations. A great percentage of this cultural content could be described as having heritage value, expressed in the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* as the 'living expressions and traditions inherited by communities and transmitted to their descendants' (UNESCO, 2003). According to Article 2 Definition (2c) of the Convention, this intangible cultural heritage (ICH) manifests itself within, amongst others, 'social practices, rituals and festive events'. In critique of this convention, there is a persuasion in some academic circles that the 'preservationist tendency conveyed by the institutional narrative' may actually fail to safeguard intangible heritage by focusing on the listing and archiving and through the displacement of ICH from its original place of practice (Duarte, 2010:858). Duarte calls for the need to challenge this narrative to ensure ICH is 'instrumental in the sustainability of communities', raising the point that the relationship between the past and the present as displayed through intangible practices is under 'constant negotiation' (Duarte, 2010: 856-8). As festivals predominantly display intangible culture it is pertinent to determine what, if any,

heritage connection is contained within the intangible culture and examine their place in safeguarding this aspect of heritage. This includes determining how the concept of heritage is interpreted by the festival community and awareness of the debates surrounding heritage authenticity.

2.3.2 *Authenticity of Heritage within Festivals*

Within the festival context, the thesis engages with some of the debates associating heritage with memory and identity, and with the concept of invented tradition and authenticity, with regard to the social impact of heritage on a community. In considering use of memory, concepts of authenticity in the recollection and transmission of heritage must be considered. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to engage extensively with the arguments surrounding what is authentic, particular literature was reviewed concerning memory and heritage (Relph, 1976; Waitt, 2000; Smith, 2006 and Edwards, 2011). Section 2.4.1 discusses the literature regarding authenticity, memory and place regarding heritage connections (Relph, 1976; Hannon and Curtin, 2009). Smith (2006:273-4) writing extensively on heritage and memory in *Uses of Heritage,* describes heritage as a 'cultural tool by which a community defines itself', emphasising that it [heritage] 'will always be utilised for the needs of the present, and responds to the aspirations and desires of those defining heritage and doing the remembering'. However, in stressing the value of heritage elements to the community as lying in their use she states the importance of recognising the changeable nature of heritage. 'Use means change. Nothing can be, nor should be, 'conserved as found' otherwise it ceases to be heritage and to have on-going cultural meaning'. To "use" something is an active process: in recalling the heritage content of a particular community festival, Smith (2006:274) describes the 'process of active identity making and remaking'.

These notions of change and active engagement with heritage are important to consider regarding the authenticity of heritage in a festival context and present potential contradictions. An association of heritage with preservation of the past and tradition can lead to a sense of inauthenticity and disconnect from contemporary culture. As Shils (1981:12-13) points out, while an object may stay constant, 'the perception or interpretation of that object changes through time' and it is the 're-enactment of the patterns or images of actions [associated with the objects]' which

make the traditions. Echoing Smith (2006), Shils (1981:13) emphasises that 'a tradition [...] is the past in the present but it as much part of the present as any very recent innovation'. Tradition is presented as a 'guiding pattern' (Shils, 1981: 32-3), from which heritage associated with tradition may be taken as the inheritance of these patterns. The interpretation of the term "heritage" and its association with tradition is an important consideration within the research and, as is seen in section 5.2, one which is problematic. The association of heritage with tradition may suggest a lack of authenticity, as opposed to recognition of change within cultural processes and 'on-going cultural meaning' (Smith, 2006:274). Tradition, as described by Hobsbawm (1983a:2), refers to the past through 'fixed (normally formalised) practices, such as repetition' and is 'invariable'. This emphasis on 'invariance' with the past and hence a failure to recognise contemporary continuity within certain festival practices is considered throughout the research findings, particularly sections 5.2, 6.3 and 7.3.

With further regard to the authenticity of festival content and processes, Hobsbawm (1983a:1-4) explores the notion of 'invented tradition' as a 'formalisation and ritualisation, referring to the past, imposing repetition'. The invention of certain traditions is described as a means of creating order to 'inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour [...] automatically implying continuity with the past'. This concept was salient within the thesis research regarding certain themes emergent from the data, in particular the understanding of heritage processes within festivals and recognition of social impact through these processes. Vlastos (1998:3), commenting on Hobsbawm's conceptual model of invented tradition, argues that 'while traditions impose fixed practices, custom is flexible, capable of accommodating a certain amount of innovation'. This distinction between invented tradition and custom not only emphasises flexibility in the latter and greater invariance in the former but highlights the importance placed upon 'the past to legitimate action and cement group cohesion' (Hobsbawm: 1983a:12). The author suggests that the invention of traditions may be more frequent in times of societal upheaval and rapid change, in response to a need to connect with a perceived notion of the past. Vlastos (1998:3) considers the urge for tradition as a 'modern trope [seeking] socially desirable (or sometimes undesirable) institutions and ideas thought to have been handed down from generation to generation'. This concept of seeking authenticity or legitimacy through connections

with the past was pertinent to consider regarding festival impact on community social sustainability, as explored regarding a desire to return to tradition (section 5.2.1.2). In addition, the perceived 'flexibility' of traditional or heritage practices may affect a festival's potential impact on sustainability, as considered in perceptions of heritage (section 7.3.4).

Festivals are transient and largely intangible and, while elements of festivals can be seen as consistent and recurring on an annual or regular basis, their content and processes remain open to subjectivity and potential change. The content of festivals displayed within the case studies was considered from within a post-structuralist paradigm, perceiving authenticity from an existential viewpoint. In addition, events deemed "local" or containing indigenous cultural elements have the capacity to reflect the zeitgeist of the wider environment, whether at regional or even global level. Edwards (2011:151) describes this as the potential to 'reflect broader societal trends' through the festivals' own unique presentations and character of their heritage. What Waitt (2000:n.p.) calls the 'multi-faceted approach' could arguably be applied to the authenticity of festival heritage. By considering a post-structuralist or individual standpoint through which connections with festival heritage are made, the authenticity of the heritage may be found in each individual story.

2.4   Placing the Festival

2.4.1   The Sense of Place

Festivals were, and in many cases still are, strongly attached to place and reflect a pattern of temporal continuity between the inhabitants and the place. This attachment may refer to being part of a locality's distinctive nature and heritage, which is revealed in the character of its people. It may describe what Relph (1976:48), in his seminal work *Place and Placelessness,* deemed the sense of or 'the spirit of place'. There is much debate within the literature regarding the importance of location or "sense of place" in which the festival is held. Although there appears some consensus as to the contribution of place to the authenticity or nature of a festival, there is less agreement as to how this relationship is evolving. Some authors (Macleod, 2006; Finkel, 2009) stress the increasing homogeneity of contemporary festivals (and loss of connection to the host locality), attributing this in part to the surge in strategic regional directives in the UK in the 1990s, which sought the regeneration of otherwise declining areas using

culture and leisure. The festivals' growth as a marketable asset of the cultural identity of a place has ironically led, in some instances, to a greater homogeneity of form and a decline in the unique aspect of a locality.

Finkel (2009:20) emphasises this trend towards an homogenous form. She blames organisers for their 'uncreative responses' to funding and strategic pressure which result in festivals becoming what she calls 'near carbon copies'. In contrast, Derrett (2003:32-33) emphasises a positive relationship between festival and place. She describes the importance placed by the community on hosting a festival, and the continuing ability of festivals to provide 'authentic and unique' occasions. In similar vein, Edwards (2011:151) describes how the use of local resources in festival development aids this sense of authenticity which he calls 'vital to a festival's success'. He refers to Waitt's (2000) research into heritage authority, recalling his post-structural reading of 'authenticity' as being multi-faceted and subjective. Picard and Robinson (2006:8-9) highlight the role which festivals can play to 'reinstall normative social order [...] moments of stasis in a highly mobile world'. The critical point they are making here stresses the changing nature of societies increasingly under pressure of globalisation, to adapt to new 'flows of people, capital and information'. Through their analysis they reveal that the place remains but that its contents (for example, people, buildings and institutions) change and that the hosting of a festival may contribute to aiding a sense of re-connectedness and stability.

Relph (1976:34) explores the nature of meaning and identity which may be formed from an association with place, stating that there is evidence for the 'very powerful relationship between community and place, each reinforcing the identity of the other'. His observations regarding these relationships highlight the importance of 'much ritual, custom and myth […] which strengthens attachment to place' (Relph, 1976:32-3). One of the means of connections which festivals can create is between residents and residence. Relph provides evidence for the importance of place to one's sense of identity with regard to community. He explores the nature of meaning and identity which may be formed through an association with a place, particularly through the notion of 'insideness' and 'outsideness', by the equating of one's experience and ability to identify with place to feelings of safety, belonging and 'home' (ibid: 49). Place has been identified as an important element in identity formation at individual (and

collective) level. The 'construction of identity involves developing a relationship with place' where a relationship is formed through a combination of previous memories and experiences in or with that place (Hannon and Curtin, 2009:126). The connections invariably relate to something intangible although the point of connection occurs through something tangible; for example, the memory or emotional response caused through walking or fishing may reinforce an aspect of identity through contact with the mountain or lake where the event takes or took place. It creates a sense of place. Conversely, the absence of connection with place (and specifically one that contributes to one's life history) can lead to illness or 'identity crisis' (Ray, 1997:18).

Much of what makes up a place is founded in memory, which is individually contributed to and collectively and continuously redeveloped. It represents a plurality of identities grouped together, sharing remembered interactions within that locale (which include very recent as well as historic interactions) and as such contributes to the building and refashioning of self-identity. As Hawke (2010:1331) states, with regard to place and heritage, 'heritage supports self-esteem, sense of distinctiveness and the continuity of autobiography or 'life story' that are components of self-identity'. It needs to be recalled that explanation for the expansion in the number of festivals in recent decades has been in part attributed to what Picard and Robinson (2006:2), (following De Bres and Davis, 2001; Quinn, 2003), state as 'a response from communities seeking to re-assert their identities' amidst a time of 'rapid structural change, social mobility and globalisation'. By seeking to make deliberate connections with place (and thus its inhabitants and visitors, often through engagement with place heritage), some festivals may be seeking to contribute to the sustainability of the community. Derrett (2003) recognises a growing feeling that a festival's relationship with its host community and host place is of a reflective nature, a representation of the host's nature and image of itself. This comment returns the focus again to the question of scale. As Delanty (2011:191) argues, connections between festival, place and people appear predominantly in reference to 'traditional carnivals and local festivals' within the domain of 'popular culture' rather than to large, international events.

2.4.2 Connection between Place and Scale

Relph's (1976:32-3) place-attached 'rituals, customs and myth' are frequently found as components of small-scale community festivals (processions, displays and competitive elements are often repeated from year to year). Some authors, however, argue that as festivals increase in size and become more global in appeal, they lose their specific attachment to place formed through continuity of customs and traditions. To many people the mention of festival today summons up a large scale, commercial event, possibly themed along the lines of music or books. Indeed many such festivals exist, having even become a part of our national calendar, for example Glastonbury, Edinburgh and Notting Hill. However humble their origin, the scale of these festivals is now so large as to make the connection to their host location almost irrelevant; they have 'completely outgrown their locality' (Fegan, 2012:n.p.). Macleod (2006:232), though critical generally of the 'commodification' of festivals, refers specifically to the 'global parties, the non-place festivals such as Edinburgh and Pamplona' where the purpose is mass celebration but on a 'world' scale. She concludes her analysis of large-scale festive events by stating that 'community festivals are no longer considered as unique or interesting emanations of local culture but as opportunities for convivial consumption in […] a placeless atmosphere' (Macleod, 2006:235).

Although Macleod's (2006:235) observations on scale and sense of "placelessness" may be pertinent, it is highly contestable that events on the scale of Glastonbury and Edinburgh could be described as 'community festivals' and equally contestable that events such as Pamplona do not have a sense of place. The sense of scale is critical here. However, the replication of aspects of the Edinburgh International Festival in other locations (there is a replica of the Pleasance Theatre complete with festival acts in a court yard in London) implies the irrelevance of place to certain events once they reach this scale. Further authors support this notion which suggests that the larger the event the less attachment there is to place, events being multi-sited or even "place-less" (Quinn, 2000; Fabiani, 2011). As festivals increase in size it would be problematic, as Fabiani (2011:105-6) points out, for these events to be 'the place for an affirmation of a cultural unity, built (instead) on the assessment of cultural differences and variations'. However, concentration on the more visible, larger events risks ignoring

the impact of small, community cultural festivals which make up the greater proportion of UK festive events (Rolfe, 1992; Finkel, 2006).

The general consensus is the larger the scale, the greater the sense of disengagement from place and community and thus conversely, the smaller the festival, the greater its 'community-creating qualities' (Lavenda, 1992:80). Sifting through the more negative reports of increasing homogenisation and decreasing funding it is optimistic to find some authors offer a prognosis for the future of festivals which hinges on the existence of small scale events. Gibson and Stewart (2009:33) in their study of rural Australian festivals, suggest that it will be the smaller, family-focused events which are 'not reliant on funding and expensive ticket sales' which will survive. In support of this assertion they quote evidence from early 20th century times of recession, in particular during the Great Depression, arguing that historically festivals were rarely cancelled through economic reasons, rather through political or environmental issues.

2.4.3 The Liminality of the Festival

What must not be forgotten amidst discussion on the relevance of place to festivals (and festivals to place) is the temporal positioning of the event in any locality, meaning the very short time in which any festival inhabits a space. This temporality was described by Turner (quoted by Ehrenreich, 2007:21) as the 'liminal' nature of festivals, believing as he did that such events existed at the 'periphery of the main business of life'. In terms of place, festivals capture places (streets, squares, buildings) and temporarily change their use from the everyday into one of celebration and display. Through their intense, short-term duration they do not have continuous, permanent homes as such, although they may return to the same location annually. The spaces they inhabit and use may be seen as 'ambiguous', being reinterpreted and often subversively reused during the event (Picard and Robinson, 2006:11).This idea is echoed by Rose (2002:99) who comments on the relationship formed by festival goers to the host place and the apparent contradictions towards traditional boundaries of place and culture which a festival creates. She describes the absence of 'non-elitist forms of display' combined with the temporal location of an event as enabling people to cross between what Bourdieu (1986) would describe as cultural field boundaries and better identify with a sense of place.

2.4.4 Placing the Festival in an Increasingly Globalised World

Changes in the scale and form of festivals have impacted upon the way in which these events are controlled or organised. The origin of festival motivation and control, what Bourdieu (1986) refers to as the agency of power, shifted towards strategic and institutional organisations as some festivals increased in scale and regional profile and as festivals were appropriated as vehicles for social and economic regeneration. Considering a Bourdieusian approach to the accumulation of culture as capital sheds some light on this transition of power relations and political influence from the producers of culture (as in the traditional festive celebrants) to the would-be owners of culture or those who would seek to determine its direction (the sponsors and politicians) (Bourdieu, 1986). It could be argued that the acquisition and control of cultural capital occurs across all scale of festivals. Whilst some new, small UK festivals may have their origin in government initiatives rather than at local community level, the agenda is often to hand power over to the community once established.

Where Bourdieu's concept of capital acquisition falters is when considering the high degree of exchange of culture conducted at festivals (than arguably in other forms of presented culture, for example, at art galleries, theatres). It may be more appropriate to consider Foucault's interpretation of culture or a hermeneutical, textural interpretation whereby the acquisition of culture at festivals is the sum of many parts (Kelly, 2009). Recognising these contrasting epistemologies, Delanty (2011:193-5) acknowledges that even within a community committee there will be agendas of power acquisition. His argument to suggest that festivals 'give greater salience to cultural citizenship and more generally, democracy' appears persuasive. This proposition carries more consistency with the general cultural trend towards a post-representational nature of culture, apparent in museums, galleries and exhibitions, one which contests identity and meaning rather than prescribing a view. A return shift towards greater control and organisation from within the community would likewise fit within the discourse of 'new museology' as 'attempting to instigate a more democratic, locally representative understanding of community' (Dicks, 2000:96).

This shift towards larger scale festivals and greater intervention at national or state level may, in part, reflect what Delanty (2011:195) calls the trend towards an 'internationalisation of festivals' since the 1950s. However, in describing the recent

wider cultural shift away from internationalism towards cosmopolitanism he suggests there is evidence for 'an interpretation of contemporary arts festivals as the mediators of aesthetic cosmopolitanism'. Delanty (2011) proposes that cosmopolitanism signifies the presence of the local alongside the global and is, in part, a response to the contemporary need to have multiple forms of identity and belonging. He suggests that festivals may be places of learning and exchange 'as much as they are carnivalesque'. His analysis focuses on the larger scale festival with its turn towards the 'local within the global', arguably overlooking the potential that smaller festivals perhaps already exist as places of 'learning, exchange and carnival' (ibid:198).

2.5 Festivals and Social Impact

2.5.1 Evaluating Festivals for their Social Impact within the Research Field

Research into the socio-cultural impact of festivals was, until recently, a relatively under-developed field with attention predominantly given to evaluating the economic benefits of staging an event. Calls for greater investigation into festival social impact can be seen repeatedly within the academic literature and, to a degree, within what is termed the "grey literature" of reports commissioned by, or on behalf of, councils, festival associations, funding organisations and development agencies. Increasingly, authors such as Fredline and Faulkner (2000) raise concern over the paucity of research into community social reaction whilst Arcodia and Whitford (2006:1) and Picard and Robinson (2006) highlight the emphasis placed on economic evaluation at the expense of 'augmenting social capital'. Moscardo (2008) continues the call for greater focus on the effects of festivals beyond economic impact in her study of festivals in regional development. In more recent literature, Rogers and Anastasiadou (2011:385) argue that there is limited research on community response and contribution to the festival experience despite the 'existence of measurement indicators for the social impacts of festivals'. These existing measures of social impact are described in greater detail in section 4.2.2.1 regarding their role in the methodology of this thesis. Olsen (2012:1) refers to the continuing 'disregard [for] the festivals' social and cultural potential', irrespective of what he describes as the 'well-established literature' on festival evaluation. Richardson *et al.* (2013:5) also bemoan the 'general lack of research that explicitly addresses the social dimension of events'.

Beyond the recognition of gaps in social impact research into festivals, movement away from an economic focus has led to a plethora of discussion strands which seek to identify the purpose of contemporary festive events (Bowen, 2013; Payton-Lombardo, 2013). There appears an almost tangible vein running through both the professional and academic field recognising there is a common good to these events but unsure as to how to define what this is. The twitter debate forerunning the British Arts Festival Association (BAFA) conference on festivals in 2013 focused on this question, asking 'What is the point of festivals?' and evoking a multitude of responses searching in some way to identify a purpose to such events (BAFA, 2013). Another element of the wider discussion focuses on the ability or otherwise, of festivals to resist the advances of consumerism and globalisation, thus appearing to presume this is what needs to be done. Rolfe (1992), Finkel (2009) and Powell (2011) in their respective analyses highlight the increasing commercialism, standardisation and changing objectives behind the staging of a festival. Macleod (2006), as illustrated in 2.4.2, implies that festivals have lost their purpose, 'no longer an emanation of local culture but placeless opportunities for convivial consumption'. In contrast, Smith (2003:143) highlights the potential for festivals to display community culture, tradition and identity'. Arcodia and Whitford (2006:3) argue strongly for the potential of festivals to enable community development, describing 'a key characteristic of a festival [as] the sense of community and celebration engendered by an occasion' or what Getz (1997:326-327) refers to as the 'facilitators of community pride and development'.

A strong defensive body of research into festivals as promoters of community sustainability and cohesion has emanated from Australia in recent years. In addition to work mentioned above, several antipodean writers support the ability of festivals to promote social cohesion (Fredline and Faulkner (2000), Arcodia and Whitford (2006) and Rogers and Anastasiadou (2011)). Gibson and Stewart (2009:26-7) argue, in their report *Reinventing Rural Places,* that festivals not only 'build communities' but are able to 'bring together disparate social groups'. Derrett (2003), Phipps and Slater (2010) and Gibson and Connell (2011) respectively present positive imagery of cultural festivals within their communities.

An examination of the grey literature alongside the academic literature was considered to obtain a balanced evaluation of festivals. Associations of festival organisers and

their institutional backers naturally have a tendency to promote the positive impact of festivals and the ability of such events to enable community development. BAFA produced a series of three reports between 2000 and 2008 evaluating UK festivals with the emphasis lying predominantly on assessing the economic impact, as can be seen in their title *Festivals Mean Business* (BAFA, 2000, 2002, 2008). Despite the overarching and positive economic position of the reports, some mention of social impact is made with regard to 'advocating and supporting festival development' (BAFA, 2008:29). Within regional strategic documentation, the ability of festivals to promote social cohesion is frequently proffered to various degrees as a reason for an event's existence and development. SQW's (2006:30-32) *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Culture*[10], prepared for the Newcastle/Gateshead Initiative programme for cultural and tourism development, highlights the social impacts of cultural events, particularly community development. This is echoed in the *Northumberland Festivals and Events Strategic Plan 2011-2016* produced by the Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board (2011:3) which describes festivals as being 'a catalyst for community development'.

Even where social impact was included as a measure of evaluation, the rhetoric appears more representative of "marketing speak": Northumberland's events' strategy waxes lyrical on the potential for festivals 'to highlight the inventiveness, passion and creativity of [Northumberland's] residents' (Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011:5), although the message is still arguably predominantly economic in focus. In a parallel report *Northumberland Cultural Strategy Consultation Document (2011-16)* (NCC, 2011:7 (8.1)), NCC places the development and support for festivals firmly within their strategic theme of Economic Prosperity. The strategic direction still prioritises evaluation by economic means and a focus on growth regardless of the rhetoric of the Regional Development Agency (RDA) One North East (ONE)'s *Festival and Events' Strategy* (Anderson, 2007) which states to stimulate community cohesion and maximise social potential.

Although it may be safe to conclude (from the references above) that there is growing evidence within the literature of the need to recognise the potential social impact of festivals, there is a continuing crevasse between the theory and practice. As referred

to in the introduction to this chapter, significantly little research has been conducted into the impact of festivals on social sustainability.

2.5.2 Examining the "Social" within the Pillars of Sustainable Development Theory

Historically, the concept of sustainability has been associated with the environmental movement, originating in the 1960s amidst concerns regarding pollution and reduction of natural resources. The term came into more popular usage following the publication of *Our Common Future*, later known as the *Brundtland Commission Report,* in 1987, which lent the ubiquitous definition:

> 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987:para.2.III.27).

The definition and indicators of sustainable development continue to shift with global and political change. Although widely recognised as being a concept with three pillars (environmental, social and economic facets), it is not appropriate to divide indicators along these three lines but rather to 'emphasize the multi-dimensional nature of sustainable development and reflect the importance of integrating its pillars' (United Nations, 2007:10). Manzi *et al.* (2010:2) call for the need to 'integrate policies of environmental, social and economic issues and […] consider long-term change'. This call for greater integration between the indicators and policies of sustainable development appears to recognise a paradigm shift, from a more economic towards a more substantive tradition of social science (Shepherd, 1998). This emphasis on the interconnectedness between the three pillars, which Moseley (2003) and Abu-Khafajah (2007) likewise discuss, can also be found in government publications (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2006; Stoll and Michaelson, 2011). Salvaris and Wiseman (2004:11), in their report on community well-being and development, refer to the United Nations Development Program (1996), which recognises a more 'people centred, equitably distributed, and environmentally and socially sustainable' approach to development.

Evidence within academic and grey literature points to definitions of sustainability as originating in recognition of human needs (social and other), which are closely connected to a sense of well-being (although, as Ahman (2013:1156) points out, there

is no single definable model of social sustainability). It may be suggested that sustainable communities are those in which a high number of its members experience a sense of well-being and that a component of this sense of well-being is that there is a greater 'meeting of one's expectations from life' (Deiner, 2009; Phipps and Slater, 2010). Human relations (i.e. personal and organisational connections) are instrumental in satisfying these needs and achieving well-being.

2.5.3   Well-being and Social Sustainability

Reflections on the interconnectedness of all aspects of sustainability and the growing anthropocentric approach highlight the normative connotations within the Brundtland (1987) definition which suggests 'a desired end state which is both holistic and long term' (Manzi *et al.*, 2010:2). One could describe this 'end state' in terms of well-being for all people and, by default, for the wider ecological domain on which people are, by and large, dependent. Haworth and Hart (2007:1) in their introduction to *Well-being: Individual, Community and Social Perspectives* suggest 'well-being offers a paradigm that allows those in academic, policy and user fields to focus on positive outcomes and how best to realise them'. Stoll and Michaelson (2011:n.p.) examine the use of well-being in measuring 'national progress or success' at local UK Government level. They propose 'a framework for understanding societal progress', using 'high well-being for all' as the ultimate goal and stress how this is intrinsically linked to social sustainability. The importance of 'strong social networks and communities' are emphasised, particularly in the shadow of the Big Society agenda and changes to the Localism Bill if these government measures are to succeed (Stoll and Michaelson, 2011:n.p.).

Although contentious and complex in its meaning, it is necessary to attempt an understanding of the concept of well-being and thus understand its role in sustainable communities and the contribution which festivals play towards this sense of well-being. Both the subjective, individual nature of well-being and the collective sense (within the context of community) must be taken into consideration. Despite dispute over both the reliability and the predominance of subjective or social/collective well-being, it is arguable that a degree of both aspects must come into play for the vast majority of people. This perspective is reinforced by Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky (2007:58-9) who point out the importance of 'multiple sites when analysing well-being'. The authors stress that organisational and social structures impact on well-

being and state, (quoting Eckersley, 2000:n.p.), 'subjective well-being reports can be very prone to bias'. Although there may be no doubting that subjectivity plays its part in responses to well-being, it is apparent that this must be considered within a cultural environment and one in which cultural heritage plays a part (Fulmer *et al.*, 2010). Phipps and Slater (2010:28) emphasise the importance of 'the opportunity for cultural expression and cultural endorsement within society's institutions'.

Towards reaching a definition of well-being, the distinguished psychologist Deiner (2009:28), quoting Andrews and Withey (1976:18), refers to well-being as 'both a cognitive evaluation and some degree of positive or negative feeling i.e. affect'. In an earlier work, Deiner (2000:34) described the 'separable components' of subjective well-being (SWB) as 'life satisfaction, satisfaction with important domains, positive affect [and] low levels of negative affect'. Phipps and Slater (2010:27) refer to 'well-being as reliant upon feeling that one has a level of control over one's own life' or that one's expectations from life are met. The object of this evaluation and affect, or that which one seeks to satisfy or have control over, can be seen as a collection of "needs", as depicted in Maslow's (1943) *Hierarchy of Needs*. Despite being hugely influential during the second half of the 20th century, this model was later criticised (including by Maslow himself) for over-simplification and being too hierarchical. Max-Neef (1991) proposed a model of human needs, *Human Scale Development,* challenging the dominant economic language of development and seeking to address a broader range of human needs simultaneously rather than hierarchically. Despite some variations, which are predominantly the structuring of these needs and the removal of hierarchies, the tables of Maslow and Max-Neef bear more in similarity than difference.

2.5.4   Determinants of Social Sustainability - Consistency and Innovation
As referred to earlier, although there is 'no consensus regarding what kind of societal qualities to promote in the name of social sustainability' (Ahman, 2013:1156), various authors (for example, Max-Neef, 1991; McKenzie, 2004; Council of Europe, 2005; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Vallance, 2011; Ahman, 2013) refer to determinants which could be identified as forms of "consistency" and "innovation". Max-Neef (1991), the Council of Europe (2005) and Arcodia and Whitford (2006) refer to the need for a level of consistency, both in terms of existential resources (for example,

human and material) and in terms of axiological consistency within processes of satisfying needs. Max-Neef (1991:101) refers to the need to maintain a system which reproduces itself 'consistently'. The significance of heritage upon social identity is highlighted by Arcodia and Whitford (2006) and within the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Council for Europe, 2005).

Consistent elements are those which can be traced through time as having the same qualities or quantities, having 'conformity with other or earlier attitudes, practices etc' (Trumble and Pearsall, 1996:307). Examples of consistent features within festivals include intangible practices (for example, recurring features such as an opening parade) and tangible elements (for example, a consistent place and/or date for the event within the year).

Consistency may be a component of sustainability; however, sustainable practices often need to be adaptive and require change to continue. Indeed cultural sustainability has been described as 'change within continuity', a balance between respect for tradition and innovation (Sachs, 1999:32). As was examined in section 2.3.2, tradition, although associated with the past, is 'as much part of the present as any very recent innovation' (Shils, 1981:13). Over emphasis on a static or invariable connection with the past is unsustainable. Hobsbawm (1983a:2), in distinguishing between the fixed practices of 'tradition' and the flexibility of 'custom', implies that the latter is capable of accommodating a certain amount of innovation.

Society needs to be adaptable to change, to innovate, but in a culturally sustainable manner or, as Abu-Khafajah (2007:26) states, to have the 'ability to retain cultural identity and to allow change to be guided in ways consistent with the cultural values of a people'. To innovate is 'to introduce new things' or to make changes through the introduction of these new ideas, methods or objects (Collins, 1981:110). Change within festivals may occur as part of a process of adaptation or as a new creation. Festival innovation can be defined by form and content; new approaches and processes may be included and innovative content displayed or produced. This innovation involves partnerships and networks for, as Larson (2009:288) describes, 'festival innovation is a highly cooperative endeavour among many actors in an inter-organisational network'.

Innovation may involve some form of creativity, often brought about through 'adaptation to social trends' (Larson, 2009:289). Macbeth *et al*. (2004:502) refer to the 'community gathering to share a cultural event' in the context of 'a way of understanding how the social characteristics of communities contribute to successful innovation and sustainable development'.

Thus, qualities of innovation and consistency, which may appear polarised as terminology, can be seen as necessary determinants of sustainable development. As Ahman (2013:1162) states, 'it is in the dynamic and ever changing process of negotiation between changing society and maintaining it as-is that society can be truly sustainable'. Sustainable development, as argued by McKenzie (2004) and Vallance (2011), can only truly be achieved by integrating the social, economic and environmental aspects as a whole. It has been argued above, that a socially sustainable community can only be obtained through the satisfying of universal human needs, consistent across time and cultures which thus contribute to greater levels of well-being within that community (Maslow, 1943; Max-Neef, 1991; Scheff, 2004). The work of Max-Neef (1991) in particular, was influential in this thesis as a model for examining the need to balance consistency and innovation as a means of meeting human needs.

2.5.5   *The Max-Neef Model for Sustainable Development*

Max-Neef (1991:18) considered human needs to be universal and consistent stating 'fundamental human needs are finite, few and classifiable [...] the same in all cultures and all historical periods'. However, these consistent needs are satisfied through changeable and innovative cultural adaptations. As the author states:

> 'What changes, both over time and through cultures, is the way or the mean by which the needs are satisfied. Each economic, social and political system adopts different methods for the satisfaction of the same needs [...] what is culturally determined are (not the needs) but the satisfiers for those needs'.

In emphasising the subjective interpretation of human needs 'according to the ideological and disciplinary lens of the viewer', Max-Neef (1991:14) stresses that the means by which needs are satisfied are what vary between cultures and through time. Fiske and Fiske (2007:284) describe these cultural adaptations to universal needs as the 'human adaptive niche', exploring the relationship between culture and social relationships as being essentially founded on the capacity to network. They refer to

cultural adaptation as a 'socially shared understanding which provides a framework to enable the functioning of groups in an environment' (Fiske and Fiske, 2007:284). Tov and Deiner (2007) consider the meeting of universal needs within varied cultural environments in the context of life satisfaction (as a component of subjective well-being). They conclude that life satisfaction is shared across culturally diverse people. However, they highlight the personal and institutional factors which influence the cultural variations which contribute to one's sense of well-being; for example, religious doctrine, genetic differences and disposition to depression.

Max-Neef (1991:25) stresses that needs are not just based on 'deprivation' but also potential. As discussed in section 2.5.3, the ability to meet potential for life satisfaction is considered as a key component of well-being (Deiner, 2000; Phipps and Slater, 2010). Max-Neef (1991:17) proposes that a more sustainable means of development can be arrived at by addressing a broad range of these needs simultaneously rather than hierarchically. His argument suggests a desire for an innovative, systemic and endogenous approach to needs: 'it can only emanate directly from the actions, expectations and creative and critical awareness of the protagonists themselves' (ibid: 38).

In terms of social sustainability, levels of self-determination and endogenous or bottom-up action are frequently stated as being critical to community cohesion and development, particularly in strategic literature (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2006; Pascual, 2009). The implications behind these sentiments point to the necessity for some consistency of control over the means of satisfying these needs, beyond the fluctuations and vagaries of political dictate at a higher level. Although these satisfiers may change with cultural and temporal variations, the impetus to influence these must be consistent or risk being detrimental to well-being and social sustainability. Decisions and control regarding festivals, although influenced by a variety of stakeholders, may predominantly lie with the organisers. Thus within this thesis, it was important to consider the means of organisation and perceptions of accessibility to the organisational structures as contributing to social sustainability, as satisfying needs in the community.

The literature specific to models and measures of social impact within festivals was examined for indicators of needs satisfiers, as depicted in Max-Neef's (1991:32) *Matrix of Needs and Satisfiers*. Gursoy *et al.* (2004:n.p.) refer to particular indicators of 'community pride and image', 'enhancers of understanding' and 'preservation of local culture'. Robertson *et al.* (2009:156,163) in their 'synthesis of literature relating to methodologies for evaluating the socio-cultural effects of festivals', highlight the importance of 'social networks', 'pride and participation' and 'community involvement with regional place'. These references refer to the need to measure the connections made or reinforced by festivals between people, their culture and cultural heritage and with place, which in turn could contribute to satisfying, for example, the needs of identity, understanding and participation.

Max-Neef's model for sustainable development, in summary, considers the attainment of human well-being as a combination of universal needs met by cultural adaptations and innovations, as having a level of control over one's life and the ability to meet (the majority of) expectations. He describes the need for balance between humans, nature and technology, illustrated by a symbol of these three intersecting components (Figure 2.1).
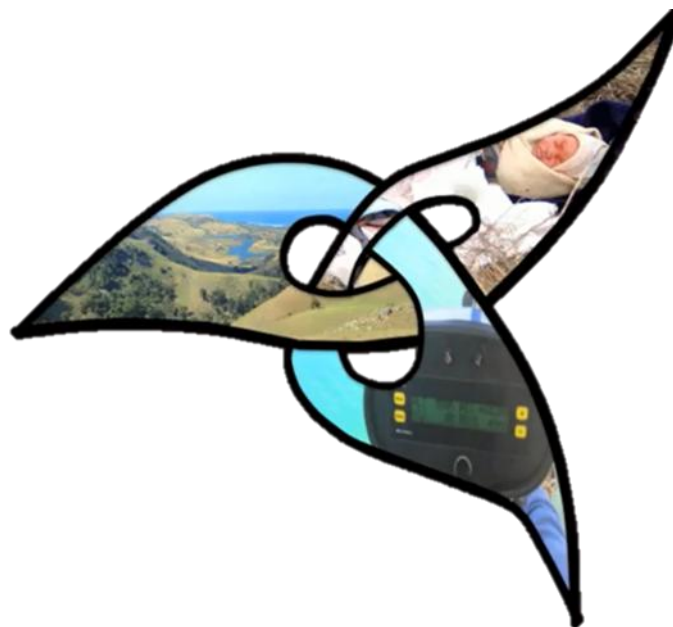
Figure 2.1 Max-Neef's three point symbol used to illustrate the organic relation between humans, nature and technology within sustainability (Max-Neef, 2013).

This three point symbol provided a figurative reference for the relationship between consistency, innovation and connectivity as the interconnecting arms of the symbol

represent nature, technology and people. A socially sustainable society needs to operate through the building of interconnections whether these are through formal or informal institutions; put in simple terms, humans are predominantly social creatures, and to 'belong' is to 'survive' (Fiske and Fiske, 2007:284).

2.5.6 Connectivity. The Social Relations which affect our Well-being

Connectivity, 'the state of being connected or interconnected' (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014:n.p.), implies association, an existence of links between parties, whether at singular or multi-level. Social interconnections and relational networking may be seen to contribute towards well-being. Within festivals these connections may be individual or group connections, often within a network of interconnected social relations. Although the festival must be the catalyst for its occurrence, the connections may take place beyond the actual event as well as concurrent to it. In addition, the festival may enable new connections, reinforce existing relations or have negative impact on connections. Healy and Côté (2001:39) point out that preventing the occurrence of, or destroying existing, connectivity can lead to 'dysfunction of the community'.

Acquiring the means to connect may be described as the acquiring of social capital. The acquisition of social capital has been referred to as a component of well-being and as such is usually referred to positively as a 'public good' (Healy and Côté, 2001:39). Social capital may be defined as having three central aspects: networks (links which bridge and bond), reciprocity and trust, and norms and values (Assist Social Capital, 2012). In providing this definition the authors pay credit to the much quoted and influential work of Putnam (2000; 2001; 2003) whose research on connectivity within communities directed various national social policies, including that of the UK. Putnam's work highlights the tangible benefits to members of belonging to groups (formal and informal institutions) through the associated development of levels of trust, engagement and interaction (Healy and Cote, 2001:43; Manzi *et al.*, 2010:12).

Putnam (2001:12) argues for the importance of networks through which social capital is acquired, stating the positive effects of social capital as leading to 'increased levels of happiness, greater health and reductions in crime rates'. He charts the decline of social and civic engagements and with it the decline in levels of trust of fellow citizens over the preceding forty years (Putnam, 2001:6-7). In later research he elaborates on

the forms of social capital and in particular the processes through which they are acquired, distinguishing between the 'bridges' (more heterogeneous) and 'bonds' (more homogeneous) (Putnam and Fieldstein, 2003:279). Where festivals come under increasing instrumental pressure to connect extrinsically at the expense of the intrinsic, a 'broad cross-section' of connections between stakeholders may enable a festival to succeed in providing 'bridges' to those outside the community whilst displaying the diversity of 'bonds' within the contemporary character of a place and within its heritage. The importance of both bridged and bonded forms of connectivity are emphasised in Putnam's (2003:294) work and, correspondingly, the necessity of creating 'new spaces for recognition, reconnection, conversation and debate', arguably spaces where community festivity might come in to play. It may be argued there is a need for both internal and external connections to avoid a community becoming over 'exclusive' with too great a reliance on strong, internal bonds at the expense of inclusivity (Macnab *et al.*, 2010:2). This apparent contradictory nature of festivals, to both bridge and bond, has been described by Rose (2002:100) as the 'ability of festivals to help people identify more strongly with a sense of place but also break down boundaries'.

Festivals may offer the opportunity for both individual and group representation within a community, in both an organisational and participatory capacity. Derrett (2003:40) argues strongly in support of the role of festivals in building community: 'the complex relationships that festivals provide for individual members of a community, as each exchanges information and energy, offers the stability and protection that community can provide and isolation cannot'. Phipps and Slater (2010:27) propose that 'if a broad cross-section of a community is involved there is greater potential for the event to foster democracy'. The critical phrase in the previous statement is 'broad cross-section': for a festival to democratically represent and enable a community it must involve a wide range of its members or run the risk of serving an elite or minority cause. In the same article, the authors refer to the potential for intergenerational exchange at festivals (Phipps and Slater, 2010:51) though evidence from other authors suggests that cross-generational organisational input (particularly from younger people) infrequently occurs (Gibson and Stewart, 2009:33).

The scale and motivation of the festival must be taken into consideration when discussing the potential connectivity between facets of the community. Incentives to grow the festival, particularly to increase tourist visitation may have negative impact on connections; elements of the community may feel increasingly disengaged from the event or unable to identify with the festival image, particularly if content has been motivated for a visitor with no particular intrinsic connection to the locale. Finkel (2006:25) argues that the 'increasing pressure [...] to fit in to place-based economic and tourism strategies' is 'detrimental to smaller, traditional local festivals'. In her case study of Lichfield festival, she notes that it 'has very little content embedded in the local community [...] which makes it almost devoid of meaning to the town' (Finkel, 2006:34). One might assume that if increasing tourism development was detrimental to local residents at some festivals it would, however, bring greater connections between the host place and the tourists. Conversely, Macleod (2006:231) argues, 'the gregarious experience of the festival overrides any sense of place to a visitor' and that tourists are seeking 'like-minded people not local communities'. As the focus of this thesis rests in the impact on local communities and not on touristic impact, overt analysis of Macleod's argument was resisted here. Suffice to note that although Macleod is not alone in criticising the negative impact of tourism on the connective potential of festivals, her critical voice is in general overshadowed by the overwhelming consensus that festivals offer a means of enabling interaction between otherwise disparate groups (Derrett, 2005; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Picard and Robinson, 2006; Gibson and Stewart, 2009; Powell, 2011).

The participatory nature of festivals may encourage connectivity and contribute to community sustainability. As discussed in section 3.3.1, Matarasso's (1997:27) study, *Use or Ornament*, concluded that the arts played a significant part in developing pride in one's locality and helped promote 'stable, cooperative and sustainable communities'. Seen as the first large scale attempt in the UK to find evidence of social impact from participation in the arts his work emphasised the positive impact of involvement in the arts on social cohesion. Critics of Matarasso suggest that, whilst he does acknowledge limitations within his research, his overt emphasis on the positive response led to bias in his findings. Merli (2002) contests his argument that art can transform society, declaring his almost proselytising attitude as flawed. However, in

defence of Matarasso, his research makes an important distinction between participatory and audience-based art in its potential outcomes and is a useful contribution to the on-going debate of the value of art in our society. To bring this discussion to more recent times O'Brien (2010:11), reporting to the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS), notes the importance of 'collective valuation' and stakeholder participation in valuing culture within communities.

2.6 Summary

Through literary analysis of interpretations of festival and community, a greater contextualisation was sought for the purpose of the research, in particular seeking to reflect societal changes both at global and local level. Festival hosting communities can be interpreted both as communities of place and of interest and as fluid entities, necessitating the need to examine sense of belonging and identity. A scope of the literature pertaining to heritage and place within a broad festival context was reviewed to gain a greater understanding of the connections between a festival and heritage, place and people.

Defining aspects of social impact and social sustainability highlighted elements of well-being. These include universal needs and cultural adaptations and the forms of connectivity or social relations inherent in communities. It is important to clarify that only a limited aspect of sustainable development theory and related concepts of well-being were examined, owing to the scale and contentious nature of the field. It is however, pertinent to note that despite the calls for greater investigation into the social impact of festive events apparent in the literature, it is evident that research in this field is still predominantly rhetorical.

3   Chapter 3. Festival Development in the United Kingdom and Northumberland

3.1   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present a comprehensive analysis, through secondary and later primary data, of the evolution and development of community festivals in the United Kingdom (UK) and Northumberland. The chapter (section 3.2) begins with a brief historic overview of festivals from early, pre-Christian manifestations to the current day. Secondly (section 3.3), it explores the festival dynamic (using dynamic as defined in section 1.4) proceeding 1980, a period which represents a time of great expansion within the UK cultural festival sector. The chapter contextualises this expansion within an examination of prevailing cultural strategies, in particular regional development and culture-based regeneration, and changing public responses to leisure and heritage which may have been influential upon festival funders and developers, organisers and participants during these decades. Section 3.4 examines the festival dynamic in Northumberland with consideration of the rural location of the case studies, the implications of localness and the effect of regional strategy. The impact of historical and regional development on the four case study festivals and their host towns/villages is also discussed. The chapter then concludes with a brief summary of key points presented here within.

3.2   Historical Development of Cultural Festivals in the UK

3.2.1   *Early Forms of Festivity: Events Embroiled in Struggle.*

From the earliest times humans have engaged in some form of festivity, of celebration to mark a break in the routine of existence. Early customary festivities arose as a way of either appeasing and/or giving thanks to Pagan gods and the power of Nature and, as a result of this association with the environment, became seasonal and annual in character, the original manifestations of some of the traditional festivals which still survive today (Palmer and Lloyd, 1972; Frazer, 1976).

The word festival derives from 'feast' (Derrett, 2003:33) appearing firstly in Middle English in association with religious times of celebration. From the advent of Christianity in Britain, many of these traditional feasts became bonded to the church calendar by what Palmer and Lloyd (1972:10) call the 'long and stubborn struggle between paganism and Christianity'. This relationship between festivity and times of

"life crisis" is further explored by Frazer (1976) in his classic text *The Golden Bough,* in which he emphasises the communal and festive element of early cult practices, celebrating the continuation of life in the face of adversity. Duvignaud (1976) and Ehrenreich (2007), in their respective works *Festivals and Carnivals: the Major Traditions* and *Dancing in the Streets,* suggest that many of these celebrations owe their survival, at least in part, to this struggle against the suppression of traditional means of living and celebration. The very attempts to eradicate these celebrations, whether by church, state or society, often strengthened the fabric of the event rather than destroying it. In contrast festive events often proliferated at times of transition and societal unrest which, Picard and Robinson (2006:27) suggest, is owed to the means by which events 'allow us to make, remake and experience the world'.

3.2.2 The Place of the Festival in an Industrialised UK: the Increasing Role of the State.

Early forms of festivals originated in struggle, both against the forces of nature and, increasingly, the forces of state and authority. The industrialisation of the UK (or of Great Britain up until the term UK was introduced in 1801 following the Act of Union with Ireland) had an arguably irreversible impact upon the nature of these traditional festivals. Industrialisation made inherent changes to societal structure and influenced patterns of rural-urban migration, which in turn influenced festival motivation and organisation. As the state played an increasing role in industrial Britain, festivals continued to mark times of change and repression but on a widening societal scale. Duvignaud (1976:19) implies that festivals exert a 'defence of collective life against the great moments of disorder and destruction [whilst yet being] a powerful denial of the established order'. Authors such as Hobsbawm (1983b) however, argue that increasingly the established order made use of festivals either to allow officially sanctioned rupture of hegemony or to promote order and legitimise state rule. Hobsbawm provides evidence, in his investigation into cultural tradition, that between the 1870s and 1914 the state became increasingly instrumental in organising tradition and ceremony to legitimise control. In particular, he refers to the 'invention of traditions [...] and the invention of public ceremonies' in asserting state order and a sense of national identity (Hobsbawm, 1983b: 270-1). At the same time, the rise in (non-state) mass movements sought equivalent legitimacy through adoption of traditional celebrations, as witnessed by the socialist movement's approbation of May

festivities in the 1890s (Hobsbawm, 1983b). Interestingly, it took nearly a century for the state to adopt May Day as a national bank holiday in 1978.

3.2.3 *Festival Development in the 20th Century UK*

There appears substantial evidence to, at least in part, describe festivals in pre-1870 Britain as the embodiment of collective struggle, appearing as a response to times of crisis and repression. If these festivals could be described as subversive, potentially anarchic in tendency, only on occasion feeling the influence of state intervention, then the contemporary concept of festivals can be seen to have reversed this trend. Festivals today are rarely overtly political in objective and tend to display models of societal control and order, events where visitors can feel unthreatened and safe to experience the community (Derrett, 2003). It has been suggested that 'any effects of festivals as direct agents of social political change have to a large extent waned' (Picard and Robinson, 2006:8) though Humphrey (2001) argues the extent to which festivals ever directly imparted change, suggesting this may place too great a political emphasis on what are, at least to a large extent, social events. Gibson *et al.* (2011: 7) argue that where evidence for political content does exist (citing for example, the participation of the local Green Party stall at a festival), it is often 'diluted amongst more simple pleasures'.

The period from the 1950s saw the greatest proliferation and changes to the format of festivals in Britain. Immediately following the end of World War Two the new drive for reconstruction and inter-European reconciliation, which Rolfe (1992:7) describes as 'this period of optimism and artistic endeavour', gave issue to large scale, national festivals such as Edinburgh and Aldeburgh. The instrumental capacity of the state to employ festivity and celebration for nation building and reconstruction was epitomised by the Festival of Britain in 1951, arguably one of the earliest manifestations of regeneration through culture, described by Conekin (2003:4) as 'simultaneously a public celebration and a government sponsored educational event'. Further efforts to rebuild regional communities, the ratification of a new Arts Council charter in 1946 and the influence of regional arts associations led to steady increases in festivals during the 1960s and 70s. These numbers were bolstered by the restarting of many traditional community gatherings (for example, miners' galas and agricultural shows) after their suspension during the war years (Rolfe, 1992).

3.3   The Contemporary Festival: Changes and Development since 1980

3.3.1   A Period of Expansion and Change

It was the 1980s which witnessed 'real expansion in this area of cultural activity', a decade in which, according to Rolfe (1992:8), the number of festivals in the UK more than doubled. Within this expansion, the greatest growth was in small festivals (less than 10,000 visitors) as evidenced by Rolfe (1992) and Finkel (2009) in their respective overviews of the festival field. The reasons for this expansion are complex and owe much to key political changes at this time, the advent of conservative market-led policies and a drive towards entrepreneurialism under the Thatcher government. The development of what became termed the "heritage industry" and the increasing and increasingly privatised leisure market influenced the format of festivals during this era, as did the rising tourism sector. The intertwining of culture and tourism, the use of cultural capital to promote place and the ability of the arts to aid social cohesion became increasingly influential factors throughout the 1990s into the new millennium (Bradley and Hall, 2006; Edgar, 2012). Matarasso's report *Use or Ornament* (1997), examined the social impact of participation in the arts, and was influential on the development of Labour Party policy during the late 1990s. From a political standpoint, the arguments he raised in his conclusion for participatory arts, and for the ability of the arts to attract new and diverse audiences, appealed to the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith (Merli, 2002:n.p.). Though since criticised by Merli (2002:n.p.) for bias within the research and an almost 'missionary-like zeal', the report nevertheless was a major contribution to the 'value-of-art' debate, 'establishing a near consensus in Britain among cultural policy makers'. This arguably contributed to the interest in festivals as participatory art forms and potential marketing tools and the instrumentalism of culture. This occurred despite the attempts of Smith's successor Tessa Jowell (2004:n.p.) to point out the 'devaluing of the primary purpose of the arts – to communicate the human condition – through such instrumentalism'.

3.3.2   The Elevation of "Heritage" and the Place of Heritage in Festivals

In her comprehensive analysis, *Heritage Place and Community*, Dicks (2000:9) emphasises the onus placed on the changing fields of leisure and tourism, stating 'heritage is a quintessential product of enterprise culture in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s'. In bringing to our attention the political contestation of values inherent in

heritage and the close ties between the development of experience culture, cultural consumption and the heritage product, it is possible to infer the intertwining of what now appear indistinguishable sectors - heritage and tourism - and how this too has impacted on the development of festivals. The bringing together of heritage and the tourism industry occurred through a combination of factors. The rise of "new museology" with its emphasis on the vernacular, polyvocality of history played an influential part in democratising the display of history. Occurring in tandem, developments within the tourism sector were intended to bring increasing opportunities to acquire cultural capital (Richards, 2011). The festival came under scrutiny as a vehicle for disseminating cultural heritage, particularly in a marketable format. Heritage became increasingly democratised and many events such as festivals became involved in partnerships, particularly to attract funding through emphasising their inherent heritage aspects, often through the use of vernacular display (Dicks, 2000). Del Barrio *et al.* (2012:236) refer to 'cultural festivals [as] one of the most important examples of cultural consumption in recent years [and] a characteristic example of immaterial cultural heritage'.

This increase in the vernacular, both in context of the practitioner/artist and the visitor played an important role in the changing content of festivals. Rising demands from the tourism sector to view "everyday life", or as Dicks (2000:37) quoting Urry (1995) puts it 'the democratisation of the tourist gaze', led to greater pressures upon festivals to become "destinations", using their heritage to promote a sense of place. The relationship between festivals and place is examined more thoroughly in section 2.5; however, it is pertinent to recall here how heritage is used in a mnemonic role to reinforce and perpetuate collective memories, often pertaining to place and how festivals engage with local heritage for this purpose. As Lowenthal (1985) points out, it is the use of reverie (as opposed to instrumental recall) which highlights emotions and helps to reinforce memory about a place or event. Being events which tend to evoke emotional responses, festivals have the potential to strengthen and create identity through reverie. Lowenthal (1985:210) emphasises the importance of memory to identity and how connections with heritage can create and strengthen contemporary associations, whether with place, people or objects: 'memory functions to adapt the past to enrich and manipulate the present'.

The mnemonic role of heritage, the inherited processes and content of festivals, was arguably one by which the identity of a place or occasion was intrinsically reinforced and perpetuated, bringing shared experiences between participants. It is arguable that the impetus for including heritage, particularly heritage content, in contemporary festivals often originates from external sources, funding bodies and public institutions, rather than as a continuation of inherited processes. It has been suggested that the framing of festivals by policy makers within 'provision of a public good' and the recognition that these events come close to 'fulfilling the function which culture provides in contemporary society' has led to the 'festivilisation of cities', or the proliferation of this type of activity (del Barrio *et al.*, 2012). However, Dicks (2000:50-1) questions the inclusion of heritage at a strategic level, in particular its 'claim to represent the story of a place' or the locality in which the cultural heritage is displayed. She suggests that where heritage has been employed for state and civic purposes, to 'reinvigorate a community ideal', questions must be asked as to which community is represented and for whom the story is told. She refers to the contradictions inherent in the notion of 'inclusive heritage' which, despite attempting to 'celebrate difference […] operates through asserting identity or sameness', in effect 'drawing boundaries around forms of representation' (2000:95). The implications made by Dicks suggest that our perception of community is idealised through a notion of heritage and place, an ideal which 'privileges face-to-face social relations' (bonded relations) at the expense of emphasising differences and creating social boundaries (ibid: 98).

Although it is apparent that strategic inclusion of heritage within festivals may lead to exclusivity and questions of misrepresentation within communities, there is evidence that its inclusion may also work to the contrary. Duffy and Waitt (2011:44) consider the potential for festivals to aid the processes of belonging, pointing to the ability of festivals to 'facilitate and demonstrate expressions of particular values and histories'. The majority of research conducted to date appears to emphasise the inclusive qualities over the exclusive, in particular the ability of festivals to make simultaneous connections at almost paradoxical levels. Edwards (2011:151) points to the ability of festivals to 'reflect broader societal trends and demonstrate the character and history of a particular locality' whilst Curtis (2011:290) similarly describes the 'emotional and social experience (as being both) here and now and within other places and times'.

Throughout these festival experiences, identity is engaged at both individual and collective level by memory frequently evoked through various forms of cultural heritage. The ability of festivals to strengthen territorial identity and sense of place was increasingly recognised during the 1990s by the UK public sector (for example, Forestry Commission, National Parks). It is widely acknowledged that these organisations often "adopted" festivals as a tool aimed at regenerating and revitalising both urban and rural communities. Achieving this was strategically sought through connections with the cultural heritage of a place, and marketed in the festival programme, as touched on above.

As heritage came to be associated with a more populist presentation of the past, the intentions of state institutions to imbue a greater sense of identity with place through cultural heritage became apparent. McGuigan (1996:124-5) argues that the more mobile members of society form a 'new cosmopolitan elite' to whom place matters less as new connections are constantly being created through associations and networks of interest rather than territory. Conversely, he describes the less mobile inhabitants of financially deprived locales in tribal terms, placing greater emphasis on place. An event which helped engender place identity through local cultural heritage was seen as having potential benefits to that community. What was overlooked, in the rush to promote festivals as harbingers of "identity health" (to borrow the concept of identity ill-health as put forward by Ray (1997)), was the potential homogenisation of territorial identity in the heady creation of new festivals focused primarily on economic outcomes. In striving to appeal to the 'broadest market', the creative processes engaged in developing a sense of identity with place were often 'globalised and dumbed-down' (Ellis, 2003:47). Many new or resurrected festivals became sites for consumption, reflecting an increasing consumerism within the broader society.

3.3.3   Rising Consumerism: Tourism and Leisure Markets, Means of Exchange

Festivals, by their nature, are transient, movable feasts and thus have historically been open to changes in content and form. The accelerated rate of change apparent since the 1980s led to a greater variety of festivals on offer. Across the spectrum it is possible to find all manner of themed events, although many researchers argue the range of form is diminishing as festivals become increasingly homogenous (MacLeod, 2006; Finkel, 2009; Powell, 2011). The impact of rising consumerism, coinciding with

the 'boom' of new heritage (Dicks, 2000:35) and an era of rising individualism, affected the relationship between festival visitors and their cultural participants in a number of ways. Visitors' expectations of the type of content on offer at festivals became ever more focused through a market-orientated lens, with increasing numbers of stalls offering opportunities to purchase goods. Few festivals exist without containing some commercial stalls or opportunity to part with cash. In addition, the means of engagement with the content of the festival was influenced by this consumer mentality. Not only the cultural goods but the performers, display and indeed the venue itself, were seen as commodities and the audience potential purchasers, where even places and events were seen as things to consume rather than to know (Macleod, 2006). It has been argued that the ceremony and ritual, the cultural heritage of a festival, what Duvignaud (1976:15) refers to as the 'creation and re-creation of embodied beliefs' or Picard and Robinson (2006:6) call 'forms of symbolic continuity', became increasingly altered or designed to satisfy the consumer need, rather than as an expression of communal celebration.

The means of engagement or exchange between the purveyors and recipients of culture at festivals is critical to understanding the impact of such events in society but, as will be shown, is problematic in its various interpretations. Picard and Robinson (2006:13-15) describe changes to the form of exchange, seeing it based increasingly on consumer need, as 'capitalist and commodity based'. This epistemological approach lies in sharp contrast to that taken by early to mid-20th century researchers in the field (predominantly anthropologists such as Durkheim, Mauss and later Turner) who explored the notion of gift exchange as the means of participation in festive activities. Mauss (1990), in his book *The Gift* (originally published in 1954), outlines the reciprocal nature of gift exchange as opposed to the more individual and self-interested form of commodity exchange. His notion of gift carries broader connotations than its contemporary meaning which is often interpreted more akin to a present. His approach, taken to include objects and forms of labour or service, focuses on the circulatory nature of the act of gift giving and the bonds which this creates, and has been drawn on by sociologists in examining exchange in social life. In contrast, commodity transactions resist any further obligation beyond the monetary deal as ownership is transferred from one party to another.

The increasing commercialisation of festivals in the late 20th century necessitated an epistemological shift in the means of analysis of exchange. It could be argued that the rise in a capitalist or market-based approach influenced the turning point at which many festivals fell under the pressures of consumerism and left their raison d'être, or to use Goldblatt's terminology, quoted in Derrett (2003:33), the 'ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs'. To focus on the latter, however, ignores the considerable level of non-commodity exchange which enables the majority of festivals to function – namely voluntary organisation, free participation and donations in kind. As Carrier (1991:122) proposes, the Maussian approach centres on 'social identifications and understandings of people, objects and social relations' rather than a more Marxian view concerned with production and class.

This dichotomy is further complicated by examining the relationship between a visitor and a free festival. The absence of monetary/commodity exchange does not necessarily imply either a level of commitment or lack of commitment. Traditional or early forms of festival involved no monetary transaction and were based upon reciprocal involvement or interdependence. On the contrary, visitors to a contemporary "free" festival may have no obligation to become involved beyond passing the entrance gate. As Arai and Pedlar (2003:193-4) debate, visitors at such events can 'engage as little or as much as they wish, acting at an individual level, being as they are free to leave the festival whenever they wish as they are under no financial constraint as no money was exchanged'. It is argued that it is the 'distancing of visitors from involvement in the structure of the festival in addition to the inclusion of money as the token of obligation to involvement, which may create a very different sort of relationship, one in which independence is maintained' (Black, 2011:16).

New and expanding developments in the tourism and leisure sectors ran concurrent with rising commodification. Powell (2011), Ehrenreich (2007) and Arai and Pedlar (2003) all draw attention to the commercialisation of leisure, in particular highlighting the rising degree of individual beneficiaries at the expense of 'community common good' and the growing centrality of the ideology of individualism. Funders and organisers placed greater incentives upon festival expansion to attract new audiences and to achieve what Finkel (2006:33) calls 'wider tourism and economic development goals'. In doing so festivals became increasingly less indigenous community gatherings

and more events which anticipated the inclusion of 'outsiders', even if in reality the majority (75%) of their visitors remained local (Finkel, 2006:33). Festivals were promoted as leisure options and identified by Derrett (2003:38) (citing Dimmock and Tiyce, 2001 and Gunn, 1994) as 'one of the fastest growing forms of leisure and tourism related phenomena'. Marketed heavily as tourist attractions to bring visitors to specific towns and regions of the UK, the image of some contemporary festivals was arguably contrived by regional marketing and tourist board initiatives. This image focused on celebrating the success and strengths of towns and cities, designed to comply with regional, corporate ideas rather than markers of life's rituals or celebrations of survival. Derrett (2003:40) further describes how these contemporary festivals were 'demonstrating confidence in how these communities have kept order', a far cry from the anarchic revelry which gave 'powerful denial to the established order' (Duvignaud, 1976:19).

3.3.4   The Migrating Population

The migration of populace from and to rural areas, particularly during the latter decades of the 20th century, has been a contributing factor in the creation and transformation of festivals and their role in regeneration strategies. After the urban migratory trend which accompanied industrialisation up to the 20th century, the latter half of the 20th century saw the pattern of movement reverse with an increase in the rural population of England by 24% between 1971 and 1996 (Shucksmith, 2000:7). According to Shepherd (2009:3), between 2001 and 2006, rural migration experienced a 5.3% growth rate, twice as fast as that occurring in towns and cities. Much of this movement could be described as 'socially selective', made by those with the financial capital to select to live in rural areas and exacerbating social exclusion within those areas (Shucksmith, 2000:12). 'Rural deprivation may be masked by surrounding affluence' where, according to Hood and Chater (2001:7-10) , a quarter of rural households live 'on the margins of poverty' particularly in areas with wealthy commuters or an abundance of holiday homes.

From the 1980s onwards policy makers increasingly perceived the potential role of festivals in re-building community in areas made disparate through the movement of people. O'Sullivan *et al.*'s (2008:45-6) observations into the role of festivals within the development of rural Welsh communities notes that rural economies, being 'relatively

reliant on agriculture, tourism-related activities, part-time and self-employment' have attracted 'a plethora of government funded (small) business support mechanisms'. They point out, however, the need for greater evaluation of the contribution from festivals to development owing to the diversity of events and the potentially 'multiple set of roles in development generally' that festivals may play.

Within Northumberland, the net inflow of people to the rural districts of the region, although the lowest in absolute terms of all the regions in England, was still a 'significant component of population change', recognised by the Countryside Agency as having 'important implications for policy formulation in the countryside' (Bosworth, 2006:3). Changes to the rural demographic and a wider regional industrial economic decline were influential upon strategies for the regeneration of rural areas through tourism initiatives (SQW, 2006). This is examined in greater detail in section 3.4 later in this chapter.

3.3.5   A Sense of Localness within a Festival

The contribution of festivals to community affinity with place may arguably be linked to the sense of localness which is displayed at or included in the event. The term localness, meaning 'belonging to or existing in a particular place or places', may be interpreted in several ways (Oxford English Reference Dictionary, 1996). In their examination of localness in housing in rural England, Gallent and Robinson (2012:365) describe localness as:

> 'a matter of perspective - it can be taken to mean having an ancestral link to a community, being rooted there by birth or by family [or be] linked to employment [which suggests links to the functioning of that community rather than any deep-rooted bond with the community]. Another important aspect of localness is its geographical specificity [....] Local authorities draw lines on a map to delineate areas for policy purposes, but communities often define geographical localness by association.'

Within festivals, connections with the locale may be seen differently by the various stakeholders involved, and subjective to their own interpretation of what counts as local. According to Duffy and Waitt (2011:55), 'the space and time of the festival is a complex site for thinking about localness and belonging but often too, festivals celebrate connections beyond that of the locally defined community'. Festivals may celebrate "indigenous" or local culture from within a geographical or political

boundary, for example a parish border, and may help people identify more strongly with a sense of place (Rose, 2002). For a sense of local affinity to occur this local culture needs to be accessible and recognisable as emanating from a local source. This in turn may contribute to a perceived increase in a community's ability to be sustainable: 'acceptance by the residents of the host community and buy-in by local and regional stakeholders enhance the potential for the festival to sustain itself' (Derrett, 2005:2).

A sense of localness displayed at a festival can create bonds within the community and enhance a feeling of connection through providing the means to identify with local culture. It can reinforce the identity of a community, potentially strengthening the sense of being inside. However, the territorial nature of localness, of being an insider thus implies the existence of outsiders and thus the localness of an event may potentially also be exclusive. But as Duffy and Waitt (2011:55) describe above, festivals often bring connections at a number of levels, often connecting beyond a 'locally defined' area. Geographical boundaries of localness are often 'blurred, perhaps between neighbouring villages that share some common history through family connection, so normative lines seem artificial' (Gallent and Robinson, 2012:365).

This potential for festivals to aid connections between identity and place within a locale contributed to their instrumental inclusion in regeneration programmes. Authors such as Ray (1997) and Moseley (2003) point out independently the strategic, territorial approach of regeneration programmes such as the European Leader project, and the need to appeal to the sense of local character. When considering this sense of local identity within the context of the North East, although a predominantly rural county, Northumberland's industrial heritage is well recognised with its legacy of coal mining and ship building, particularly in the south east of the county. Small towns suffering from post-industrial decline were recipients of local authority funding, often filtering down from the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). This funding contributed to some areas acquiring one, if not several, new festivals as part of the regeneration strategy. Many of the more rural towns and villages with an agrarian history continued their festive traditions in the form of local agricultural shows and fêtes. In particular, where the location was neither classifiable as rural or post-industrial, there was less impetus and revenue from extrinsic sources to start up new

festivals or necessarily contribute financially to existing ones, a factor evidenced in section 3.4.2 within primary interview data.

3.3.6 The Instrumental Festival: a Tool in Regeneration Strategies

The combined impact of consumerism, rising tourism and increasing emphasis on the power of the individual must all be considered when regarding the place and purpose of festivals within regional regeneration strategies developed during the latter decades of the 20th century. Although regeneration projects may be traced back to the Urban Programme Funding of 1968, it was not until the early 1990s that culture became an element of regeneration strategy, albeit initially a minor one (Selwood, 2001:55-6). The development of regional arts associations during the 1970s and 1980s enabled growing community involvement in the arts which in turn increased local authority awareness of the role the arts could play in regeneration (Rolfe, 1992). Increasing interest at national and regional level into the economic impact of cultural activities, owed in part to the publication of Myerscough's (1988) study *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain*, played an instrumental role in regeneration policies. In the face of 'mounting evidence of the economic value of the arts to the so-called leisure industries and thereby to the regeneration of Britain' (Edgar, 2012:n.p.), emphasis was placed on evaluating festive events as a potential tool for growth and regeneration.

A succession of European and national policy incentives to aid growth and reverse the period of post-industrial decline culminated in the creation by the Labour Government in 1998 of the RDAs. With RDA objectives focused on physical and economic redevelopment of post-industrial Britain, public funding of the arts and of festivals remained centred on quantifiable outcomes. Hoping to build on the success of established festivals, the income they could generate and the burgeoning tourism market, funding was quite readily available for new cultural events, particular in regional regeneration areas. The RDAs, while not directly funding festivals, 'acted to influence policies at regional and sub-regional level and to encourage local authorities to work closely with festivals', seeing the 'significant potential to 'showcase' areas, promote visitor economy and attract creative talent' (Maughan, 2007:87). Many new festivals arose as councils actively promoted what they considered would bring 'positive visibility in a public space' (Phipps and Slater, 2010:50) and 'symbolically

reposition cities in the face of de-industrialisation' (Picard and Robinson, 2006:9). Local government was directly encouraged through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to support cultural initiatives, including arts festivals (Finkel, 2009:10). The number of public/private partnerships grew at this time under the aegis of the regeneration agencies. Although it was the public-sector which produced the initial grants and subsidies, as Dicks (2000:53) points out, the 'rhetoric, priorities and strategies of the market increasingly provided their rationale and managerial direction'. The role of the consumer in shaping the festival landscape was arguably becoming increasingly influential.

The focus on regeneration through culture was part of the wider paradigm shift towards a greater instrumentality of the arts. An increasing interest in the economic impact of the arts led to growing support for artists involved in festivals, despite the absence of any specific festival policy from either Arts Council England (ACE) or the local authorities. This lack of policy, despite the large and ever growing number of festivals in the UK, was apparent both at regional and national level, revealing very few public institutions with specific policies targeted at such events. In research undertaken by Maughan (2007:85) for the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA) only 16% of local authorities in England indicated they had a policy dedicated to festivals.

The apparent lack of strategic or resource investment from local authorities is arguably more apparent when considering variations between urban and rural authorities. In research into the social contribution of festivals to enterprise in Welsh rural areas, Picknell *et al.* (2007:14) stated that, despite finding evidence to suggest that 'rural areas find festivals of greater combined benefit (economically and socially) than urban, fewer resources are committed to festivals by rural unitary authorities than by urban unitary authorities [in Wales]'. The authors add that, in this study, the Welsh unitary authorities report 'socio/cultural reasons as more important for involvement (by the authorities), above economic or physical/environmental reasons' (Picknell *et al.*:11). These findings echo Maughan's (2007) research which suggested that the emphasis for festival support lay (in English local authorities) predominantly within areas of community cohesion, social inclusion and art form development. He suggests this emphasis came, 'perhaps surprisingly', above economic development, tourism and

employment and may be indicative of an attitudinal change regarding expectations of economic impact from festivals (Maughan, 2007:86). In contrast, Finkel (2006:25-6) highlights the pressures from 'local officials' for festivals of all scales to 'justify themselves [through] quantifiable results'. She points to the negative effect of this pressure on both programming and local involvement, asking why is it not 'good enough [that festivals] serve the local community?'

From the turn of the 21st century, rural policy became increasingly topical in the UK following the publication of the Rural White Paper in November 2000, which highlighted the paucity of regeneration in the rural regions (Department of the Environment, Trade and the Regions (DETR), 2000). Rural policies, particularly those emergent within the new millennium, had some influence upon non-urban festivals, in part through emphasis placed on increased community involvement. The LEADER programmes for rural development, setup by the European Commission in 1988 to 'recognise the greater rural diversity beyond agricultural policies', was intended to be 'area based, bottom up and partnership based with an emphasis on innovation and integration' (Moseley, 2003:12). A range of publications produced by a plethora of government agencies and charities, significantly Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and the Joseph Rowntree Trust, proposed increasing involvement of communities at grass-roots level within rural regeneration and for greater empowerment to initiate such regenerative projects (Bennett *et al.*, 2000; Shucksmith, 2000; Hood and Chater, 2001). Ray (1997:7), in an analysis of local development and culture, cites within these intentions 'the reinvigoration of local culture as the new foundation for local/regional socio-economic well-being [...] through inspiring innovation and socio-cultural vibrancy that counters economic vulnerability'.

With a greater emphasis on rural areas within the UK under the aegis of New Labour, the focus edged towards the growing 'creative industry sector' which by 2010 employed 1.3 million UK citizens (Bakhshi *et al.*, 2012). This sector was characterised by small enterprise, self-employment and part-time workers. It was supported by the Rural Development Service (set up through the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2001) 'and other organisational initiatives [to] encourage rural entrepreneurship across the UK' (O'Sullivan, 2008:46). Policy-makers looked to the original focus in urban restructuring, culture and the arts, to what Bell and Jayne

(2010: 210-211) describe as the 'almost ubiquitous focus on the role of 'creatives' as saviours of cities'. The authors describe the development of 'a rural creative agenda' developed in the UK where 'countryside and arts lobbies overlapped'. This agenda, combined with increasing emphasis on the value of sustainable, local products, led to greater emphasis on the arts and culture in rural regeneration, often displayed in local festivals and events which became seen 'as key markets for rural creative products' (Bell and Jayne, 2010:210-211).

3.3.7 *The Rural Festival within a Research Context*

Considering the number and diversity of rural festivals throughout the entirety of the UK, it is surprising how little research has been conducted in this field. What material does exist tends towards the historical and documentary (Palmer and Lloyd, 1972; Hutton, 1996). Rare exceptions focus on the impact of contemporary rural festivals which include two separate Welsh research projects, that of Unitary Authority impact by O'Sullivan *et al.* (2008) and a case study by Wood and Thomas (2009). There is a recognised paucity of study into rural UK festivals, and into rural cultural regeneration and cultural impact in general. At an international level, much of the research into rural cultural festivals has emanated predominantly from Australia (Reid, 2008; Phipps and Slater, 2010; Gibson and Connell, 2011).

Arguably, this empirical gap stems from an under prioritising of research in this area rather than a lack of cultural activity in the rural regions. Suggested reasons for the predominantly urban focus, academically and strategically, include funding availability, regeneration targets relating to quantity of population and a lately recognised misconception of the needs of rural areas. Approaches to rural regeneration have showed significant changes within the last decade, in part through the creation of DEFRA in 2001 and the 'reinforcement of changes to a more broadly based and locally focused rural policy through initiatives such as Rural Pathfinders and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)' (OECD, 2006). These changes within rural strategy and the general predominance of urban festival research were influential in the decision to research festivals within rural or semi-rural locations within Northumberland which, with an average density of 62 people/km^2, is the most sparsely populated county of England (Vall, 2011).

3.4 **The Festival Dynamic in Northumberland**

3.4.1 The Role of the Festival in Regional Regeneration

The wider North East region of England, within which Northumberland lies, with its traditional reliance on heavy industry, was a key beneficiary of regeneration funding and of the inclusion of culture as the vehicle for change. Overall public funding for the arts for the region increased significantly between 1980 and 2001, with North East Arts receiving a 40% increase in its relative share of grants during this period. The root causes of this increase lay in a campaign to protect the arts during the abolition of the Metropolitan Councils (Bailey *et al.*, 2004) and was aided by the creation of Local Arts Development Agencies (LADAs) in addition to what Vall (2011) describes as the 'sensitivity of Northern Arts to the market-orientated dictum of central government'.

Two separate academic studies into cultural regeneration within the Newcastle/Gateshead context, conducted respectively by Vall (2011) and Bailey *et al.* (2004), reveal that the motivation behind culture-led regeneration strategies was not, however, always apparent. Although the studies focus on the city environment, the research encapsulates the North East region as a whole and reveals, in the respective conclusions, the contestable nature of the motives for including culture in regional regeneration. Vall (2011) in her study of the role of the arts in the North East, concludes that there is negligible evidence for any social or moral benefits behind the use of the arts by the development corporations, implying their purpose was predominantly market-led. In contrast, Bailey *et al.* (2004: 61) suggest that the reason the Newcastle/Gateshead developments had such impact was 'precisely because economic benefits were not their primary motivating force'. In their longitudinal study they refer to the high level of investment in the arts in this region and the fact that the regeneration projects in themselves fed into a sense of identity already existent in the region and served to reinvigorate it. Their suggestion is that the regeneration programme has been successful because 'culture matters for its own sake' and thus rises in purpose above the economic incentives which it is often criticised as serving (Bailey *et al.*, 2004).

The majority of support offered to small, rural festivals within Northumberland came from the six district councils who administered funding and strategic advice which trickled down from regional cultural and regeneration strategies. These strategies

increasingly proposed festivals as a panacea for community revival and local-level involvement, as evident in the Northumberland Strategic Partnership (2002-2008). Seeking to follow the 'new rural development paradigm', festivals appeared to satisfy demand for investment in community involvement and more sustainable development investments (Shepherd, 1998:17,184). The democratisation of decision processes, which theoretically enabled residents to have greater input into the running and organisation of their locale, saw the establishment or reestablishment of festivals following community consultation including the making of parish plans. Changes in regional population dynamics, through increasing migration between rural and urban areas, imported urban incentives and experiences to the countryside. Incomers to rural villages and towns brought with them their desires for festive models based on their previous urban experiences, combined with the more predominantly urban strategic template for local development through cultural initiatives (Bell and Jayne, 2010).

Within the North East, the emphasis of the RDA, known as One North East (ONE), was placed on linking tourism and culture, as can be seen in the evaluation framework document produced for Culture[10] (SQW, 2006) and the strategy documents for ONE (Anderson, 2007). The Culture[10] report stated the 'need to promote and develop new festivals' (SQW, 2006:8), emphasising the importance of linking tourism, development and culture, while the ONE report highlights what events can add to the 'visitor offer', constituting the secondary spend within the region from festival tourists and visitors (Anderson, 2007:13). The district councils were influenced by these reports in their approach to festivals, although they maintained a degree of autonomy as each was responsible for their own local arts budgets prior to the formation of a unitary council for Northumberland in 2009.

Following the formation of this unitary Northumberland County Council (NCC), support for festivals was rationalised into one central distribution point and decisions, theoretically at least, disseminated out to the parishes through the formation of community forums and 'community chest' budgets (Northumberland County Council, 2012). With the demise of ONE in 2011 and the administrative changes at county level, the likely role of the festival as a regenerative tool was potentially, as Fegan (2006:n.p.) indicated, outdated. He suggested that they serve as 'shop windows

through which people celebrate their capacity to redevelop' rather than powering that development. Strategic documents produced by NCC suggest however, that the regional focus continued to emphasise the need for the promotion and development of new festivals (Northumberland Strategic Partnership, 2002; Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011). Primary evidence collected at an interview with a director of the NCC as part of this research project, implied the predominant motivation behind strategic festival support retained the economic mantra which prevailed within the development agency, combined with an aspirational hope for festivals to 'become the elixir of rural economic regeneration' (Wood and Thomas, 2009:149).

3.4.2 The Changing Dynamic of Festivals within Northumberland

In order to establish an overview of small-scale festivals in Northumberland between 1980 and 2012, spatial, temporal and administrative data was gathered from grey sources (archival, media and event records), and collated into a number of databases (section 4.3.2 and Appendices 1-3). Between 1980 and 2012, 105 Northumberland Small-scale Rural (NSR) festivals were recorded as having taken place for either all or part of this time-period. Data was obtained regarding the locational distribution of festivals by the former six district councils, which were the administrative areas of the county for the majority of the research time-period up until the formation of the unitary authority, NCC in 2009. This data contributed to the selection of the four case study festivals researched in this thesis. The process for selecting the four festivals, allowing for a number of constant and contrasting variables between the cases (as intended in Aim 1), is described in detail in the methodology chapter (section 4.3.3).

Information was also gathered to determine the pattern of festival longevity by district with festivals recorded as being established, revived, continuous or expired during the research time-period of 32 years. Limitations in availability of data were taken into consideration when gathering this data (section 4.3.2.3). The pattern of festival existence in the county can be seen to fluctuate over the time-period with only 22% of all festivals in continuous existence, a total of 23 out of the 105 festivals recorded. Table 3.1 illustrates the pattern of festival distribution and longevity by district. Note that some festivals will have both established and expired during this period. Consideration was also made as to whether size of population by district was

influential on the number of festivals per district. Data was obtained regarding the population of each district with figures taken from the 2001 census for England and Wales (Office for National Statistics, 2001) and ranked in order of population density with (1) being the highest population and (6) the lowest.

Table 3.1 Northumberland Small-scale Rural festival distribution and longevity by district including population statistics from 2001 data. District population ranked 1= highest population to 6 = lowest population.

District	Population size of district	Established	Revived	Continuous	Expired	Total festivals per district
Blyth	81,265 (1)	4	0	0	2	5
Wansbeck	61,138 (2)	3	1	2	5	9
Tynedale	58,808 (3)	23	3	8	15	40
Morpeth	49,100 (4)	4	0	3	2	7
Alnwick	31,029 (5)	14	0	7	12	27
Berwick	25,949 (6)	13	0	3	4	17
Total	307,289	61	4	23	40	105

The greatest quantity of festivals occurred in the districts ranked third in population (Tynedale) and in the two least populated districts of Northumberland (Alnwick and Berwick). Conversely, the least number of festivals were held in the most highly populated areas (Blyth and Wansbeck districts). It is apparent that size of population does not relate to quantity of festivals per district authority and in addition may suggest that it was not a strategic priority to support or establish festivals according to population. It must be emphasised that although these figures contributed to an overall picture of the festival dynamic in Northumberland, it was beyond the aims of the thesis to analysis population demographics beyond a preliminary picture of their distribution.

Information was obtained on the origins of festivals across the county and the data subsequently sorted to determine whether variation in origin had an impact on the longevity of the festivals as illustrated in Table 3.2. Festival origins were distinguished as being intrinsic, extrinsic, a combination or unknown. These distinctions can be defined as: intrinsic – having origins within the host community, extrinsic – having origins outside of the host community (for example, strategic initiative), combination – having a mixture of intrinsic and extrinsic origins or unknown – data unavailable. As has been previously described (section 3.4.1), the predominant line of extrinsic influence on small-scale festivals within Northumberland came from the district councils. Of the 105 NSR festivals in existence for all or part of the time-period of the

research (1980 -2012), 67 (64%) had intrinsic origins, 17 (16%) had extrinsic origins, eight (8%) were a combination and 13 (12%) were unknown in origin. It must be noted that some of the festivals both established and expired within the 32 year period. Of the 17 festivals whose origins were extrinsic or strategically motivated, almost half (44%) expired. Of those with unknown origins, 85% expired although the lack of publicity and information available on these festivals means there is insufficient data to reliably draw any conclusions from this. Of the total 105 NSR festivals, 23 (22%) were in continuous existence during this time and data relating to their origins was considerably more reliable. Of these continuously existent festivals, 70% had intrinsic origins in comparison with 17% with extrinsic origins, 9% with combined origins and 4% of unknown origin.

Table 3.2 Origin and longevity of Northumbrian Small-scale Rural festivals, 1980 – 2012. *Festivals may both establish and expire therefore accounting for discrepancies in tally

Origin of festivals	Established		Continuous		Revived		Expired		Total festivals by origin type	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Intrinsic	40	65	16	70	1	25	18	45	67	64
Extrinsic	11	18	4	17	1	25	8	20	17	16
Combination	4	6	2	9	1	25	3	7.5	8	8
Unknown	7	11	1	4	1	25	11	27.5	13	12
Total of all festivals	62*		23*		4*		40*		105*	

The festival data was further sorted by origins within districts in order to determine whether district location might be an influential factor on the continuity of a festival, as illustrated in Table 3.3. As was shown in Table 3.2, while only 23 out of 105 festivals (22%) were continuous, 16 of these 23 (70%) were intrinsically originated. Extrinsically originated continuous festivals accounted for four (17%) out of 23 festivals with two (9%) continuous events having combined origins. The majority of continuous festivals thus have intrinsic origins. The district with the highest proportion of continuously existent festivals in the county was Morpeth (43%) of which 67% were intrinsically originated. Alnwick held the second highest proportion of continuous festivals in the county of which 86% had intrinsic origins. Berwick, Tynedale and Wansbeck districts had 50% or more of continuously existent festivals with intrinsic origins with Blyth district having no continuous festivals.

Table 3.3 Distribution of continuously existent Northumberland Small-scale Rural festivals by district showing origins (1980 – 2012)

Name of District	Continuous festivals of Intrinsic origin		Continuous festivals of extrinsic origin		Continuous festivals of combined origin		Continuous festivals of unknown origin		Total number of continuous festivals	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Morpeth	2	67	1	33	0	-	0	-	3	43
Alnwick	6	86	1	14	0	-	0	-	7	26
Wansbeck	1	50	1	50	0	-	0	-	2	22
Tynedale	5	63	0	-	2	25	1	12	8	20
Berwick	2	67	0	-	1	33	0	-	3	18
Blyth	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
County total	16	70	3	13	3	13	1	4	23	

While the district demographics may be influential on the continuity of a festival, as previously stated, it was beyond the scope of this research to analyse these demographics as a variable. This is instead considered as a recommendation for further research in the conclusion of this thesis. The origins and longevity of the festivals were, however, considered as important variables in assessing festival impact upon social sustainability as will be discussed in section 8.6.1.

3.4.3   The Impact of Historical and Regional Development in Festival Dynamics upon the Four Case Study Festivals

The changing dynamic of festivals within Northumberland, and the influence of strategic regeneration within the region, played some part in shaping the four case study festivals upon which this research focuses. An overview of the historical development and content of each case study festival follows, including a brief socio-economic contextualisation of their geographical location within the county. While data was gathered relating to the population size and relative affluence of districts and festival dynamic within the county (Table 3.1), no specific data was collected regarding the relative affluence of the individual case studies. Regarding figures by district, preliminary data revealed that the greatest number of total and of continuous festivals occurred (1980 – 2012) within the least deprived districts of Northumberland (Rowe, 2011; Office for National Statistics, 2014). Further research is suggested (section 9.5) into the impact of the relative affluence of the host community upon the origins and continuity of the festival.

The Morpeth Gathering was started in 1968, the motivations being a desire to maintain and promote the cultural heritage of Northumberland. The festival has run continuously since its origin and was established by the father of the current committee chairperson in association with the Morpeth Antiquarian Society. Held annually the weekend after Easter over a course of three days, the Morpeth Gathering is a 'festival of street entertainment, indoor events, music, dance, craft, dialect, heritage and traditional fun [...] including a young people's pageant as part of the Saturday morning Border Cavalcade' (Northumbriana, 2015). Variations to the content and form of the event over the lifetime of its existence include those extrinsically influenced (for example, removal of the horses from the cavalcade, funding to employ a temporary Arts Officer) and intrinsically motivated changes based on available performers, chosen themes or number of competitive entrants.

Morpeth is the county town of Northumberland and has the most sizeable population of all the case study host communities, having 13,857 in 2010 (Morpeth Town Council, 2015). The Morpeth District saw little (0.6%) change in population between 1981 and 2008 (NCC, 2012); evidence from NCC suggests that natural population change was negative in this period whereas net migration was positive, implying migration was the cause of any population increase. There is evidence within the data regarding the potential of the festival to aid integration for incomers to the town (section 7.4.4) and for festival visitors resulting from increased migration (sections 6.5.1 and 7.4.3). Using an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), where one is high deprivation and 100 is low deprivation, Morpeth town showed varying measures of IMD: the centre of town measuring a high (therefore relatively affluent) IMD (66%) while outlying areas measured greater deprivation (39%) (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2014).

Ovingham Goose Fair has its origins in the 15th century as an alleged stopping point as traders walked their geese from Carlisle to Newcastle. While it is difficult to guarantee its continuity through the centuries, there are records of a fair being held in the village of Ovingham into the 1800's (Ovingham Goose Fair, 2015). There is no evidence of a festival being held from approximately 1939 until its rekindling in 1969, from which date it has run continuously, and annually, for one day in June. The festival features a procession, proclamation, approximately 75 stalls and a variety of entertainments (Ovingham Goose Fair, 2015). Changes to the format since its reinvention have

included increases in scale and a perception of growing commercialisation and non-local involvement, as evidenced within the data. Recent changes to the festival include moves to return the event to a traditional and previous format with greater emphasis on the locale (section 7.3.2).

Ovingham village had a population of 1,222 in 2011 (City Population, 2014) and is an area of relative affluence, scoring 57% IMD (ONS, 2014). There have been fluctuations in the demographic of Ovingham predominantly since the 1980s, in particular as residents commuted to work in adjacent towns and cities. The data suggests that increasing numbers of incomers and changes in employment patterns had an impact on the festival, both in terms of influencing content and format and in the value of the festival to the social sustainability of the host community (sections 5.4.3.1 and 7.4.4).

While its origins lie in the 1880s, the current **Haltwhistle Carnival** has taken place since 1989 when it was resurrected by the town twinning committee. Occurring annually, the event includes a week of build-up activities culminating in a final celebration when a procession of highly decorated floats makes its way through the centre of town to the festival field. The carnival day includes live music, dancing, stalls, fun fair and vintage vehicles alongside displays of local performers. Since 1989 the event has grown in scale, both in number of days held and number of participants and visitors. Many of the original features from 19th and early 20th carnivals remain although in more contemporary manifestations, for example the fun fair and evening dance.

Haltwhistle town describes itself as the 'centre of Britain', owing to its geographical position at the exact middle of the UK (Northumberland Tourism, 2015). The population in 2011 was just under 4000 (NCC, 2012) with an overall IMD of 40%, classing the town as 'a deprived rural community' (Haltwhistle Town Council, 2015). Predominantly an agricultural market town in origin, mining and haulage also played a role in Haltwhistle's industrial past. The closure of these industries in the 20th and early 21st century has made its impact on local demographics, as have attempts to position Haltwhistle as a commuter town and to focus on local tourism, of which the festival plays its part.

Glendale Festival is the most recent of the four case study festivals originating in the millennium as part of an initiative with Berwick Borough Council. Organisation of the

festival was handed to the community shortly after origin with the local Glendale Gateway Trust (an independent community development charity) providing some facilities and support. The festival has evolved from a themed event, based in a field outside of town to a broad range of performers, stalls and activities situated in the town high street, closed for the one day of the event. The festival takes place each year with increasing focus on music and local participants: as a relatively recent feature of the town, the organisers expressed a desire for the event to become a 'local fixture' (Org GF, 2012).

The town of Wooler, which hosts the festival, is in the region of Glendale, 'one of the most sparsely populated areas of the country' (Glendale Gateway Trust, 2015). The town's population in 2011 was 4,266 (City Population, 2014) with a 58% IMD (ONS, 2014). The Glendale region, from which the festival pulls many of its participants and visitors, has a population of 6000 and covers 250 square miles. While numbers of population appear relatively constant, the area suffers from rural isolation and outward migration of its, particularly younger, population. Recent tourism initiatives and in-migration of a relatively older populace have led to a rise in incomers and an older demographic (Glendale Gateway Trust, 2015). There was evidence in the data of some tension between incomers and locals with regard to an earlier carnival event in Wooler and the Glendale festival (section 5.4.3.1). However, the data also provided evidence for the festival's contribution to the "hub" aspect of Wooler for both local and incomer residents, and external visitors (section 7.4).

3.5   Summary

It is apparent that many 21st century festivals have clearly altered in format from their earliest manifestations as times of ritual, participatory celebration within an inclusive community. Contemporary festivals reveal the influence of rising consumerism and an increasing focus on touristic impact, particularly as an intended economic benefactor. The elevation of heritage, in particular the intertwining of heritage within tourism, contributed to the increasing instrumentalism of the festival by the state as a potential tool for place regeneration. The significance of place, notably to enhance identity and belonging, was considered a factor in the emergence of new festivals within areas identified for development.

Growing emphasis on development needs in rural areas and the cultural regeneration initiatives in the North East of England, contributed to a focus on the potential role of festivals within Northumberland. Some strategic support was offered through the former district councils to assist in establishing new, community-focused festivals and support existing events. In contrast the strategic focus of the RDA, although it may in part have influenced the district authorities to support these smaller events, prioritised larger events with regional or national appeal through a tourism development remit. Evidence suggests that the strategic focus on festivals remained predominantly economic, as a visitor attraction bringing secondary spend to the region rather than social benefit at a more local level. There is little evidence of strategic positioning of festivals in more populated districts of Northumberland as these areas, on average, hosted fewer festivals than the more sparsely populated areas.

4   Chapter 4. Methodology

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the ideas and processes behind the methodology used to address the research question and associated Aims and Objectives. The initial section 4.2 shows the approach taken and explains the ontological and epistemological origins of the research, the philosophical roots of the investigation. Section 4.3 outlines the mixed-method approach used and the process behind each of the methods employed. This section identifies how the databases were established and provides some summary results of the materials used for analysis. The method used to select the four case study festivals is described, followed by an outline of each festival. An explanation of the methods used to gather data at each case study is subsequently given. Section 4.4 presents a summary of the objectivity and validity of the methods chosen, ethical considerations and levels of reflexivity within the study. Section 4.5 concludes with an overview of the chapter.

4.2   Approach and Design

4.2.1   Approaching the Research through a Methodological Paradigm

The research question and Aims and Objectives approached within this thesis were deemed best explored within a constructivist or interpretivist epistemological paradigm. This underlying philosophical stance stems from the anti-foundationalist ontology which, to borrow from the blog of Graham Durant-Law (2012), holds that 'all social phenomena are socially constructed and as such must be positioned in time, space and culture' and cannot be seen as concrete phenomena or given truths. One who adopts a constructivist and anti-foundationalist approach interprets the data available as being dependent on variable impacts and thus believes that there are many, subjective realities, each constructed individually according to personal experience. Therefore, a key consideration in choosing a methodology must be its capacity for interpretative data analysis, taking into consideration the standpoint of the participants, and that of the researcher.

The impact of festivals must be researched through a lens which focuses on the relational aspect of the various subjects and sites within the study and which does so

through a degree of immersion within the subject. The experience of the researcher (including previous anthropological research) and the Aims of the thesis suggested an ethnographic methodology would be appropriate, being such which seeks 'to understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given field' (Brewer, 2000:11). As Marcus (1998:16) writes, 'ethnography discovers relationships, connections and cultures of connections, association and circulation'.

Interpretative analysis may be problematic in that it raises questions of partiality and subjectivity. As a responsible researcher, it was critical to be aware of potential bias and subjectivity when using a constructivist methodology. In addition, one must recognise the importance of inductive processes to strengthen these methods, the 'reflexivity, biography and theory' to which May (2011:188) infers when describing ethnography. This rigorous approach is discussed in greater depth in section 4.4 which considers the validity and objectivity of the research.

A Constructivist Grounded Theory Method (CGTM), as proffered by Charmaz (2006), was considered the most appropriate methodology, as it considers the relational and ethnographic approaches described above. In addition it is a predominantly qualitative method which allowed for a flexible employment of mixed-methods within a case study approach. Grounded theory methods originated in the 1960s 'following paradigmatic developments in qualitative social science research' (Black, 2009:82). These methods were intended to allow the researcher to develop theoretical analyses whilst at the same time grounding the findings in the empirical data. It is an inductive method, concerned with recognising processes. However, as Black explains, theorists working within the constructivist tradition have tended to move away from this focus on social processes and more towards 'a conceptual analysis of patterned relationships' (Black, 2009:82 quoting Charmaz, 2006: 181).

Referring to Charmaz, as being the most closely associated with the CGTM tradition, Black succinctly explores the method. She describes:

> 'A social scientific […] perspective (which) assumes that people, including researchers, construct the realities in which they participate. Constructivist inquiry starts with the experience and asks how members construct it. To the best of their ability, Constructivists enter the phenomenon, gain multiple views of it, and locate it in its web of connections and constraints. Constructivists

acknowledge that their interpretation of the studied phenomenon is itself a construction' (Black, 2009:84).

The twin components of constructing themes within the data (deduction) combined with the grounding of data within the theory (induction) were key to incentives for using CGTM in this research thesis.

4.2.2 Designing the Method

The purpose of this thesis was to make visible the threads of a social web which is spun amongst and beyond a given community and the festival it hosts and, in doing so, to reveal patterns and to interpret meaning along these threads. An intention of using ethnography is to immerse oneself in the research subject and in doing so one must learn, if not exactly 'the rules of the game' then at least how 'to become conversant' (Fielding, 2000:72). As a field-based method, it satisfied the need for observation and analysis within a naturalistic setting, that of the case study environments. A mixed method approach, which is a definitive aspect of ethnography, lent itself to this research with the need for field observation, a range of interview methods, diverse data sources and on-site evaluation. This collectively formed the data within which the theory was grounded. From within this grounded data, the researcher was aware that themes and knowledge are constructed and in turn sought to reground the data in the in theory. This grounding formed an essential part of the method as it sought to lend greater validity and consistency to the approach. Through mapping the philosophy behind the conclusions and findings to practical occurrences within the cases examined, meaning was conceptualised through empirical data. This form of seeking knowledge through combining sensory evidence with reasoning has been termed a 'realist' approach (Durant-Law, 2012:n.p.).

In seeking to meet the Aims and Objectives, the methods were predominantly, but not exclusively, qualitative: the research dealt with questions of value and the reasons behind particular behaviour within a social setting and in relation to culture and place. A number of quantitative methods were also used, particularly in the early stages of the research project, to establish the overview of the dynamic (section 1.3) of Northumberland festivals between 1980 and 2012. These methods included quantitative analysis of archival material and the inclusion of some interview questions which would elicit quantitative responses. However, as May (2011:167) points out, it

was important not to 'distinguish too sharply between the two' methodological approaches, quantitative and qualitative, as one may be seen to inform the other. In order to understand the quantitative data obtained a qualitative 'understanding of frames of reference' (or values) was, as will be evident, successfully combined.

4.2.2.1   Range of Existing Models for Measuring Social Impact

To address the research Aims and Objectives it was necessary to be able to recognise what was meant by a social connection but also to find a means of measuring the relative impact of these social connections (Aim 4). To achieve this, previously constructed models used for measuring social impact in similar event environments were sought. Interest in the social effects of festivals has risen since the 1990s and several models are in circulation, although a paucity of social impact models exist in relation to those which measure economic festival impact. The following models were reviewed for this thesis. The Social Impact Perception (SIP) scale, as used within the Social Impact Evaluation (SIE) framework (Small, Edwards and Sheridan, 2005); the Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale (FSIAS) as developed by Delamere *et al.* (2001); and the Generic Scale to Measure the Social Impact of Events (Fredline *et al.,* 2003).

In addition, regional models for measuring socio-economic impact taken from grey literature were sourced and analysed for variables of social impact. It was considered important to include these regional evaluation measures and models for their local immediacy to the project (their use in North East Festivals) and in their practical application and relation to regional strategy (SQW, 2006; Anderson, 2007; Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011). The grounding of the regional, strategic social impact models within the theoretical social impact research models informed the creation of a bespoke social impact measurement scale for this particular study.

4.2.2.2   Application of Existing Models for Measuring Social Impact

Initially, all the documented social impact models were scanned for types of impact variables, scales used for measuring levels of impact and methods described to obtain impact data. As Small *et al.* (2005:73) noted, it was important to develop a framework which included the evaluation of impact, both pre and post event, perceptions and empirical data. Several authors stress the importance of tailoring an impact

assessment tool to the specific event (Small *et al.*, 2005; Robertson *et al.*, 2009), emphasised by both the variations in number and type of social impact dimensions. Demographic variations between events may impact on the measurements and need to be taken into consideration. Robertson *et al.* (2009) stress the importance of the age of the festival as influential on willingness to take part in the evaluation process. Consistencies and variations in approach and the range of data collected were noted in the existing models mentioned above. These were then selected to inform the methodology of this research where they met the Aims and Objectives.

An overview of the existing event social impact models revealed overlaps between some of the assessment criteria. Consideration was made both to overlaps of qualitative abstraction (for example, measuring levels of local pride and cultural identity) and quantifiable measure (i.e. levels of traffic congestion or number of restored local buildings). Within each existent model a combination of qualitative and quantitative values were applied, for example, data gathered on increases in the number of vehicles at festivals (quantitative) enhanced by (qualitative) data on variable values of impact according to the subject's experience and involvement.

To summarise, existing event social impact models were used to inform the creation of a customised method to address the research question specific to this thesis. This process of adapting and creating a bespoke model corresponds to the intention of Small *et al.* (2005:74) who state: 'it is hoped the SIE process coupled with SIP scale will be flexible and allow researchers to apply the principles in their particular area of research'. The adaptation of existing means of measuring impact using CGTM was selected to alleviate the inevitable risk that may occur within new methodological applications (Robertson *et al.*, 2009:158).

4.2.3   Designing a Case Study Approach

The use of case studies as a research method originated in a desire to understand complex social phenomena, requiring multiple methods and sources of evidence and when there is a need to investigate the characteristics and interconnections within real-life events (Yin, 2000:4,11). The decision to use a mixed method approach was based primarily on the need to investigate and critically examine the phenomena of contemporary community cultural festivals within their real-life context, in other

words, to see them in action. A multiple case design was chosen as, in order to observe the societal impact made by these events, it was deemed necessary to draw out both universal and specific themes across a range of case examples. This broad approach provided the opportunity to observe differences and similarities between cases, providing a wider platform on which to underpin the relevant theory, which in turn would increase the validity of the research.

In order to understand the potential impact on community social sustainability through a host festival, it was necessary to consider the wide reaching range of festival connections both spatially and temporally. Data retrieval methods needed to be both open and objective to all sources and themes which presented themselves but, at the same time, be held within a clearly defined boundary. In constructing the "blue print" or research design, regular referral to the Aims and Objectives of the thesis ensured suitability and consistency of case inclusion and were also important in bounding themes within the cases. These boundaries were designed to focus the research within a potentially vast field, one in which it was deemed necessary to gather evidence beyond the event itself, at varying points throughout the year of festival activity, including preparation and aftermath.

Criticism of case study approach has focused on the perceived lack of rigour and the perception of generalisation within such a methodology. In response to the latter concern, Yin (2000:14) summarises the 'goal' of doing case study research as being to 'expand and generalise theories' rather than 'particularise analysis'. It is important to follow a systematic 'chain of evidence, weaving together a narrative of accounts and observations' and to leave an 'auditable trail' in order to maintain rigour within case studies (Gillham, 2000a:20,24). Problems of replicability within case studies, and in general in ethnographic field work, are many and have opened up the method to frequent criticism as for example by Brewer (2000:10) and Abercrombie, Hill and Turner (1984:34). As Hammersley (1998: 62-63) points out, the likelihood of being able to exactly replicate a study within a field-based, naturalistic setting is almost non-existent. This may be further exacerbated by the use of interviews, often an integral part of case study research. Whereas it is perfectly possible to replicate the interview schedule verbatim, structuring the interview process to 'obtain intersubjectively reproducible data' may limit the researcher's understanding of the experience to

'superficially understandable aspects' (Kvale, 2007:13). In response to this, constant variables were ensured between all case studies to enable the closest potential replication of the research, both in selecting the case studies and in designing the data collection techniques.

On the issue of generalisation, it is worth noting Flyvbjerg's (2006:228) well-argued defence of the Case Study method through Karl Popper's 'falsification' test (1959), rigorously employed to prove scientific reliability.

> 'If just one observation does not fit with the proposition, it is considered not valid generally and must therefore be either revised or rejected. Popper himself used the now famous example "all swans are white" and proposed that just one observation of a single black swan would falsify this proposition and in this way have general significance and stimulate further investigations and theory building. The case study is well suited for identifying "black swans" because of its in-depth approach: What appears to be "white" often turns out on closer examination to be "black"'.

These latter observations within the literature were taken into consideration in the preparation and design of the case study method. The process of selecting the cases is described in detail in section 4.3.3 below.

4.3   **Methods Used**

4.3.1   *Archival Research*

In order to understand the scope of festivals in Northumberland archival research was necessary. The purpose of this was three-fold. Firstly, to establish a 32 year overview of the dynamic of festivals in Northumberland; secondly, to investigate the impetus behind this dynamic and thirdly, to build the background to the festivals which were being considered as potential case studies. A number of county and national archival resources were used to access "grey literature", primarily the Northumberland Archive at Woodhorn Museum, the County Archive at the Newcastle City Library and archives from within Northumberland County Council (NCC), Arts Council England (ACE) and One North East (ONE). The archives at both the City Library and at Woodhorn are openly accessible (although one must become a member at Woodhorn). The retrieval process entailed a physical presence at both these institutions whereas the remaining archives were all accessed on-line.

4.3.1.1   *Scope and Dynamic of Festivals*

To establish the dynamic of festivals in Northumberland, a comprehensive scoping exercise was undertaken to find any material under the search terms festival, fête, fair, gala and carnival during the period between 1980 and 2012. Initial electronic search methods carried out at Woodhorn Museum proved unfruitful as the archives only yielded information of a more historical nature (dating back to 19th and early 20th centuries) and then only in very small amounts. A systematic search of newspapers from the region was conducted as they had the most comprehensive records of events relating to festivals in the county, particularly before widespread use of the internet. Three newspapers were selected to represent a geographical spread of the county as follows: Hexham Courant (covering West and South Northumberland), Northumberland Gazette (covering North Northumberland) and News Post: Blyth Edition (covering South and East Northumberland). Newspapers were searched per decade, as it would not have been practical to search every edition for 32 years. Additional resources searched were Tourist Information Centres, Library Information Services and festival websites and archives. The author's research for a Master's dissertation (Black, 2011), interviews (with festival organisers and strategic decision makers) and internet search engines were also examined to record any event fitting the relevant description within the time-period.

4.3.1.2   Strategic Impetus

Running concurrent with archival research to create a countywide festival scope was the need to retrieve information relating to the impetus behind this dynamic. Regional strategy relating to the maintenance or development of festivals was examined through archives within NCC, the Regional Development Agency (RDA) ONE and ACE North East. This predominantly involved analysis of cultural strategies, regional action plans and evaluation documents produced within the organisations or by commissioning bodies.

Retrieving documentation was problematic for a variety of reasons relating to the particular institutions. Local government in the county had undergone significant restructuring during the period under study, moving from six district councils to a single unitary council in 2009. Efforts to retrieve strategic documents relating to the local authority were made initially through councillors at NCC. Problems encountered include the mislaying of information, either through the loss in actual human terms of

knowledge and institutional memory through the staff reductions or through the material loss of records during the transition to a unitary council. As ever, the importance of finding the right gatekeeper who had access to the information and the where-with-all to provide it was ultimately the key to successfully retrieving the data. Access was eventually given to documents relating to the cultural strategies written from 2002 onwards with no information retrieved prior to this date.

Efforts were made to access the archive of ONE as an influential organisation in the cultural regeneration of the North East (and thus the provision of support for cultural festivals in the region). The organisation was abolished in 2010/11 and alongside it many of the partner organisations including North East Research and Information Partnership (NERIP) which housed the research archive. Only a proportion of the information archived was obtainable after the dissolution of the organisation. However, evaluation documents commissioned by the agency were still obtainable, pertaining specifically to Culture[10], the specific Festivals and Events Programme which arose out of the failed bid by Newcastle/Gateshead to be City of Culture in 2008.

Retrieving information relating to festival strategy from ACE was also problematic. ACE refused to produce the requested information on grounds of being too expensive to conduct and too time consuming, stating 'the work involved in obtaining the information exceeds an appropriate limit' (ACE, 2012).

4.3.1.3   Selection of Case Studies

Archival research informed the selection of the four case studies and provided background information on these cases. Information relating to the case study festivals was gathered from Woodhorn Museum Archive, Newcastle County Archive, the archives of NCC and web-based information archives for regional organisations. These organisations included Northumberland National Park, charities i.e. the National Trust, cultural and heritage organisations and the websites of each named festival.

4.3.2   Databases

A number of databases were created to outline and establish the dynamic of Northumberland festivals between 1980 and 2012 (the research time-period). A comprehensive database of all festive events in the county was compiled within the preliminary stages of the research method (a primary resource which, prior to this

research, did not exist). Patterns of temporal, spatial and thematic variation could be explored using this database. The following section describes the method involved in establishing the three separate databases.

4.3.2.1 *Database 1. All Festivals in Northumberland*

A scoping exercise (section 4.3.1.1) was undertaken to create an overview of all festivals in Northumberland, whether extinguished, revived, newly created or continuous between 1980 and 2012. Criteria for inclusion in the database were as follows: name (must imply a gathering of people for festive purposes in the title for example, festival, carnival, fair, fête, gathering, gala or show), location (must take place in Northumberland) and frequency (must take place either annually or biennially). A total of 142 festive events were identified, including one non-starter, Northern Lights Festival, which nevertheless received much press coverage (Appendix 1).

Additional information was subsequently gathered regarding date held, duration, specific location (name of hosting town/area) and genre or theme of event. This data was analysed to establish:

- Pattern of frequency of events.
- Pattern of duration of each event.
- Pattern of seasonality of the event (date held).
- Geographical concentration of current and previous cultural festivals.
- Recurrence/commonality of content type/theme of event.

4.3.2.2 *Database 2. Northumberland Small-scale Rural (NSR) Festivals showing Genre and Scale*

Database 2 was established by further sorting of Database 1 using criteria of genre (community or themed) and scale. All agricultural shows or primarily commercial ventures were removed, identifying 105 festivals (Appendix 2).

A rich tradition and quantity of agricultural shows in Northumberland were noted; however, this genre was considered outside the remit of this research and was excluded, although agriculture shows are recommended for separate study (section 9.5). Events managed by commercial promoters were not included in this research, as they were predominantly too large scale and/or originated outside the locale.

Information was added to this database to indicate the criterion of scale (number of visitors, total expenditure where known or available) in order to identify small-scale events although it was problematic owing to insufficient quantifiable evidence. Despite conducting internet, archival and observational searches for each of the festivals identified in Appendix 1, information on scale was often limited; many events are un-ticketed or attendance is unrecorded and information pertaining to scale relied in some instances on hearsay and observation. Likewise, financial records were usually unobtainable within the scope of this project. Scale was a determining factor in choosing the case study festivals with each case study having evidence that it qualified as small. The category "small" means having an income of less than £30K (based on data analysis used by the British Arts Festival Association (BAFA) (2008:8)) and having an audience of less than 10,000 (based on data analysis by Finkel (2009:6)).

4.3.2.3 Database 3. NSR Festivals showing Location, Longevity and Origin/Motivation 1980 – 2012

Database 3 records the location, longevity and origination/motivation of NSR festivals around the county, compiled after further sorting of Database 2 (Appendix 3). Festival information retrieved was often in the form of publicity/reportage and as such relies on the motivation of organisers, the ability of festivals to appear in the media (whether self-publicised or through the will of reporters) and the likelihood of the researcher finding this information. A degree of chance is endemic in gathering this information however comprehensive the search. Database 3 contains the following information:

- Location by former district councils. All data gathered was colour coded into the six former district council areas (Alnwick, Berwick, Blyth Valley, Castle Morpeth, Tynedale and Wansbeck). Although abolished in 2009, the districts were in existence for 29 years of this 32 year research period (1980 – 2012) and remain useful as a codifier in this database, not least in examining the legacy of these former administrative areas (section 3.4.2. Table 3.1).
- Pattern of longevity (including date of origin if known and records of existence between 1980 and 2012. Records were searched on each decade year ie. 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 with the addition of 2011 and 2012) (section 3.4.2.Table 3.1).

- Origination of festival (four categories of origins – 1) intrinsic, 2) combination, 3) extrinsic, 4) unknown (section 3.4.2, Table 3.2). From the original definition of a small-scale, rural festival, the origin and motivation for an event must have emanated within the festival locale and have an organisational committee consisting in the majority of local community members (sections 1.2.1 and 4.3.3.1). Festivals were further categorised to show the motivation behind the origins – a) special interest, b) community development, c) raise money and d) unknown. Thus a festival 1b) would be of intrinsic origin, motivated by community development).

4.3.3 Selecting the Case studies

There were 13 potential case studies identified from a total of 105 festivals listed in Database 2. Prior to selecting the final four cases, data was collected from these 13 festivals through telephone and face-to-face interviews, archive and web-based data and field observations. The research also drew on previous research conducted for a Master's Dissertation to substantiate the data of three of the potential case study events: Morpeth Gathering, Glendale Festival and Rothbury Festival (Black, 2011). Certain variables or criteria were decided upon as being necessary within a case study in order to address the research question. These variables are listed below (section 4.3.3.1).

Four festivals were eventually selected according to the variables listed in 4.3.3.1. This quantity was considered the optimum number to obtain the data required for the study within the practical constraints of the research period. The use of case studies necessitates a clear distinction of boundaries to delineate what is meant by the cases themselves, thus ensuring the research is deemed valid. As Webb (2012:n.p.) points out, consideration of these boundaries must be made when choosing the cases, on grounds of 'commonality or irregularities of variables'. The accessibility of data including archival records was also taken into consideration at the case study festivals. In addition to the contemporary evidence, the case studies needed to be positioned in relation to historical evidence taken from archival research to investigate changes and developments within the time scope of the thesis.

4.3.3.1   The Case Studies

The four case study festivals selected were the Morpeth Gathering (MG), the Ovingham Goose Fair (OGF), the Haltwhistle Carnival (HC) and the Glendale Festival (GF) (Figure 1.1). An organisational committee made up predominantly of local residents manage each festival, who meet on a regular basis to coordinate the event. Committee members were appointed roles (for example Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) with the intention being to distribute responsibilities amongst the group. While the committees ranged in numbers from 30 (MG) to 15 (HC), the number of active, coordinating roles was similar at OGF (five roles), HC (four roles) and GF (six roles), with MG having 12 members with a role. MG, OGF and GF committee members were all predominantly of retirement age with HC being exceptional in having a younger demographic amongst its members. All of the organisation committee members were voluntary with one exception at GF paid through the umbrella trust to whom the event was linked.

The case studies, distributed around Northumberland, had common and contrasting variables. The case studies had in common variables of genre, frequency, duration (main event less than 4 days), scale and origination of event (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Case study festivals showing common variables

Common Variables					
Name of Festival	Genre	Frequency	Duration	Scale*	Origination and motivation
Morpeth Gathering	Heritage /Community	Annual	3 days	Small	1,a,b
Ovingham Goose Fair	Heritage /Community	Annual	1 day	Small	1,b,c
Haltwhistle Carnival	Community	Annual	1 day	Small	1,b,c
Glendale Festival	Community	Annual	1 day	Small	2,b,c

Key: Origin: 1 = Intrinsic   Motivation: a = Special Interest
                      2 = Combined intrinsic/extrinsic   b = Community Development
                                                                                              c = Money raiser

*Scale: Small = having less than 10,000 Visitors (Finkel, 2009:6) or less than £30K income (BAFA, 2008:8)

The case studies had in contrast variables of longevity of existence, geographical location and date of the event (Table 4.2). Contrasting event longevity (festivals with a

historical precedent, an interrupted life span and a recent/new event) was necessary to meet Aim 4, which specifically considers the impact of longevity upon the contribution to social sustainability. Variations in monthly date were included for practical reasons to ensure events did not clash on the same day.

Table 4.2 Case study festivals showing contrasting variables

Contrasting Variables			
Name of Festival	Longevity	Geographical location by name of town/village (and by district authority)	Month Held
Morpeth Gathering	1968 – continuous	Morpeth (Morpeth district)	April
Ovingham Goose Fair	1400s – revived 1960s - continuous	Ovingham (Tynedale district)	June
Haltwhistle Carnival	1800s – revived 1989 - continuous	Haltwhistle (Tynedale district)	Mid July
Glendale Festival	2000 - continuous	Wooler (Berwick district)	End July

The case study festivals were distributed throughout the county of Northumberland, occurring in rural/semi-rural small towns/villages (Figure 1.1). The locations were selected to bear some similarity to each other in scale and rurality. The distribution was such that it ensured, as far as possible, that the subjects of the specific case studies were unique to that event, for example as local residents or having travelled locally to visit. A local resident was defined in this thesis as living within 10 miles of the festival. This distance was selected following initial field observation, the pilot interview and the rurality of the county and was based upon the perceived average distance from which the festivals drew their visitors.

4.3.4 Interviews

Interviewing was a core element of the ethnographic approach employed to collect the subject data. The ethnographic approach has been described by Collins (2010:240) as a 'dialogic' methodology, which 'primarily involves us in conversations', inevitably entailing the forming of relationships between subject and researcher. Key to contemporary ethnography is the reflexive stance of the researcher, i.e. awareness of the range of standpoints, the multi-sited sources of information and above all the relativist/constructivist elements of interview material. Awareness of the position of

the self in research is symptomatic of a more reflexive methodological response and reveal the degree of 'paradigm shift from the voice of the researcher to the voice of the researched' (Rabinow, 1986:246) or as Collins (2010:241) states, 'a foregrounding of the voice of the other'.

4.3.4.1 Sampling Methods

A variety of sampling strategies were employed to gather candidates for interview. Initially purposive samples were taken to select interviewees from the strategic sector and the festival organisations. Purposive sampling (by type) is 'often carried out within a conceptual framework of grounded theory' (Gillham, 2008:20). This was possible using the information gathered from early field studies and through the database resources. Consideration was given to potential issues of access to key data sources (the interview subjects). The festival organiser/s were seen as one of the first points of contact and as such, not only a resource in their own right but also as gatekeepers to the wider research field. They were seen as a knowledge source who could provide a possible next point of contact, otherwise termed as the snowball sampling method (Gray, 2004:88). Interestingly, they were often as likely to state who not to interview as to whom to approach which gave an insight in itself into festival organisation relationships.

This snowball sampling technique acted on the recommendations and suggestions from previous interviewees and was used to select subjects for the focus groups and key members of the community. Interviews conducted with visitors at the case study festivals were sampled randomly through, as in Gillham (2008), convenience sampling, according to the availability of people who could be approached or who would approach the data gathering exhibition (section 4.3.6.1).

4.3.4.2 Range of Interviewee Categories

Interviews were conducted within institutions and the broader public. Strategic decision-makers, festival organisers, key figures and focus groups were interviewed in each case study host community. Festival visitors were interviewed at each festival case study event. These are illustrated in Table 4.3. The range of interviews was designed to elicit a broad and valid data sample. Full ethical considerations were made

before interviews took place, including the granting of permission for recording and transcribing (section 4.5.5).

Interviews with a director were held within, respectively, NCC and ONE, to determine regional strategic influence and identify the processes behind the decisions taken, rather than the particular decisions themselves. This was necessary to become aware of the social and political forms within these organisations, in order to contextualise where decisions were made and for understanding the reasoning behind them. Data gathered at the institutional level informed the understanding of patterns of festival distribution and longevity apparent in the databases. Using the grounded theory method ensured the findings from the data were cross-referenced with the social and political theory, embedding the empirical and the theoretical as part of an on-going process.

Within each festival hosting community interviews were undertaken with individual festival organisers who each had an active coordinating role and represented the organisational committee behind the event. Key figures were interviewed in positions of authority in Education, Council, Religious and Trade establishments in each host community. These key figures were chosen to represent a broad demographic of local institutions. Focus group interviews took place in each host community, selecting members or participants of existing interest groups, rather than establishing specific groups for the research (section 4.3.5).

Visitor interviews were conducted at the case study festivals. Although similarly semi-structured to the interviews used in each other category of interviewee, the visitor interview schedule had fewer questions and was designed to be brief (lasting between five and 15 minutes) as it would be problematic to hold a visitor's attention for a greater length of time (Gould, 2011). The schedule was linked to the exhibition on display at the festival (section 4.3.6.1). Although focused on the themes of the research (and outlined in the exhibition) it was important to make the questions non-suppositional, to be open to new phenomena whilst remaining consistent with other means of data gathering for the purposes of analysis. A target of 40 visitor interviews per event was set with the final outcomes as MG: 39, OGF: 41, HC: 42, GF: 41. Table 4.3 categorises the interviews carried out showing the organisational affiliation of the

interviewees, the number of interviews conducted within each category and the date

conducted.

Table 4.3 Summary of the interview categories by position, number and date. All interviews were transcribed with the exception of the festival visitors. MG = Morpeth Gathering, OGF = Ovingham Goose Fair, HC = Haltwhistle Carnival, GF = Glendale Festival

Category of Interviewee	Position of/Organisational affiliation of Interviewee		Number of interviewees	Total interviewed	Date of interview
Pilot Interview	Great North Festival Organiser		n = 1	n = 1	9.10.12
Strategic Decision-Maker	Northumberland County Council Director		n = 1 per organisation	n = 2	3.7.12
	One North East Director				17.3.13
Festival Organiser	Otterburn festival (pilot)		n = 1 per organisation	n = 5	15.11.12
	MG				23.10.12
	OGF				24.10.12
	HC				24.1.13
	GF				11.12.12
Festival Visitor	MG		n = 39	n = 163	5/6/7.4.13
	OGF		n = 41		15.6.13
	HC		n= 42		14.7.13
	GF		n = 41		21.7.13
Key Figures	Education	MG	n = 1 per organisation	n = 16	9.5.13
		OGF			26.6.13
		HC			3.10.13
		GF			21.10.13
	Council	MG			1.7.13
		OGF			2.7.13
		HC			3.10.13
		GF			17.9.13
	Religion	MG			10.6.13
		OGF			8.7.13
		HC			11.9.13
		GF			17.9.13
	Trade	MG			9.5.13
		OGF			17.7.13
		HC			11.9.13
		GF			17.9.13
Focus Groups	Morpeth Baden Powell Scouts (MG)		n = 1 focus group with 8 participants	n = 37	20.9.13
	Ovingham Yoga (OGF Focus Group 1)		n = 1 focus group with 7 participants		11.7.13
	Green Ovingham (OGF Focus Group 2)		n = 1 focus group with 8 participants		1.9 13
	Haltwhistle Art Group (HC)		n = 1 focus group with 6 participants		3.10.13
	Wooler U3A (GF)		n = 1 focus group with 8 participants		21.10.13

As Table 4.3 shows the first interviews conducted were with the strategic decision-makers and the festival organisers. Qualitative analysis of these interviews was conducted to identify emerging themes and key words (or nodes). These nodes were cross-referenced to the Aims and Objectives of the thesis to assess direction of research and then a further analysis was conducted to ground these emergent nodes within the theory of the literature.

4.3.5 Focus Groups

The selection of focus groups for each case study was intended to represent a wide and balanced demographic of the community, from a mixed heterogeneous and homogeneous socio-demographic whilst having homogeneous interests. At the outset of planning the methodology, the intention was to hold four focus groups per case study, based on the recommendation that between three and five is usually adequate before saturation point (Morgan, 1997:43). This was subsequently reduced as is explained in 4.3.5.1. The decision was made to access existing groups rather than set up project-specific groups as they were deemed easier to recruit and evidence suggests that the participants would 'feel more comfortable amongst people they know' (University of Strathclyde, n.d.). The focus group interviews were set up as part of existing meetings scheduled for the groups with the intention of avoiding as much inconvenience as possible and to encourage the groups to feel relaxed in their situation. Wherever possible, an initial meeting with the group took place before the interview occurred. Snowball selection methods were made following interviews in the communities with the addition of trawling information centres and websites for local directories of groups.

4.3.5.1 Practical Limitations and Challenges faced when using Focus Groups

On the surface it appeared that there was a multitude of available organisations and social arenas which could be potential focus groups. However, multiple problems ensued in moving from the concept to the reality of conducting a focus session. Many of the advertised contact details were outdated; a number of the groups were seasonal and not available during the research time-frame and a number were unwilling to be involved owing to time and work restrictions. The initial objective of including focus groups within the methodology was primarily to reach as wide a scope of local individuals who would have a high probability of non-direct involvement with

the festival and a random range of levels of involvement where they did exist. The aim of eliciting responses from a potentially "other" perspective, was to avoid potential bias within the study.

This sector of the community is considered more problematic to reach by the nature of their "otherness". Focus groups are considered particularly beneficial as a means of 'obtaining several perspectives about the same topic' (Gibbs, 1997:n.p.). This highlighted the necessity of an awareness of the researcher's positionality between sites of research (for example, of community, institution or festival), of how the researcher perceives the other and in turn how the position of the researcher may be perceived by the subject (Phillips, 2000). It was imperative to recall the constructivist, epistemological stance behind the method when establishing the notion of other.

The intention to seek the other perspective was achieved through selecting focus groups across a wide range of activities and a broad demographic in terms of age and socio-economic background. Groups who met for sporting and leisure interests, that were not age related or financially restricted (for example, membership costs), were sought in particular. Obstacles appeared here too however; for example, darts, gardening and football all have their tendency to attract a particular age or gender dynamic.

As mentioned earlier, initial intentions to engage with four focus groups per case was deemed unachievable within the time parameters of the research. Finding and interviewing even two focus groups in connection with OGF had been logistically problematic to arrange. With these limitations and restrictions in mind, the number of focus groups per subsequent case study (MG, HC and GF) was reduced to one per case, a scale manageable within the confines of the project and yet which contributed significantly to the range of data retrieved.

Focus groups, by their very size, represent different challenges in interviewing to that of the individual interviewee (Morgan, 1997). The variety of interviewees within the groups, the manner in which they interact, and the range of responses which occurs within a group interview is significantly more unpredictable and can thus potentially shed new angles on the research in ways which a one-to-one interview may not do. Ensuring thorough and consistent matching of comments to the speaker is more

problematic when dealing with multiple participants. Despite recommendations in some of the literature for the presence of two researchers when recording the proceedings, this was considered not only impractical but also potentially intimidating to the participants (Gillham, 2008:35).

In order to ensure accurate recording of the meeting a group-seating plan was drawn out at the start of the meetings on which pictorial tracking of the conversations and responses could be made in addition to audio recordings and note taking. Video recording was ruled out as being too intimidating in nature. In a similar manner to that of the individual interview transcripts a systematic approach was made when compiling the schedule for the focus groups, in part to ensure that what Morgan (1997:63) calls 'group to group' validation could be consistently carried out during analysis. It was important here to compare not only the content element from the meetings but also the interactions between group members.

Compiling the method for interviewing focus groups took place following the observation of particular themes and recurring responses to questions within the previous interviews. The importance of linking interviews with focus groups has been highlighted by Morgan (1997:22). Key themes were identified and a funnel strategy was adopted for the group interviews, moving from an open, less-structured discussion towards a tighter, more moderated structure in which the identified themes are introduced. Core themes were identified based on those used in the semi-structured interview schedules and emerging patterns resulting from those interviews. As referred to previously, this grounding of the methodology within the data is an important aspect of the CGTM adopted in this research. In practise the adaptability of the method, bringing with it the opportunity to expand on developing themes and adjust the suitability of the interviews for the subject group, was critical in eliciting information and being able to follow subject inspired tangents if they arose.

4.3.6   Field Work at the Case Study Festivals

The nature of an ethnographic approach is to be 'immersive' within the subject and involves a degree of engagement which, as May (2011:171) points out, is not only an 'advantage but an existential fact'. The manner of immersion within the research project, excluding strategic, organiser and key figure interviews and focus groups,

entailed engaging in field observation, interaction in the form of an exhibition and activity and carrying out semi-structured interviews with visitors at the case study festivals.

4.3.6.1 Field Observation

Visits were made to each of the case study festivals within a wider scoping exercise during the first year of study (2012), in part to assess their suitability for selection. Information was gathered in the form of field notes, both written and visual data (photographic evidence) and in the form of off-record discussions with participants and visitors. The immersion process benefits from as great a length of time as can be allowed for within the study, enabling the researcher to build up a rapport with the subject and thus aim for greater acceptance within the community (Charmaz, 2006). Through building iteration into the process, the researcher seeks to better observe empirical patterns within the festivals which can be tracked and analysed alongside the additional data and theory (May, 2011).

During the second year of study (2013), the method of data gathering in the field was developed to contain a means of extracting information from festival visitors in the form of an exhibition and activity which was replicated at each case study. The purpose of compiling this method was to engage with a wider audience at the festivals (for example, potentially attracting families), to move beyond text-based data capture and to employ a variety of means of engagement with subjects, through the activity (for example, kinaesthetic, visual). The researcher was also interested in means of engaging the public in the research ideas and how that might inform or enhance its direction.

In order to develop this method, the researcher applied to participate in the *Afterlife of Heritage, Research to Public* project funded through the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and run in conjunction with Manchester University (AHRC, 2013). The aim of this project was to enable greater engagement between university researchers and the non-academic public, in collaboration with a partner organisation. A proposal was submitted for an interactive "pop-up" exhibition at festivals and within their wider communities and was accepted (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 The exhibition stand at the Glendale Festival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

The exhibition was designed to fit a mobile display stand which could be moved between festivals and community venues. It consisted of a heading banner with the name of the festival, the three overarching themes or research questions (connections – between festival and place, festival and heritage and festival and people) and below these, three posters containing statements and questions related to these themes, designed to provoke thought and response from the visitor. Although text based, the design was colourful and visually eye catching. Alongside the exhibition, an activity was created to provide the visitor with an opportunity for commenting on the themes of the research. This took the form of pre-cut bunting triangles, coloured differently according to the three themes, which the visitors were invited to decorate and add their comments to. These bunting "notes" were then attached to the respective display boards showing, individually, responses to the research questions and, collectively, proportionate areas of interest by quantity of notes.

This novel and exploratory form of methodology had both advantages and disadvantages as a means of eliciting data. It was useful in engaging the public in research, providing an opportunity for public responses to the research questions "in private" and not directly elicited: respondents could write or draw their reactions and comments regarding the festivals when the researcher was not present and leave them on the exhibition stand. Respondents had the opportunity to comment in a more

visual form by drawing their responses or in a couple of instances, writing poetry. Its inclusion allowed for greater interaction with a younger public as the majority of respondents were 16 years or younger. This in itself had an added gain as by attracting the attention of younger visitors (and holding that attention), the parents or carers could be simultaneously engaged with in an interview with the researcher.

It was deemed appropriate and complimentary at such creative and diverse events as festivals that a method of data gathering was employed which allowed for a creative and diverse response. However, there were several practical issues which hampered the successful execution of the activity including inclement weather and space restrictions, leading to the cancellation of this activity at one outdoor festival (Haltwhistle Carnival). The inconsistency of the method and the erratic and incongruent range of responses on the bunting alongside logistical time constraints led to the decision not to include the bunting data in the final analysis of the thesis.

4.4   Analysis Process of Data types

4.4.1   Interview Analysis

When designing the data gathering methods (section 4.3), consideration was made to the means by which data would be analysed in order to allow sufficient time and financial resources. The predominant form of original data was anticipated as being textual with possible visual data from the field-work. A plan was made to transcribe interviews immediately after recording and to organise and edit field notes into a computerised system as soon as possible after the event in preparation for thematic indexing prior to analysis. As Berg (2007:46) points out, failure to consider data organisation until after collection may lead to 'serious problems' arising. Interviews were audibly recorded and transcribed: audio recording of the visitor interviews was not possible and written documentation was made at the time of interview. Table 4.3 outlines the range, date and transcription record of all interviews.

Qualitative data collection evolved around three sets of activities. Visitor interviews were carried out following the strategic and organiser interviews, with interviews taking place at the four case study festivals as they occurred. An initial quantifiable analysis of the 163, semi-structured visitor interviews (which observed demographic patterns of the interviewees and analysed the ratio of preferences expressed by visitors to festivals) resulted in a synopsis of these interviews by their four respective

case studies. This analysis was followed by a qualitative analysis of these visitor interviews (using the same analysis approach used on the strategic and organiser interviews). This process was repeated with the key figure interviews and focus groups.

4.4.1.1   Data Analysis, the Methodology and the Research Structure

The interview analysis and its subsequent grounding in the literature and theory played a significant role in the formation and direction of the research structure. An initial review of the literature (Chapter 2) identified certain emergent themes regarding festival impact on social sustainability. These themes focused on connectivity between festival and heritage, festival and place and festival and people (sections 2.3, 2.4, 2.5). The qualitative analysis of data from all interviews (all categories), and the subsequent grounding of this data in the theory, revealed additional themes of consistency and innovation which on further return to the literature were recognised as important contributions to social sustainability, embedding the research within the paradigm of sustainability (sections 2.5.2-2.5.5). Grounding of the emergent data in the literature, as for example in Max-Neef's (2013) three point symbol for the relational components of sustainability (Figure 2.1), contributed to the structure of the thesis and the thematic configuration of the chapters. The interconnecting arms of the symbol (nature, technology, people) suggested the potential relationship between consistency, innovation and connectivity.

The CGT method foregrounded the importance of these key themes of consistency and innovation, which became the subject of Chapters 5 and 6 respectively. The initial themes of connections between festival and heritage, place and people mentioned previously were subsequently analysed within the context of levels of consistency (Chapter 5) and levels of innovation (Chapter 6). In addition, this initial analysis identified the emergent strength of the nodes within the data referring to the forms, levels and values attached to social connectivity (at individual and group level) which led to the formation of a separate chapter (Chapter 7) on connectivity. Careful choice of terminology was made for references to the themes, particularly where used in the interviewing schedules, as this was considered an important aspect of the data gathering (Gillham, 2000b; Friesen, 2010).

In preparing the interview schedules the term consistency was chosen deliberately as implying maintaining or sustaining aspects of culture through the festival, as opposed to continuity which may suggest adaptation and thus possibly be confused with the separate data theme of innovation. Where reference was made deliberately to consistency within the interview schedules, the purpose behind the questions was to ascertain whether there were aspects within the festivals which were constant over the life of the event and how and why this mattered or not. It was deemed important to the research that these themed determinants of social sustainability could be identified in their own right to establish a balance between, in particular, the apparent duality of consistency and innovation; thus the need to establish the semantic emphasis on the consistent.

This analytical approach and cross-referencing was important in aspiring towards the objectivity and reliability of these emerging themes and in the identification of indicators which demonstrated the contribution of festivals to community social sustainability (Aim 3). The process of determining these indicators was achieved through the comparative analysis of impact variables from social impact models and measures within the literature (as for example, identified by Gursoy (2004)), mapped against models for evaluating the meeting of human needs (as for example, Maslow (1945) and Max-Neef (1991)). Models such as Max-Neef's *Human Scale Development* (1991) ascertain that greater social sustainability can be achieved through the culturally adaptive satisfying of human needs, which in turn increases well-being (sections 2.5.3 and 2.5.5). The variables by which festivals were deemed to socially impact on their communities were aligned against the satisfiers of needs, identified as increasing social sustainability (and could thus be used to address the research question). The series of indicators of festival contribution to community social sustainability were identified as the following:

a. contribute to community pride and localness
b. enhance knowledge and understanding
c. contribute to the continuity of local culture
d. enable networks of connectivity

4.5   **Reflexivity and Validity**

4.5.1   *Objectivity within the Research*

The importance of compiling a high quality and valid research method cannot be over emphasised. The etic and emic position of the researcher – the objective position – needed to be brought into question and the possibility of bias highlighted. As Denscombe (2003) highlights, the researcher can strive towards an objective stance through maintaining reflexivity and being aware of potential personal biases within the research process. Greater objectivity may be achieved through anticipating problems of subjectivity and inference of causation (making the project internally valid), through providing a means to replicate the project (external validity) and through what Guba and Lincoln (2005) describe as the corroboration of the research findings by others. Their arguments emphasise the importance of disseminating the research findings within the academic community through conference presentations and publications in addition to providing a transparent methodology. The author has sought to present findings and publish proceedings from these presentations throughout the research process as a means of testing and confirming the process.

4.5.2   *Internal Validity and Self-reflexivity*

An awareness of the need to be self-reflexive was paramount throughout the research. Using an ethnographic approach sought to build a rapport with the subject and to immerse oneself in the subject. As Fielding (2000:72) states, one is seeking access to 'privileged information [with which] to become conversant'. It follows that the researcher will have a standpoint or position regarding the subject (it would not be possible to be completely neutral) though it is critical, as Burawoy (2000:28-9) stresses, to acknowledge the importance of remaining reflexive and of studying the processes without objectifying them. The issue of self-reflexivity and a postmodern epistemological approach is central to contemporary ethnography and has been reflected in the paradigm changes within ethnographic methodology over the previous century (Marcus, 1998; Burawoy, 2000).

4.5.3   *External Validity*

The potential for the project to have external validity was vital for the research to gain acceptance within the field. Ensuring that the project was hypothetically replicable, using a clear methodology, the research could potentially be repeated or broadened in

terms of the number of cases or studies, either by subsequent or current researchers. However, as Phillimore (2012) points out, ethnographic research is positioned within a 'non-positivist paradigm [and as such] replication as in scientific studies cannot be done'. Research within the social sciences and that which examines social connections can never be entirely replicable (in a positivist sense); the interpretation of responses by researcher and researched tend to subjectivity and the circumstances of the cases could never be identical (environmental factors alone would ensure this). However, the intention was to present a method for identifying and evaluating social impacts which could be repeated with a 'minimum of errors and biases […] to document the procedure as thoroughly and openly as possible' (Yin, 2000:37-8). As May (2011:164) points out (my emphasis), 'social inquiry focuses on *interactions* between groups of people in social settings and not the individuals themselves'.

4.5.4 Triangulation of Enquiry

To further render the research valid and reliable, triangulation of the enquiry methods was an integral feature of this ethnographic research. According to Olsen (2004:3) triangulation has been defined as 'the mixing of data or methods so that diverse viewpoints or standpoints cast light upon a topic'. Furthermore, she emphasises the need to acknowledge the combined relevance of quantitative and qualitative methods in producing, through triangulation, 'a greater dialectic of learning' (Olsen, 2004:4).

This thesis recognises the need to include both quantitative and qualitative methods and, though greater attention was placed on the latter, the number of interviews was great enough to ensure the inclusion of quantitative findings within the data. The responses of individual interviewees were triangulated "within method". Beyond that, the emerging findings from the range of qualitative methods (described in section 4.3) were triangulated in accordance with CGTM as interviews were cross-checked against field observations and further cross-checked against theoretical data.

4.5.5 Ethical Issues

Ethical consent was a necessary aspect of conducting research through Newcastle University and ethical approval was sought. The project was deemed to not require ethical approval by the Dean of School in 2011. However, an ethnographic methodology which interacts with human subjects through observation and interview

methods has potentially ethical issues. It was important to consider issues of confidentiality, informed consent and accurate data collection and dissemination (Denscombe, 2003).

In order to avoid the potential identification of subjects, the research strove to provide confidentiality through the coding of interviewees and avoidance of names. Guidance was sought from the Research Ethics Toolkit produced within Newcastle University (Newcastle University, 2014a). Interviews with all strategic decision-makers, organisers, key figures and focus group interviewees had the potential to be 'intrusive', asking in-depth questions of what Phillimore (2012) terms 'key informants'. In addition, the position of these interviewees within their community (with the exception of the focus groups) meant that anonymity could potentially be compromised. An ethical permission form was provided to each of the latter interviewees seeking consent and the objective of the research clarified from the outset. In the MG focus group where some participants were 16 years or younger, permission to interview the group was granted through the leader, acting as a gatekeeper. Similarly, although ultimately none of the material collected through the creative activity at the exhibition was included in this thesis, participants gave permission for their contributions to be used in the research. Where children participated in the activity, parents or responsible adults gave consent.

The interviews with the visitors did not require consent forms, as there were no identifying aspects within the interview schedule. In addition, these interviews were of brief duration, and matters of practicality considered, taking into account the outdoor, festival-in-situ interview setting.

4.6 **Summary**

To summarise, this chapter has outlined the research paradigm (an interpretivist epistemology with an anti-foundational ontology), illustrating the reasoning behind the use of CGTM within which the practical methods of data gathering and analysis were undertaken. It highlights within this methodology the relational aspects of the analysis of the data, considers how appropriate this method is with regard to the research project and emphasises aspects of the method to ensure that the data and theory were sufficiently cross-embedded as prescribed within CGTM. The practical

components of the method were described in detail revealing the developmental stages of the research project, from the early archival and literature review to development of databases, selection of case studies and the process of constructing and conducting the methods. The methods of data analysis and in particular how they informed the development of the thesis were subsequently described. Limitations of the methodology were explained and outlined in detail to emphasise the need for transparency of process, and to ensure valid replicability of any future study using this methodology. The validity and reliability of the research was documented regarding internal and external validity and the triangulation of methods. Ethical issues arising in the research and measures taken to ensure confidentiality were described.

5 Chapter 5. Festivals: Consistent Connections within Communities

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 is the first of the three themed data analysis chapters, examining the primary variables at the core of this research project. The three chapters analyse the interview data from the organisers, visitors, key figures and focus groups at each of the four case study festivals. These chapters are presented through the themes of **consistency, innovation** and **connectivity**; their titles indicate the processes or determinants emergent from the data which were deemed to be components necessary for a socially sustainable community (selection of the terminology is explained in section 4.2.4.2). Identifying the determinants of social sustainability is central to Aim 3 of the thesis. The literature on social sustainability suggests the need for both a degree of consistency, described as 'maintaining as-is' (Ahman, 2013:1162), coupled with the ability to adapt or innovate, summed up by Sachs (1999:32) as 'change within continuity'. Emphasis on the role of connectivity within sustainable communities (explored by, amongst others, Healy and Côté, 2001; Putnam and Fieldstein, 2003; Macnab *et al.*, 2010) reveals the need for a range of connections (i.e. bonds and bridges, formal and informal) and the potential impact of these connections upon well-being. These determinant themes were substantiated through the process of grounding within existing models of festival social impact (section 4.2.2.1) and within the literature on social sustainability (section 2.5.4).

This chapter examines the conceptual theme of **consistency** and its relation to social sustainability. Consistent elements can be described as having 'conformity with other or earlier attitudes, practices etc' (Trumble and Pearsall, 1996). Within the literature on social sustainability, consistency is associated with 'maintenance social sustainability' (Vallance, 2011:344) or 'sustaining the current way of living' (Ahman, 2013:1159). Consistency, or a state of stability, is considered to be a contributing component in the satisfaction of certain human needs (for example, the needs for participation, understanding and affection), which in turn contribute to social sustainability (sections 2.5.3-2.5.5). McKenzie (2004:12) offers the following indicators of a socially sustainable community which are suggestive of consistency through inheritance and through the maintenance of a system worth sustaining: 'a system for

transmitting awareness of social sustainability from one generation to the next [and] a sense of community responsibility for maintaining that system of transmission'.

All interview responses were analysed for qualitative references to the thematic determinants of consistency and innovation within the festival alongside analysis of the sub-themes of the connections made with heritage, place and people. Focus in this chapter is on consistent connections, beginning with a brief examination of the interviewees' perception of the term heritage and implications of the various respondent interpretations upon the research data (section 5.2). Consistent connections with place are explored, considering festival contribution to localness, belonging, place image and pride in place (section 5.3). Section 5.4 examines consistent connections with people, the festival organisation, bonded connections and those between generations. A final summary (section 5.5) of consistent connections concludes this chapter.

5.2 Consistency: Festivals and Heritage

Festivals contain many elements of heritage, particularly intangible cultural heritage (ICH), both in process and content. Authors such as Arcodia and Whitford (2006) and Derrett (2003) have pointed to the value of historical continuity and enhancement of cultural traditions contributing to a sense of belonging within a community. Definitions of heritage refer to inheritance implying connections and some level of consistency between past and present within the respective community (UNESCO, 2003; Council of Europe, 2005). The definition of heritage entices 'an often bewildering array of identifications and potential conflicts' (Graham *et al.*, 2005:30). Heritage may be a 'concern for the past' (Graham *et al.*, 2005:26), what Duarte (2010:858) refers to as the 'preservationist tendencies of the institutional narrative', but also forward looking, a 'sign of change and innovation' (Lumley, 2005:19). The dualist tendency of the definitions suggests the linking of the past to the present (through inheritance) and an experiential combination of consistency and innovation.

Graham *et al.*'s (2005) 'bewildering' term heritage was problematic when determining the interview responses to questions concerning heritage. Varying perceptions of heritage not only impacted upon the data gathered, in terms of responses given and analysis made, but could also affect how heritage was included in the festival (i.e. what

was considered heritage content by the various organisers). Thus, an attempt to understand how the interview respondents interpreted heritage was endeavoured at an early stage in the methodology to contribute to the understanding of the impact of heritage within the research.

5.2.1 *Identifying a Range of Interpretations of the Term Heritage*

Analysing and identifying interviewees' interpretation of the term heritage in association with their respective festivals was a complex task, predominantly undertaken qualitatively and enhanced with additional quantitative data. The interviewees were not asked direct questions concerning their response to the term heritage as this was deemed to be too leading. A variety of initial reactions and responses to the term heritage from the interview respondents (organisers, key figures, visitors and focus groups) were recorded at the outset of the interview. Changes to these responses were also noted as the interview progressed, following particular questions related to heritage (Appendices 5 -8 illustrate these respondent interview schedules). These changing perceptions of heritage content or processes within the festivals throughout the stages of the interviews, are described in section 5.2.1.1.

Many respondents initially equated heritage and the festival with tradition and, in some instances, a finite view of the past. Organisers (n = 4) made remarks regarding the heritage content and also the process of holding a festival with comments such as the following: [it's] *a traditional thing that people look forward to* (Org OGF, 2012) and [it's] *linked to a traditional format* (Org HC, 2013). Some (non-organiser) respondents associated heritage with a lack of change, equating heritage with a past culture. This perception of heritage may contradict the notion of continuity in inheritance or, in Duarte's words (2010:859), 'efforts towards re-working cultural heritage in a creative way [...] to connect to and re-create' by failing to see a consistent but adaptive thread within the culture. This can be seen in the following quote which appears to associate an interpretation of heritage with a more finite version of the past: *we don't do history here, it's all gone except for* [what's] *for the tourists* (Visitor HC, 2013) and in the following, from the same festival: *history's gone here. Except for the Roman Wall and that's aimed at tourists really. I don't think there's any heritage in the festival, oh except maybe the old farming practises* (Visitor HC, 2013). Many of the visitors

interpreted heritage as primarily focused on a historic aspect of the local culture (for example, in this case, the Romans and displays of traditional farming methods) rather than inherited cultural processes (for example, the displays or procession) within the festival.

Visitors (n = 163) and key figures (n = 16) were asked to identify aspects of the festival which made connections with the local heritage. Of the 163 visitors interviewed, 68 (42%) stated that they did not know or could not think of any heritage content within the festivals. Amongst the 16 key figure interviewees, 7 (44%) responded negatively or expressed levels of doubt that the festival displayed aspects of the local heritage. This was typified in the following comments: *there's limited heritage, apart from the event itself is heritage; there's not really any heritage link in any conscious fashion* (KF HC, 2013); *there is a link but it's generally underdeveloped and too reliant on the comedy goose* (KF OGF, 2013). Of the 95 (58%) visitors who did suggest some heritage element in the festivals, the greatest recognition of heritage was applied to aspects of the festival with more tangible content (for example, the stalls and crafts) above other heritage forms of a more intangible nature. A significant number of responses failed to recognise, at least initially, any heritage in the festival. This suggests that heritage was associated primarily with recognisably historic artefacts before recognition of inherited and more intangible processes.

Alongside the sentiments of lack of heritage content, a common perception was that it may not be the role of festivals to connect to heritage or provide that consistent link with the past. Respondents at one focus group raised the question, *do you use festivals to reinforce heritage? I don't think that's why we have festivals. Reinforce the heritage in other ways* (FG OGF, 2013). A key figure also remarked how *other events highlight the heritage so maybe it is done by other things at other times of the year* (KF GF, 2013).

5.2.1.1 *Shifting Interpretations and Recognitions of Heritage*
As noted above, some interviewees' (i.e. 42% of visitors and 44% of key figures) initial perceptions of heritage associated with the festivals focused on tangible content linked to a preserved notion of the past and of tradition. However, shifts in these perceptions were observed following particular questions in the interview schedule.

Although these shifts in perceptions of heritage did not occur consistently across individual interviews (n = 220), certain sections of the interview schedules were repeatedly observed as bringing changes in interviewee responses. These included organisers' responses to connectivity (Question section 6, Appendix 5), visitors' responses to heritage (Question section B, Appendix 6), key figures' responses to perceptions of the festival in the community (Question section 5, Appendix 7) and focus groups' discussions on connectivity (Question section 3, Appendix 8). Many of the interviewees, in particular the visitors and key figures, showed an increasing recognition as individual interviews progressed, of heritage processes including inherited festival content and staging the event. Figure 5.1 illustrates these shifting perceptions of heritage.

Interview respondents' perceptions of heritage associated with festivals (early stages of interviewing)

Little inclusion of heritage at the festival

Purposely included heritage

Focus on content, tangibles (for example, stalls, craft)

Linked to the past, may be a finite association

Interview respondents' perceptions of heritage associated with festivals (later stages of interviewing)

Heritage more widely acknowledged as present at festival

Increasing recognition of tacitly included elements

Focus on process, intangibles (for example, opening ceremony, parade, stories and memories, community connectivity)

Linked to contemporary practices and 'inheritance'

Figure 5.1 Shifting perceptions of heritage associated with the festivals during individual interviews

Respondents were observed to retract or alter their perception of the heritage links made by the festivals, from an initial acknowledgement of the more explicitly or purposely included aspects of festival heritage, to the more tacitly included heritage. The consistency of the event (not only its annual recurrence but also its predictability in the calendar) was suggested by many of the interviewees as being part of the heritage component of the festival. Some respondents noted in particular the significance of the regularity of the date on which the festival was held, commenting that: [we] *experimented with changing the date but it wasn't popular. It's now established in the folk calendar so would be hard to change* (Org MG, 2012) while another stated: *it's like a legend, the date* (FG OGF, 2013).

A number of interviewees referred, at later stages of their interviews, to the event itself and its continuous existence as being part of the heritage. Initial interview remarks from respondents at HC recognised little heritage content while, at later stages in the interviews, two key figures at HC stated, *the event itself is heritage* (KF HC, 2013) and *I think they see it as part of their heritage really* (KF HC, 2013). The focus group at this event remarked, *the longevity of the event keeps the place together, there's focus in its regularity* (FG HC, 2013). As the interviews progressed, certain aspects of the festivals' content were reconsidered as heritage (for example, the fun fair, the tea tent and the dance which were consistently part of the event each year). The processes of staging the festival were also acknowledged further into the interviews as bringing consistency to the event, within which changes in the content could occur over the lifetime of the festival, as shown in the following remarks.

> *There was a pageant. Continued the theme of the Carnival princess* (illustrated in Figure 5.2)*. Traditionally there was a King and Queen. We have two attendants, a boy and a girl. Now it's a princess. How they're selected has moved on but it's a link to the traditional format. We have a disco for the younger ones; in modern day terms it's a version of the dance which me mam used to tell us about* (Org HC, 2013).

Figure 5.2 Carnival Princess in the Haltwhistle Carnival parade, 2012 (Black, 2012).

Many of these festival processes and content are subconsciously or tacitly included as *part of the fabric of the place* (Visitor MG, 2013), consistently run, inherited from one

festival to the next. These aspects of a festival may be so familiar they are taken for granted which in turn may mean they are overlooked as potential elements of cultural heritage.

This shift in perceptions of heritage became particularly prominent in responses relating to the social processes involved in hosting a festival with evidence of an increased recognition of the inherited and continuous processes within the festival. The following visitors' remarks illustrate this point, referring to the heritage as being about: *community togetherness* (Visitor HC, 2013), *a sense of the locale* (Visitor OGF, 2013) and about *the stories that are told when you get a group of people together* (Visitor GF, 2013).

Another visitor remarked:

> *It's the coming together and the chance to learn specific things about Wooler which the festival does every year. The younger generation see the chance to pull together and promote what's unique about the place. Especially important for a rural community, to see a common cause and where we've come from. The festival can help do that so I suppose that's showing its heritage* (Visitor GF, 2013).

Many of these subconsciously or tacitly included aspects of heritage provide an atmosphere conducive to reminiscence and relaxation (for example, the community togetherness, sense of locale and space to gather). These elements provide opportunity for *fun* or *entertainment* which many respondents referred to as *very important* (across all interviewee categories) and also address the human need for idleness or leisure. Idleness, as used by Max-Neef (1991:32), is perhaps actually the better of the two terms to employ in this instance as, despite its negative connotations, it suggests spare time for reflection.

The shifts identified in many of the respondents' perceptions of heritage appear to be largely positive as they encompass a wider understanding of the inherited qualities of the festival. The organisers were overall more positive than either visitors or focus groups regarding heritage links at festivals, due largely to their direct involvement in purposely including heritage elements within the events. This was particularly so at the MG, being an historically themed event; the organiser described the heritage content of this festival as *the whole essence of what we are* (Org MG, 2012). In addition the organiser placed emphasis on the festival's consistent recurrence each year as

benefitting the local heritage, providing an opportunity for cultural traditions to be regularly repeated and thus to survive. Without the showcase which is the festival, the organiser argued, many of *the traditions would discontinue*, [and that although] *things might die a natural death* [...] *you have to give them a chance to survive* (Org MG, 2012).

There is a potential that the term heritage may be detrimental to the attraction of a festival, particular amongst the younger interviewees. The focus group respondents at MG were of a younger demographic (i.e. 14 -18 year olds) and suggested that their festival appeared boring through its linkage to heritage and by default, in their perception, old things. Respondents perceived heritage as *something in a museum, not a festival thing* and as being *not cool, even scary* (FG MG, 2013). It must be pointed out that this response was exceptional and that the majority of the young respondents expressing this view had never attended the festival.

5.2.1.2   Return to Tradition

As mentioned previously, a number of respondents, particularly organisers, equated heritage with tradition. The organisers at each of the case study festivals emphasised that *people want tradition* (Org MG, 2012) and that they believed that many of their visitors were desirous of change and/or a return to a form of the festival either as it was at the outset or in a former time. At OGF the organiser stated *that it's changing too much, there's a need to move away from commercialisation* and that there was a desire for a *return to tradition and a small scale village style event* (Org OGF, 2012). References were made to efforts to restore festival consistency by returning the event to an earlier format. The OGF organiser stated that efforts to achieve this reflected the broader interests of the host community and followed a village meeting on the direction of the festival. Similarly the HC organisers stated *we want to bring back the old ways* (Org HC, 2013). This response was observed to be cross-generational as younger members had similarly expressed their desire to maintain the traditional structure. *The common thread with the young people was that they love the carnival week. It wouldn't be the same if we took some of the things out* (Org HC, 2013).

Emphasis on return to tradition, though predominant amongst organisers, was also apparent amongst other groups of respondents, most noticeably at the festivals with

longer existence, MG, OGF and HC. Key figures, visitors and focus groups suggested that the festival had both a part in the community's heritage and a length of existence long enough to become tradition or heritage. This was expressed through sentiments desirous of preservation and also of pride in keeping something worthwhile going in the community. OGF key figures referred to a desire to return the event to a more traditional model, consistent with former events. Both focus groups at OGF referred to this as is evidenced in the following quotes: *people are protective of a village tradition* (FG2 OGF, 2013) and *they have a sense of pride that it's been going for all that time* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

At GF, where the festival was relatively new, several responses referred to an earlier celebration still held in the town, describing a degree of antagonism or separation between the events. *The real tradition was the local carnival; I get the impression that the carnival is for them, the local people that have always lived here, their children and grandchildren [...] very, very Wooler people whereas the festival reaches out more* (FG GF, 2013). The event was commonly perceived amongst visitors to GF as being *too new an event for consistency; it's too new to make links between old and current town* and *there's not the connection* (Visitors GF, 2013). A GF key figure described the place of the festival in the town in the following way: *acceptance within the community is starting but still needing to happen* (KF GF, 2013). The apparent negative response to consistency within the GF is balanced, however, by an equal perception that the festival provided an opportunity to make heritage connections. This was expressed as an important factor as such connections were generally believed to be lacking in the area.

5.2.2   The Social Process of Inheritance

As previously noted, many respondents' interpretations of festival heritage shifted, throughout the interviews, from a more predominant focus upon content, particularly tangible features, to a greater recognition of the intangible elements of heritage (Figure 5.1). These latter intangible elements of heritage may be referred to as the social processes of inheritance or the interactions between people to continue and to disseminate cultural heritage, through education, knowledge dissemination and promotion in both formal and informal settings. The process of inheritance is 'active' and a contributor to what Smith (2006:274) refers to as 'identity making'. As Rolfe

(1992) emphasised, locally specific culture may be inherited and may continue through the repeated staging of a festival and many of the performances within. Evidence of the social processes of inheritance was identified within the interview schedules by questions referring to the contribution of festivals to keeping culture alive and in the relationship between heritage and cultural displays within festivals.

Organisers stated overwhelmingly that festivals kept culture alive. OGF and HC organisers suggested that inheritance of cultural practices was an important factor for the continuity of the community. The MG organiser suggested that, while some festival visitors may potentially perceive heritage content as *stereotyping the local culture,* the event could contribute to overcoming these perceptions (which the organiser ascribed to ignorance or lack of knowledge) through showing the cultural continuity in the inherited processes. The GF organisers likewise believed that the festival provided opportunities for the process of inheriting local culture and thus including this culture in the event was very important. However, they emphasised that, in order to promote interest in the local culture and thus interest in inheriting it, the event had to be primarily fun to get the message across.

Visitor response was overwhelmingly positive regarding the contribution of the festival to keeping cultural heritage alive. Visitors commented on the consistency within the processes of inheritance, referring to a variety of ways in which the local culture was transmitted and passed on by the festivals. Many visitors emphasised the importance of inheriting knowledge, stating that the festival passed on knowledge in a widely encompassing manner. References were made to the role of festivals in displaying the dynamic or social structure of the community (i.e. who resides in the locale, what they do, how they do things and whom they do it with). Despite this acknowledgement, many local visitors (i.e. living within 10 miles (section 4.3.3.1)) stated they did not personally learn anything about their local culture, implying they *already knew it* and it was already familiar (local visitors all festivals, 2013).

Visitors emphasised the opportunity for non-locals to learn about the culture of the place and equally important, for the younger generation to inherit knowledge and understanding. Many references were made to inter-generational inheritance processes apparent at the festivals; this is explored in detail in section 5.4.4. The

majority of key figures at all festivals similarly stated that they believed festivals helped keep culture alive and contributed to cultural inheritance. Their positive responses were qualified however by references to potentially negative aspects of inheritance. These related to the danger of *exclusion in a small place* (KF OGF, 2013), whilst a key figure at GF remarked that while *generally there is a need to highlight heritage elements, heritage may be off-putting* (KF GF, 2013).

5.2.3   Interpreting Heritage as Authentic or Consistent

It is appropriate here to briefly refer to questions of heritage authenticity within the context of consistency (with further discussion concerning localness and authenticity in section 8.4). Although authenticity was not directly raised as part of the interview process many of the interviewees referred to the authenticity of heritage within the context of consistently recurring forms of culture, relating to the purpose of its inclusion in a festival. While several respondents from each interview stated the existence of the event in the community was, in itself, a significant part of the local heritage, questions were raised by key figures, visitors and focus group respondents as to the authenticity of some of the heritage content included.

An event could be considered as a consistently recurring aspect of the community, particularly where it had existed for excess of 30 years (all but GF). However, aspects of the festival considered to lack consistency could lead to perceptions of an inauthentic event. This was expressed within focus group 2 at OGF: *there's a heritage feel to the event on the surface but I think the link is taken for granted so much of the heritage is being missed. There's a lack of homogeneity – stalls reflect some sort of heritage but what?* (FG2 OGF, 2013). An apparent inconsistency of chronology between the performances and displays at an event also had a negative impact on respondents as is shown by MG visitor remarks: *the disjointed chronology doesn't help you to relate to the heritage or to engage people locally* (Visitor MG, 2013); *Morpeth was a market town. There should be more references to the cattle and horses* (Visitor MG, 2013). Key figures at GF, the most recently established of all the case study festivals, also remarked on inconsistencies and perceived inauthenticity of cultural content. One respondent commented on the inclusion of a street market (Figure 5.3), *I think people's got the wrong aspect of Wooler. It's a market town but it's never had a market on the street, it's a cattle market town* (KF, GF). Another key figure referred to

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the heritage content on display, stating *they have Morris dancers. Well I just don't see the point of Morris dancers and I wouldn't say they're even local to the area* (KF GF, 2013).

Figure 5.3 Market on the high street at Glendale Festival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

Although it was recognised that elements of the heritage content may be inconsistent with perceptions of what constitutes local heritage, there was some recognition of the value of inheriting and passing on knowledge through the annual festival. This takes place through the demonstration of methods of crafts, dance or music, the organising of the event and in the passing of experiences and memories relating to the community. Respondents recognised that adaptation and innovative, creative interpretations of the heritage may occur, what Smith (2006:274) refers to as the 'process of active identity making and remaking'. While this may influence how people think and feel about authenticity, adaptation within the festival heritage content may contribute positively to the community. Visitors' remarked frequently upon the festival *keeping cultural heritage alive* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013), providing *living demonstrations* (Visitors MG, OGF, 2013) and that the process of *the community involvement keeps the culture and heritage alive* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). On balance, the processes of inheritance and the sharing of heritage, which occurs at

festivals, contributes to the continuity of heritage and has a positive social impact. If the heritage displayed is deemed inauthentic or inconsistent, however, the value of these social processes found in festival communities is arguably negated.

5.3   **Consistency: Festivals and Place**

The significance of the relationship between festival and place is apparent, particularly in a small-scale event such as the case study festivals (Derrett, 2003: Edwards, 2011). The degree to which this relationship holds consistency for its community was explored through attempts to understand how the respondents perceived that the festivals contributed to a sense of place, particularly of localness. Festivals have been described as 'the outward manifestations of the identity of the community and [which] provide a distinctive identifier of place and people' (Derrett, 2003:49). Several questions explored how the festival impacted on the respondents' sense of belonging, pride and attachment to place, including perceptions of whether and how the event contributed to their commitment to the place. Research participants were asked questions related to sense of place (local connection, aspects of pride) and sense of belonging to place.

5.3.1   The Contribution of the Festival to Localness and Belonging

Localness, as defined in section 3.3.5, suggests a reflection of tangible and intangible elements of a loosely defined place, closely linked to a sense of belonging within a community. This sense of belonging infers the notion of boundaries, the delineation of what is within and what is without the locale. The degree to which a festival reflects a sense of localness is largely dependent on the organisers and funders, the people who select the content and decide on the form of the event. The intention of these decision-makers may be to contribute to a sense of belonging within a community, though not necessarily to demonstrate a sense of the immediate locale (Duffy and Waitt, 2011).

The MG organiser expressed that the aim of the festival was to reflect the *uniqueness of place* (Org MG, 2012) but in a county-wide, Northumbrian sense of the culture. The organisers of OGF, HC and GF placed an emphasis on the immediate locale, although this was not always acknowledged by visitors or within the wider, hosting community (reflected in comments from focus groups and key figures). The intention of the

organisers at OGF was clearly to reflect the *character of the place* and return the event to its local roots. This was in recognition of a desire amongst local residents to return to *something smaller, more traditional* [....] *although we haven't succeeded entirely yet, the image we're trying to give – carrying on tradition, an opportunity for groups in the village to say we're here, this is what we do* (Org OGF, 2012).

While some OGF respondents recognised the local representation, commenting for example, that *most of the local organisations are there and it's like a shop window on the village* (KF OGF, 2013), in contrast some respondents perceived little apparent localness, as for example, in the following remarks:

> *It didn't seem to be our kids dancing, seemed to be coming from away; the uniqueness could be celebrated more, how much they're local stalls, I don't know* (KF, OGF);

> [The] *locals don't bring their things – it's from outside; I don't think they approach local business. Some of the performers, they're not from Ovingham, they're from miles away* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

There was similar evidence at GF of variations between the organisers' intentions and perceptions of local representation at the festival. The organisers stressed the importance of the local element saying, *it's got to be local, local crafts all produced in the area, all handmade. Food is all local suppliers, growers and music side is predominantly from a 50 mile radius* (Org GF, 2012). The festival was not necessarily perceived as being locally representative amongst (non-organiser) respondents, as the following comments suggest: *I don't think they're very local* (Visitor GF, 2013); *I was disappointed with the commercial element of some of the stalls* (KF GF, 2013).

The need for a festival to demonstrate connections with the locale may be particularly important owing to the brevity of the event (in all cases the festival lasted no longer than three days, excluding build-up). Despite this brevity, where the festival was locally centred with local participants, respondents referred to links made with more permanent features and organisations within the town/village, the chance to see a *snap-shot* (Visitor HC, 2013) of the local social structure exposed. It could be seen that the brief festival gathering provided a link to a more consistent undercurrent of community life. Simultaneously, local residents are themselves "on display" and an

opportunity is given to meet neighbours who may not be encountered on other occasions.

The central location of each of the festivals, and the utilisation in each case of the main thoroughfare at some point of the event, was frequently referred to by visitors. This centrality was indicated as a key element of the success of the event in bringing people together and promoting the town in general. There was often a consistency to the physical venues with references made to the familiar, physical context of the buildings, high street and communal areas which the festival inhabits for its duration. The following quotes illustrate the combining of consistency of place with the liminality of the festival:

> [A] *chance to meet up with people in a familiar and 'normal' place but not in the normal routine* (Visitor MG, 2013);
>
> [the] *High street location means I can mingle with non-festival goers too* (Visitors MG and GF, 2013) and,
>
> *The high street brings people to a linking point in a consistent place* (FG GF, 2013).

These comments appear to summarise that the consistent location and placing of the festival contributes to:

> *a sense of place to come together in and socialise* [which] *is very necessary today. We need reference points* (FGs 1 and 2 OGF, 2013),
>
> and somewhere where, *you look forward to seeing people at the festival who you'd never see except for at the festival* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

Amongst organisers and non-organising respondents alike, there was an apparent yearning to reflect the local, often expressed together with a motivation to maintain or return to the roots or traditional format of the festivals. This may be explained as an urge to find a level of consistency within the place through the festival, a reflection of what the host community is and does from one year to the next. The participation in the festival of local people and activities was not only desired but suggested as being instrumental in keeping the local culture alive. The process of participation and opportunities to connect with local culture may contribute to a sense of consistency of place, reflected in the responses desirous of content, and opportunities for involvement at the festivals, to be locally representative.

Visitors and key figures at each festival emphasised the importance of local involvement in showing a sense of village/town life. Many respondents described how the event contributed to keeping the present culture alive through demonstrating local culture and through an annual opportunity to participate in local activities, as for example, the procession (see Figure 5.4). These same respondents, however, expressed ambivalence (with the exception of MG) to the ability of the festivals to provide heritage links between past and present forms of local culture.

Figure 5.4 Involvement of local groups in the procession, Ovingham Goose Fair, 2013 (Black, 2013).

If respondents perceived significant alteration had occurred from a perceived authentic (original) state of the culture displayed, the connection between the contemporary and past form of this culture was unacknowledged, considered inconsistent. A respondent's ability to recognise cultural heritage continuity within a community can be influenced by their varying perceptions of heritage, whether preservationist or allowing for change. This in turn, may have implications for the respondent's ability to identify with local heritage and make connections with place.

5.3.2   The Festival Contribution to the Image of a Place

The display of the locale at festivals was acknowledged by respondents as a desirable feature and something which could be said to contribute to a more holistic notion of a sense of place or 'spirit of place' (Relph, 1976:30). This notion extends beyond a

conscious recognition (for example, evidence of local stall holders or cultural practitioners) to infer a less tangible, subconscious feeling of place, contributing to a perceived image of the locale. Questions were asked of all interviewees as to the contribution of the festival to this place image. Key figures at all four case studies recognised that the festival contributed to creating a sense of place, something also acknowledged by many visitors and focus group participants. Where questions were asked regarding the contemporary place image responses were overwhelmingly positive as typified by the following:

> *it's part of the character of the place; it's known for its festival* (KFs OGF, 2013);

> *it's good for business, good for the town. Wooler needs it* (Visitor GF, 2013) and,

> *it keeps the place together. I can't think of anything else that would do that if the festival weren't here* (FG HC, 2013).

The event was seen as the product of the town/village. The evidence showed that respondents felt the festival-place relationship was symbiotic, stating it could not be held anywhere else, typified by the following comments: *it wouldn't have survived all these years if it wasn't a town thing* (KF HC, 2013), *it's part of the fabric of the place* (Visitor MG, 2013).

Interestingly, where a negative perception of the festival was held, this was predominant amongst people who had never visited (or not for a long time) and thus had no direct or recent experience of the festival. This was apparent within OGF focus group 1 where the majority of participants were non-visitors: *my perception was that it was very commercial but maybe it's more quaint* (FG1 OGF, 2013). The MG focus group interviewees did not associate with the festival nor connect the festival to their town: *I've never heard of it so it can't be any good* (FG MG, 2013). The group comprised a younger demographic who predominantly did not visit, many stating they had never been encouraged to visit as a child.

5.3.3   *The Festival Contribution to a Sense of Pride and Belonging*
All interviewee responses were analysed to determine whether a festival contributed to a sense of pride. All comments relating to increased or decreased feelings of pride associated with the festival were recorded. Key figures and focus groups were asked to give quantitative responses to questions of pride associated with the festivals whilst

attitudes to pride from visitors and organisers were established through qualitative analysis of interviews. The majority of all respondents expressed feelings of pride associated with the festival. Many comments implied increased pride through greater understanding and acquiring knowledge through the festival, often linked to learning about the local heritage. Some respondents, who had suggested early in their interviews that they had learnt little about the indigenous heritage, commented towards the close of the interview upon feeling a sense of pride through learning about heritage at the festival.

The responses to questions of pride appear to correlate to variations in the respondents' involvement in the festival. This was evident at GF with quite distinct variations between responses of pride in the festivals. All four key figures had had some degree of festival involvement and all responded positively to the festival contributing to a sense of pride in place. As a more recent event than the other three case studies, the GF is still arguably in the process of establishing itself within the community. Fewer visitors have a role in the festival than at MG, OGF or HC (section 7.5.1). This may account for the very few visitor remarks expressing pride through the festival.

A sense of pride appears to be associated with a sense of belonging or being *within the territory* (FG1 OGF, 2013) which was particularly apparent at OGF. OGF focus groups stated that the festival contributed to a collective sense of village pride at a very local level, implying that this was quite territorial in nature, being linked to village boundaries: *it's to do with feelings of being different; I think there must be a thing between the villages like tribalism. You support your own* (FG1 OGF, 2013). Although not expressed in the same sense of local territory, MG key figures equated the sense of pride with being *limited to certain groups involved in the event*, implying divisions within the community between insiders and outsiders. This sense of insider/outsider was also apparent at GF, explored further in section 5.4.3.1.

Scale may be a contributing factor to sense of pride if pride is associated with belonging and engagement. MG is the largest event of the four case studies, held in the county town of Morpeth, with a greater population than the other host communities. It has a larger and more diverse range of participants and visitors and a

lesser proportion of the local population directly involved with the festival. Key figure, visitor and focus group responses to questions of pride were overall less positive at MG than at the other three case studies which appears reflective of this lack of involvement. Potential impact of variations in festival scale is discussed further in section 8.6.2.

5.4   Consistency: Festivals and People

This section (5.4) deals initially with the organisational committees, examining both the organisers' perceptions of consistency related to the festival and considering all interviewees responses relating to the accessibility of the organisational committee, either actual or perceived. The section then explores further forms of close, intrinsic connections (for example, between families or neighbours) enabled by the festival, referred to by Putnam (2000) as bonded relations. These included perceptions of individual and group opportunities for participation and networking at the festival including potential cross-generational connections. Analysis of responses was also made as to whether festivals impacted on perceptions of being an insider or outsider. A degree of both bonded and bridged relations were considered necessary components of a sustainable community (Putnam, 2000). Evidence of wider, extrinsic or bridged relations is explored in Chapter 6.

A key component of investigating the social impact of festivals on their host communities must inevitably involve questions relating to the social relations between individuals and groups. Interview questions were asked which examined the type and extent of individual and group relations including perception of their consistency.

5.4.1   Festival Organisation and Committee

An initial overview of the types of organisations behind each event was undertaken early in the research to ascertain consistent elements and variations between the four case study festivals and the manner in which the respective events were organised (section 4.3.3.1). In general, the four case study festivals had similar organisational committees in size and structure owing to their predominantly common variables although the unique characteristics of each festival and location lent each committee its own character. With one exception (at GF), organisers were volunteers and many, although not all, were retired.

5.4.2 Accessibility of the Organisational Committee

Analysis of the data revealed variations amongst visitors, key figures and focus groups in their perceptions of the accessibility of the festival organisational committee. Consideration was made as to whether these perceptions were influenced by differences between a consistent committee or one which was changeable. The MG committee was considered by many respondents to be consistent and accessible to the community. Many of the committee had a long-standing involvement with the festival including personal connections. The organiser interviewed had held organisational responsibility through a family connection since origination in 1969 and stated the event as being *so much a part of me* (Org MG, 2012). This personal commitment and connection was acknowledged by visitor and key figure respondents: *it's because of the commitment of X,* [who has] *total involvement in the life of Morpeth* (KF MG, 2013). The dominance of individual characters was, however, also noted as being potentially detrimental to the festival.

At OGF, the organisational committee and the shape of the festival had undergone considerable changes in previous years including increasingly commercial elements and increase in scale. In response to these changes, an impetus to return to a more traditional or consistent form of the festival was observed. Comments from OGF key figures and visitors attributed these changes to previous festival committees and a rise in new-comers to the village. One key figure stated: *they're* [the committee] *trying to make it more traditional. There was a lot of outsiders from the town coming in, traders used to come in with crappy little toys, the "usual", it's not as bad as that any more* (KF OGF, 2013). The same key figure placed the blame in part on the committee owing to *missed opportunities* to link to the local people. There was a perception amongst some of the visitors and key figures that there had been *dominant personalities wanting things in a certain way* (KF OGF, 2013). However, the over-riding feeling in the community was that the present committee was more open and accessible and working towards returning the event to a more traditional and locally-based festival.

The HC organising committee displayed consistent links with previous festival committees. Several members could trace family connections with earlier event organisers, similar to MG but in this case through multiple families. Uniquely, the committee was comprised of a number of younger generation members which were in

part directly targeted through family links. The committee was seen generally as part of the local network, accessible within the community and the involvement of all generations was emphasised by both the HC organisers and key figures. The latter pointed out the willingness amongst younger people to participate; they were not coerced into taking part. While HC organisers recognised some desire to bring back traditional elements in response to festival evaluation, the overriding impression was that there was little desire to alter the festival format, particularly amongst younger people. The committee had asked participants at the last meeting *whether to change the carnival and what the common thread was with the young people was that they love the carnival week. It wouldn't be the same if we took some of the things out* (Org HC, 2013).

The GF committee had experienced a lesser degree of consistency having part extrinsic origins (including community development incentives for the Millennium) which then passed responsibility on to the community. There was strong support for the work of the committee amongst the community: *they're very accessible; they'd welcome you with open arms* (KF GF, 2013). However, there was also criticism in the form of suggestions of *cliqueyness* and being *stuck in their ways* (KFs GF, 2013), despite the more recent origin of the festival. Comments were made suggesting that the committee continued to be perceived as more top down than coming out of the roots of the community and a recognition of some division within the community regarding the carnival. As was evident at MG, where a potential "rival" event also existed in the town, the feeling of a division between the original carnival event and the contemporary festival was evident amongst GF respondents in all categories. This was particularly apparent amongst the GF organisers.

Each festival committee, though to a lesser degree MG, had experienced change within its membership. This included incomers as members at GF and OGF. All current committees were largely perceived as being accessible; however, this had not always been the case. The data suggests that an overly consistent committee is generally perceived as being negative and resistant to new ideas, of not being open to change. *I associate the festival with consistency* […] *and that's a negative comment. It's good but it seems the same each year* (KF MG, 2013). However, it appears from the respondents' remarks that change should reflect the desires of the wider community

as consistency and repetition in the content may also be a positive attribute: *it's certainly consistent as the programme doesn't change much from year to year - I would expect a lot of people look forward to that every year* (KF MG, 2013).

5.4.3 Consistent Connections: Creating and Reinforcing Bonds

When considering components of a sustainable and thus not dysfunctional community, there is an emphasis on the need for both bonds and bridges within the social structure (Healy and Cote, 2001). Consistency within forms of social connections implies the more inward-looking, strong connections found in bonds whereas innovation may suggest new, wider reaching yet weaker forms of connections which may be described as bridges. The absence of a balance between the two can have negative implications as 'an over-reliance on bonded relationships, as may occur in a small, close-knit community may lead to mistrust of the rest of society' (Healy and Cote, 2001:39-43). Likewise, too transient a community without more rooted and internal connections may be one lacking in trust and support mechanisms as discussed in Fraser's (2013) radio series, *Through Thick and Thin*. These bonding and bridging processes are the making of social capital within a community, a necessary component of sustainable development (Max-Neef, 1999; Healy and Cote, 2001). Small-scale community festivals exist through the coming together of a group of people to share resources and in doing so create social capital. 'Social capital is generated when people work together to make things happen. It's what's generated when people get involved and ask others to get involved' (Assist Social Capital, 2012).

Although each case study hosting town/village was unique in demographic character, each could be said to have traditional rural origins, characterised as predominantly more socially bonded with relatively few bridges to outsiders. The contemporary demographic of each place, however, paints a different picture though to greater and lesser degrees. Morpeth is the county town and displays a higher and more sustained level of migration than Haltwhistle or indeed Wooler, although both these latter towns have experienced increased residential movement recently (Orgs, HC and GF, 2013). Questions were asked to determine the nature of social relations which take place through the festival, as to whether these relations were more inward or outward in nature. Although it is arguable to what degree these communities were ever consistent in terms of demographics (movement in and out had occurred for work

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purposes throughout history in rural communities), increased changes had occurred during the 20th and early 21st centuries.

5.4.3.1   Perceptions of being an Insider or an Outsider
Although recognised as inevitable and generally positive, the movement of people in (and out) of the host towns/villages was nevertheless not seen without tensions and led to some feeling of "us and them" between locals and non-locals. While the perception of being either inside or outside the community, and the potential impact this may have on identity and belonging in place, is explored in greater detail in section 7.4.1, potential tensions, particularly regarding festival organisation, may be influenced by changes in the local demographic and are briefly examined in this section.

To illustrate this, there was evidence of some of the tension at GF between the older carnival and the more contemporary festival. This could be attributed in part to the demographic changes which have occurred in small, rural towns such as Wooler, the GF host town. The carnival was perceived by both GF focus groups and key figures as "old" Wooler where *everyone used to get involved* (FG GF, 2013), whereas the festival is seen as being run predominantly by non-locals: *most of the committee are people who've moved in* (KF GF, 2013). The comments varied with some responses implying a more negative attitude to the incomers:

> *The organisers are incomers and people say it's all the same whereas the girls who organise the carnival are locals and know people. It was because the Carnival was traditional whereas the festival, the first year it happened they didn't ask permission, they stepped on a few toes. So that created a bit of, as such. It's got better since* (KF GF, 2013).

In contrast, some responses referred to the organisation of the festival by incomers as positive with suggestions that the event could be a means by which the incomers might begin to create their own bonds with the place and the local people. Some respondents commented on the fresh vigour which the incomers brought to the organisation which was sometimes perceived as lacking on the part of the locals:

> *Most of the committee are people who've moved in; there aren't many local locals on the committee. They are good as they come in and want to put something in to Wooler, they want to get involved. Wooler people want things to happen but don't want to actually do it* (KF GF, 2013).

The GF focus group commented on the insiders (locals) as being *negatively consistent* and indeed exclusive, wanting to hang on to old ways and resist change. The group expressed their concern with an unchanging and overly consistent group of people, closely bonded and long-term resident in an area, in the following way:

> *There were a lot of local families in Wooler for a long time and they all knew each other and had informal occasions to fix things up and organise things and they forgot that they needed some kind of mechanism to properly communicate with people at every point. That's how things break down, people get left out* (FG GF, 2013).

When discussed at OGF, the concept of feeling insider or outsider aroused an emotive response with strong feelings expressed from both insiders and outsiders. One respondent commented: *I really felt like a newcomer. The committee – it was basically the Old Guard* (FG2 OGF, 2013). The implication was of a group of people resistant to change and that it was difficult to break through the bonds. The respondent continued; *there was a lot of people sighing and I was just trying to suggest some new ideas*. Other group members contested this notion as illustrating more of a bond with place than between people: *it's more that people are protecting a village tradition* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

Overt consistency, or overt bonding, can be seen as leading to exclusivity and something to be avoided in festivals and festival committees. However, these perceptions and feelings of exclusivity were predominantly formed amongst people who had not visited the events rather than those who had. It was the focus groups which expressed most strongly the feeling of being excluded from the event and this interview category which had the greatest proportion of non-attendance at the festival.

Some degree of tension was apparent at MG with regard to the town fair, which also takes place in Morpeth. However, in this instance, tensions between the two events appeared to focus on the involvement of outsider participants and the perceived attraction of outside visitors as opposed to the involvement of residential incomers.

5.4.3.2 Networks of Participation

Questions were asked of all interviewees to investigate whether the festival contributed to creating or strengthening social relationships between individuals and

groups within the community. The bonded relationships were expressed through responses relating to reassertion of links between friends and family, opportunity to share experiences and memories and opportunities to participate in group activities, either at the time of the event or beyond. The festival undoubtedly contributed to bonded social relations, increasing levels of consistency within these relations and within the wider community where these relationships come into play.

The festival may also contribute to a sense of belonging for the members of these relationships, in particular through the regular recurrence of the event. Many respondents from each interview category remarked on the ability of the festival to contribute to a sense of belonging through the chance to revisit annually and commented how, despite only being once a year, the event enabled reconnections between neighbours and residents of the community, a form of "touching base". It also enabled individuals to connect to groups within the area who were promoting their activities at the event. Individuals were then able to join these groups and continue their social interaction throughout the remainder of the year, making their connection more consistent.

For individuals, there was an abundance of evidence which highlighted the reinforcing of old friendships, the communal space and time which occurred throughout the duration of the festival. This was considered particularly important in what may be termed an age of fluidity (Bauman, 2004). The festival provided the occasion for story-telling, memory sharing and the passing on of knowledge in more practical ways. These included for example, reminiscing about previous events, sharing advice on local growing conditions with the allotment holders or observation of local farming traditions.

The festival provided the platform for the processes of reconnecting with friends and neighbours in a consistent environment where the anticipation was that you would meet up with these people naturally without having to make arrangements. The following quotes are very typical of the general visitor responses at each festival: *brings people together, old friends and people who come back especially* (Visitor HC, 2013); *you just come down and meet anyone who's about*; *the festival drags everyone out who you haven't seen for ages* (Visitors GF, 2013). The ability of the festival to

reinforce or create bonded relationships through group interaction provoked more variable responses, (compared with individual interaction), across the four case studies. At MG, there was little evidence of the bonding connections which interaction with locally based groups could enable. Respondents emphasised, however, the number of bridging connections owing to the wider diversity of visitors and performers who took part in this event (section 6.6.1). Respondents also referred to perceptions of the festival as more a *performance* (Visitor, MG, 2013) than a participatory event, and to a lack of focus on the local, more on the wider county culture: (Figure 5.5 illustrates the Northumbrian Tartan or Plaid as traditionally worn by shepherds in the county).

Figure 5.5 Northumbrian Tartan or Plaid displayed at Morpeth Gathering, 2012 (Black, 2012).

OGF organisers stated that part of their intent in organising the festival was to strengthen groups locally. This was not acknowledged by the OGF visitors however with only a few referring to festival group connections or any associated feelings of belonging. In contrast, the OGF key figures emphasised the feeling of belonging which the festival brought but had mixed responses to how this was achieved through group participation. The following comments relay their contrasting responses: *I can't think of anyone that's excluded really; the groups are so interactive* whilst another stated *I still think there's big chunks (of the community) that aren't represented* (KFs OGF, 2013).

HC organisers declared it was their strong intention and belief that the festival strengthened both individual and group connections and participation. This occurred through the making of the carnival floats which provided for a lengthy build-up of activities involving a wide range of the community. In addition, once the event was over, reference was made to how preparation for the next began and how participants anticipated the forthcoming festival, contributing within the community to a greater sense of consistent involvement.

GF organisers stated it was their intention to bring in locals and groups and reinforce connections but this intent was weakened owing to a sense of disconnect between the committee and the local residents. For a greater degree of connectivity to occur, particularly between participating groups and visitors to the festival, key figure and focus group respondents suggested that the festival needed to be better accepted within the community. In general, GF visitors perceived that the festival itself was too temporary for any consistent impact although it provided many opportunities. Certain groups (for example, named bands and community groups) were mentioned as beginning to make their own place or become *local traditions* (Visitor GF, 2013) within the event, marking perhaps the beginning of a wider acceptance through consistency and longevity within the community.

5.4.4 *Intergenerational Connections*

Evidence was sought as to connections enabled by the festivals for intergenerational connections. Bonded relations are made stronger through increased understanding and through processes of sharing knowledge: interview questions were asked as to how the festival enabled understanding and the inheritance of communal knowledge. A recurring response to these questions related to the processes of inheriting knowledge about the local culture and community through intergenerational links and there was little discrepancy between locals (insiders) and non-locals (outsiders) in their replies. OGF, GF, HC and, to a lesser degree, MG visitors all expressed the importance of the involvement of adults and children together in one event and the sharing of a common purpose. This was emphasised at HC, a place where generations of families continue to live together. The web of connections made through the festival was apparent, an indirect linking of the different components of the event. The following quotes express the festival connections as experienced within the extended family:

I don't think everyone's involved in everything but somebody will be involved in something. There's generations of families, they all do different things [...] they all get different experiences from different generations of the family (KF HC, 2013).

This was echoed within the FG: *the families pass down their skills; the younger generation are involved, even lads helping* (FG HC, 2013).

The sharing of skills and experiences related to the festival provides a level of continuity at a social level and in addition provides living connections between generations to place and particularly place heritage. References were made to the intergenerational reflection on the heritage content at festivals. One OGF visitor stated:

as long as there's someone there who can make that link eg. a grandma who remembers using a poss stick or old toy and can explain it to the child or recall memories of its use with a neighbour (Visitor OGF, 2013).

Similarly, at HC, another visitor recalled how, *you see the old men leaning on the fence watching the old tractors, telling their grandchildren how it used to be* (Visitor HC, 2013).

Interviewees within each case study festival, whether organisers or community members, recognised and referred to the importance of forging intergenerational links to aid the continuation of the festival. Organisers at MG, OGF and GF all expressed problems with interesting and involving younger members of the community, despite many efforts to encourage their involvement. They expressed exasperation at being unable to bring them into the organisation and emphasised how necessary this was for continuity to avoid the event dying out.

We're of a generation that appreciates history. Youngsters don't and we have to tell them now before they get too old. Old skills, I think it's important. We try to get that across but it has to be fun. Tried and tried to get youngsters involved [...] youth aspect is important. Younger people need to get involved as they know what young people want. Got to be on a self-generating basis or will just die out (Org GF, 2012).

The HC organisers were the exception in having managed to attract and retain young people onto the festival committee. Reasons stated included the existence of bonded relationships within the organisational structure: *my son came along and joined last time. Wives. They're about 20 years old. Good age to come and represent the younger generation. Enthusiasm and good ideas* (Org HC, 2013). However, this was not stated

with complacency but recognised the need to maintain and also *attract new, younger audiences, encourage them to take part and continue* (Org HC, 2013). The repeated involvement of the extended family certainly played a significant part in the involvement of the younger generation and the format of the parade in the event (which could be watched from gardens along the route) contributed to the inclusion of both young and old (Figure 5.6). The organiser described this in the following way: *taking part, even in their front garden if that's as far as they can go, regardless of age. Very much that community. If you've been on a float and then you're not on one next year, it's as if your arm's been cut off. It's such a let-down!* (Org HC, 2013).

Figure 5.6 Lining the streets to watch the procession, Haltwhistle Carnival, 2012 (Black, 2012).

The OGF focus groups' participants expressed the importance of being involved from a young age: *if you grow up with it, you go to it* (FG2 OGF, 2013), with other respondents stating: *young ones involved. Cousins are in groups which do things. It's all about growing up and knowing they'll get involved with it* (FG1 OGF, 2013). Involving a younger generation through the consistency of an intergenerational connection appears to be an important factor, whether as a participant or a visitor. MG focus group illustrated the impact of an absence of intergenerational connections: the majority of the young focus group participants stated that they had no memories of

the event and no connection with it as they had not regularly visited with their families.

The intergenerational connections could also be seen as contributing to an expression of pride in the event and what it displays about the community. This was evident amongst older respondents, at all the festivals, of a feeling of wanting to show the festival to a younger generation, to contribute to its continuity. The feeling of wishing to share the festival with the younger generation was typically expressed within the following comments across the range of the festival case studies:

> *If my daughter and granddaughter were here I'd take the little un down – nice to show them* (KF OGF, 2013).

> *We always visit as a family, we like to show the children* (Visitor GF, 2013) and,

> *the interaction's all about showing the children, the families pass down their skills. I always say the Haltwhistle people, they have a keen sense of who they are and where they've come from and the carnival shows this* (FG HC, 2013).

5.5 **Summary**

This chapter presented the variety of connective consistencies enabled by the festivals within their host communities, with greater emphasis on bonded relations. Consistent connections between heritage, place and people are seen as a necessary component of a socially sustainable community, an important aspect of the event in providing a stable environment (format and processes). Consistency could, however, be regarded as being both a positive and negative characteristic of a festival as over-consistency may mean the festival is seen as being dull or repetitive.

Heritage links may appear to be the most obvious form of consistency within a festival. However, interpretations of the term heritage vary widely and impact upon the recognition of heritage content within the festivals. Heritage content may be explicitly or purposely included by organisers, strategic or funding bodies and yet, in several examples from the data, this heritage appears to have little consistency or authentic connection with the community. There were varied perceptions of whether content was heritage or not amongst respondents. An element of festive content may be heritage (for example, the fair or the dance) but be perceived differently by the various interested parties. Festival organisers believed more strongly that there was a link between the festival and the indigenous heritage than was recognised by visitors,

highlighting potential differences between organisers and the wider festival community as to the purpose of their festival and how this purpose is achieved. What is agreed is that this content, through the process of its inclusion each year, aids consistency and connections and reinforces the idea of what a community represents. What also became apparent, through many of the non-organiser responses, was the implication that the heritage element of the festival lies in the process above specific content and becomes part of the community inheritance.

This process of the inheritance of the event itself is closely linked to inheriting the sense of place or locale. All interview groups referred to this whether it be the immediate town/village which hosts the event or from the wider sense of the county (Northumberland). Each festival organisation considered the display, promotion and continuation of their locale as one of their main intentions. Although the emphasis was on the locale, this was not always apparent within the wider respondents. There was an overwhelming feeling of the importance of the festival in terms of keeping the place alive and on going and of contributing to a sense of belonging within the community. This varied amongst respondents as to how this was achieved depending on the format of the festival, in terms of heritage content and visitor demographic. All agreed that the festivals provided a link to place in the form of a transient but recurring opportunity to connect to consistent undercurrents of town/village life. In addition, the longer an event had been in existence, the more weight was given to its image of consistency and the more potency it had in the community in terms of its right to exist.

The festivals could be seen to contribute strongly to opportunities to strengthen social bonds through providing a consistent annual event where friends, family and neighbours could meet informally. The promotion of the indigenous groups and societies was seen as providing an opportunity to make a consistent link to the community by providing a "shop-window" through which individuals could access these groups. The festival organising committees were seen as instrumental in providing these connections and accessibility to the organisers was also seen as a contributing factor. Perceptions of over consistency and lack of change within committees was noted, particularly where respondents felt fewer social connections were made through the festival. All case study respondents referred to the festival

providing consistent links through intergenerational connections and considered this

important for both the sustainability of the event and for the community in itself.

6   Chapter 6. Festivals: Innovation within Communities

6.1   Introduction

Chapter 6, the second of the thematic analysis chapters, focuses on the theme of **innovation**, as a determining component of a social sustainable community. Innovation, as defined in section 2.5.4, involves the introduction of changes and new ideas, content or processes. It is these qualities of newness and creativity in particular which differentiate innovative processes from those which are more consistent. As Larson (2009:288) points out, innovation within festivals involves 'complex and dynamic networks' and its inclusion may be both improvised and/or institutionalised to varying degrees.

Festivals innovate in their organisational processes and in their display and content and there are potentially many varying motivational factors for innovation within these events. These motivations may be external (for example, funding or development imperatives) or internally driven by the community (for example, in response to local needs or requests). It has been argued within the literature that socially sustainable communities need to be innovative, 'adaptable' (Max-Neef, 1999) and 'dynamic' (Ahman, 2013) (section 2.5.4). Innovation is deemed a necessary process within social sustainability, contributing to social capital within a community in the form of new, outward reaching forms of relationships or bridges (Putnam, 2000). In addition it has been described as a necessary component of cultural sustainability, representing the 'change within continuity', in balance with the respect for tradition (Sachs, 1999:32).

The initial section of this chapter (6.2) considers the motivators and motivations behind innovative festival content and processes. Using the sub-themes of heritage, place and people, the chapter subsequently analyses festival connections with these sub-themes (Aim 3), and considers the potential impact of these connections within the festival hosting community (Aim 4). Section 6.3 examines innovation within the connections between the festival and heritage, including innovation within the processes of inheriting practices, which a festival may enable. Section 6.4 considers how connections between festival and place can be innovative, examining the liminal and temporal relations between a festival and place. Innovation in the connections between the festival and people are explored in section 6.5, considering bridged

connections and the participatory nature of festivals. The chapter is summarised in section 6.6.

6.2 Motivations for including Innovative Process and Content within Festivals

Innovation within festivals was influenced by cultural decision makers and strategists, organisers, participants and visitors, from outside and from within the hosting communities. External factors, aside from the more obvious promotional or marketing incentives, were linked to themes or contemporary events taking place at a regional or national level. Decisions to include innovative content, or be innovative in the processes within festivals, was also influenced by a wider political, social and economic climate which may impact on the type of audience desired and on the type of cultural and art forms created by participants. It may also affect the organisational structure of the event through strategic and funding initiatives (Bennett, 1995; Belfiore, 2004; Finkel, 2006).

Larson (2009:291) termed the range of potential individuals collectively influencing the festival as, 'the political market square'. Findings in this research indicate, as Larson (2009) considered, that although the organisers appeared to have the most influence on the form and content of the festival, the audience or visitors were found to be as, if not more, influential. In addition temporal factors such as annual and short-term occurrence of the events were also taken into consideration as effecting innovation.

6.2.1 Externally Motivated Innovation in Process and Content

External strategic decision makers are aware of the economic impact a festival can bring to the host town or region in which it is held through the 'secondary spend' of the visitors on travel, accommodation and the like with local businesses (Payton-Lombardo, 2013). When funding or supporting festivals, the incentive to include innovative content and changes may be influenced primarily by these economic factors, often in the form of marketing incentives, aimed at visitor development or enhancement (Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011). These external incentives in turn influence the festival organisers who all referred, in interview, to the need to innovate to appeal to both local visitors' expectations and to attract new visitors and audiences, often from outside the locale. A number of studies support the demand upon festivals to be innovative in order to attract a wide and

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returning visitor sector (Formica and Uysal, 1998; Faulkner *et al.*, 1999; Larson, 2009). As Larson (2009:288) points out 'the innovative elements of festivals are (thus) highly significant to visitors' motivations to attend. As festivals compete with other events and experiences, festivals that do not renew themselves risk finding it more difficult to attract repeat visitors'.

It is the medium to larger scale festivals which tend to attract a greater level of external support and funding, in particular through tourism development initiatives as witnessed in the interview with the Northumberland County Council (NCC) Director (2012). Reliance on external funding and 'commercial priorities', can lead to competitive market pressures, which small-scale events, with neither the scale of funding or audience, may better resist (Finkel, 2009:7). The case study festivals are all classifiable as 'small' events using Rolfe's (1992) categorisation and, partly as a result of this classification, funding incentives for new innovations were infrequent and more noticeable by their absence, particularly at OGF, HC and GF. Of the four case studies, only the MG (the largest of the four) specifically listed funders who donated money within a development or regeneration agenda after the initial set up of the event. This included funds from the local Regional Development Agency (RDA) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through tourism agendas.

At MG where funding was given for innovation within the festival, evidence of a negative long-term implication was given by the organiser, owing to expectations and possible impact on the sustainability of the event. Funding had been provided for several years from 1996 (the Year of the Visual Arts) for an Arts Officer post which led to a number of new artistic initiatives. Issues arose when the funding stopped as the organiser explained:

> *The Arts Council changed things* [...] *never any need for funding before year of the Visual Arts* [lists a range of different funders that contributed] *that money's gone now but left with higher public expectation. It's a roller coaster idea of funding; we've trimmed our aspirations as to what funding was available* (Org MG, 2012).

With the demise of this funding, the organiser was left with a sense of raised expectations from the festival visitors as to the form and content of the event. Having witnessed new content for a number of years, visitors had come to expect a similar

level of innovation each year, something which was difficult to achieve without funding.

External motivations may be non-monetary and can take the form of support or opportunities to add content as part of a wider initiative, which can be at regional, national or even international level. Examples of these included a link to celebrations or themes, such as an anniversary of the death of suffragette Emily Davison (as illustrated in Figure 6.1), or of the staging of the Olympics in the UK, both of which provided a themed link for the MG. In these cases, new dimensions to the festival were added through the attraction of new participants and the creation of specific cultural content linked to this broader subject. In addition, the MG contained a competition element to attract artistic entries each year, the competitive nature of which, introduced creative and innovative responses to the annual themes.

Figure 6.1 Themed activities focus on the anniversary of the death of the suffragette, Emily Davison, in the procession at Morpeth Gathering 2013 (Black, 2013).

When interviewed, the organisers all stated the lack of external influence on decisions as to the form and content of the festival. They all stated that funding was an issue with little or no regular support and that as a result of that they had to be relatively self-sufficient. The reliance is on small-scale community funds (such as the Community

Chest through the local council) or local donors which do not impose expectations on how the funds are used in terms of innovative content.

Although each case study festival placed the emphasis on including local cultural participants, the localisation and limitation of funding was partly influential on the type of performers and participants at these festivals. More expensive artists brought in from outside were in general beyond the reach of events of this scale, irrespective of the desire to include them or not.

6.2.2 *Internally Motivated Innovation in Process and Content*

By gaining an understanding of the type of committees which organised the respective festivals (section 4.3.3.1), the intention was to determine whether there was any correlation between the level of innovation within the festivals and the format of the organisation behind it. The organisers were asked questions as to why they were involved and questions were asked of the key figures and visitors as to perceptions of the committee in terms of accessibility and whether members were perceived as incomers or long-term locals.

Evidence from the case study festivals suggests that organisers were predominantly motivated to be innovative by factors emanating from within the community, rather than without. Examples stated by the organisers as reasons to innovate included evaluation findings and responses from open community meetings. The organisers were all keen to show they were responsive to local requests and to engage democratically with the local community. The organisers also recognised that changes within the committee membership could play a role in selecting content and deciding format. The personalities and character of the committee members were deemed to be influential in shaping the festival and would thus impact upon levels of innovation within each event.

For all case study festivals, the organisational committees were made up predominantly by local members of the community who participated on a voluntary basis. When asked why they were motivated to act as organisers the responses varied. The most commonly given responses were the sense of satisfaction at helping to make a successful, community event and more personal expressions of recognition and family involvement. The individual motivations for involvement, although not

expressing desires to innovate outright, play a part in the level of innovation within the event, reflected for example, by desires to create change or influence an agenda. Personal levels of motivation feed in to the larger committee organisations and arguably influence the committee's effectiveness, which may be particularly noticeable in a small organisation.

The number of active members with a role per festival organisation was small (between four and 12 in the main body) although this number fluctuated as membership changed. It was arguably the new members to the committee, which often included incomers to the town/village, which were perceived as, or observed first-hand as, the initiators of new ideas, and whom often challenged the traditional means of organising the event. At GF, the organisational committee largely comprised incomers to the area who were perceived by key figures in particular as bringing new inspiration and doing things differently. New committee members at HC were not incomers but young, local members of the community. The long-term HC organisers described these new committee members as influential in bringing change within the event, alongside wider public consultation.

It is contestable as to whether change necessarily means innovation. The form of change proposed may infer a return to former, more traditional festival formats; the process to achieve this may be or may not be innovative. At HC, for example, several of the suggestions for change from the organisational committee, including ideas accredited to the younger members, included the resurrection of earlier forms of the festival including picnics and traditional stalls. A similar impetus to return to a traditional format was likewise brought into action by the organising committee at OGF following the input of new members.

A combination of motivations can be observed within these changes: both a desire to return to a more traditional model for the festival and also motivation to bring in new interpretations and ideas often based on traditional formats. An example given at the OGF was the inclusion of decorative umbrellas in the procession, a new interpretation on the costume parade inspired in response to the previous years of bad weather. Change appeared to occur in response to the need to adapt to external factors (such as wet weather) and to audience demand. This was cited by the OGF organisers as being

the driver in the move towards a more traditional format: *the public were asked what they wanted. Something smaller, more traditional, like it was; a family fun day with things to do, to eat and to buy, reasonably priced and with some entertainment* (Org OGF, 2012). Having the origins for change in the local community appeared in this case to reinforce its impetus within the committee although they recognised it was not without opposition, primarily from the existing and more commercial stall holders.

Where initiated within the committee, problems of introducing new or innovative ideas could be encountered from other committee members. One OGF focus group2 respondent, also a member of the organisational team, illustrated a reluctance to entertain new ideas:

> *We discussed the possibility of changing some of the formula, some of the tradition. Proposed the idea of altering the route of the procession to come over the bridge but the opposition to it! Tradition being disrupted. And another element of change wanted was for an evening event but that's the sort of thing that, as a new comer, I found hard to get across* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

Change and innovation may be difficult to instigate, particularly if there is a perception within the wider community that the event and the organisers are fixed to some degree in the format (see also section 5.4.2).

Aside from challenges to innovation, change and new formats are not always seen as desirable. Opposition to innovation was evidenced for a number of reasons. Change may influence the size of the event in a negative fashion, *less local, changing the scale of the event* (KF GF, 2013) or make a negative impact on the style of the event, *making the festival less recognisable by bringing change to the familiarity of the festival* (KF OGF, 2013). The extra work involved in bringing about innovative changes was also expressed. Respondents recognised that there was a desire amongst the organisers of the event to *keep things fresh* but that this was hard to achieve: *routine is easier, change means more work* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

The contrasting perception of innovation within the festivals, particularly apparent between the organisers and respondents from the wider host community, may be summarised in the following remarks and comparisons. The organisers at the MG placed emphasis on innovation as part of the intention of the festival; in contrast, three out of the four MG key figures did not associate their festival with innovation,

with similar responses from the focus group participants. Key figures attributed this lack of innovation or change within the festival in part to the themes (which were seen as restricting innovation) and to the strength of personalities within the organisation who may have very strong views on the format of the festival. Similarly, while the GF organisers perceived their event as being innovative, only two out of the four GF key figures shared the organisers' perception and the GF focus group gave a mixed response.

Responses to perceptions of innovation at HC and OGF were more consistent between organisers and non organiser respondents. At HC, the organisers suggested that the festival was a combination of consistency and innovation, a perception shared by the key figure respondents. The focus group participants at HC believed that the event had to be innovative to continue. The OGF organiser interviewed stated it was not the intention of the festival to be innovative and because of that did not associate the event with the term. The OGF key figures' responses at this event correlated with that of the organiser, unanimously acknowledging little innovation. Focus group respondents at OGF made either no recognition of innovation or provided a negative response although these appeared to be founded on a lack of positive evidence by non-attendees: *can't be innovative as haven't heard that it's fabulously exciting!* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

Two commonly repeated statements occurred across every interviewee category, in spite of the contradictory responses to the perception of innovation within festivals across all the case studies. Firstly, a feeling that the festivals were not aiming to be innovative, as reflected by the following statement, *the festival is not really about innovation* (FG1 OGF, 2013). Secondly, seemingly contradictory, all respondent groups acknowledged the need for a degree of innovation through change to keep interest going from year to year.

6.2.3 *Temporal Factors influencing Innovation*

Each case study festival occurs annually but is temporary in nature, lasting from one to three days. The annual and temporal aspects of the events could influence innovation; respondents described the contribution of temporal factors, to the potential for innovation, in the following ways. The annual gap between events is seen positively as

encouraging fresh ideas which, at HC, were described as *limitless* (KF HC, 2013) albeit not long enough for complacency within content; *there's a need to innovate as people have long memories* (FG HC, 2013). However, it was acknowledged that there could be a *relentlessness* (KF HC, 2013) to the event and the need to innovate had its price. This was stated despite the overall recognition by key figures at MG, HC and GF, that the annual recurrence contributed to innovation. As one MG key figure recognised, *maintaining the organisational effort is difficult year after year* (KF MG, 2013).

6.3   Innovation: Festivals and Heritage

Heritage is a subjective concept. Heritage inclusion within festivals was both purposive and tacit and, as illustrated in section 5.2.1, subjectively interpreted by interview respondents. As Graham (2002:1004) remarks, 'heritage is capable of being interpreted differently within any one culture at any one time, as well as between cultures and through time'. Within a political context, he describes the 'reinvention' of pasts (as in Eastern Europe) to reflect new presents', implying a certain selectivity and creative licence as 'heritage is more concerned with meanings than material artefacts'. This sentiment is echoed by Smith (2006:273-4) who argues that heritage 'will always be utilised for the needs of the present, and responds to the aspirations and desires of those defining heritage and doing the remembering'. At a strategic level, heritage may be reinterpreted and reinvented to deliberately suit the demands of the present, to fit a regeneration or marketing agenda. Festival organisers and participants may consciously bring in innovative interpretations of cultural heritage with the purpose of being more accessible to a contemporary audience.

6.3.1   Perceptions of Festival Heritage in the Context of Innovation

Perceptions of heritage within a festival context may be varied and subjective. As explored in section 5.2.1.1, evidence from the interview data suggested respondents' perceptions of heritage within festivals shift during the interviews. Initial perceptions focused on association with the past, recognised arguably as having a consistency of form with its historic origins. These initial perceptions of heritage (which denied innovative content and processes through a focus on more consistent, preserved forms of culture), were seen to change as respondents recognised the heritage connections present in some of the adapted and innovative elements of the festival. As perceptions shifted, respondents increasingly identified, as heritage, the processes

involved in staging a festival. Many of these processes are inherited, subconsciously included and often so familiar they may be taken for granted. In addition, they may not be acknowledged as heritage owing to change and innovative adaptations from their original form.

At the beginning of the interview only five out of 16 key figures (31%) described the festival as innovative and, despite several references to innovative opportunities as the interviews progressed, there were overall few examples given of heritage in an innovative context. Where they were given, the focus was on the educational opportunities which could lead to creative involvement; *you can learn about the old skills and then have a go yourself* (KF MG, 2013). Examples were also given of new interpretations of tradition introduced by having changing content and participants; *it's changing and diversifying and that's a great thing as long as it doesn't get too far away from what was wanted from it* […] *it does need to be reflective of the community* (FG GF, 2013).

Focus groups initially declined to recognise innovation in the festivals but later in the interviews referred to creative opportunities, living heritage and mixing of old and new cultures. One focus group participant described the festival as having a *spine of tradition but beyond that things change* (FG2 OGF, 2013). Responses referred in particular to the need for innovation and change as a means of cultural survival, examined in the following section.

6.3.2 *Innovation for Cultural Survival*

Evidence in the literature (Dicks, 2000; Smith, 2006; Duarte, 2010), points to the adaptation of heritage to meet the needs of the present. Duarte (2010:856) refers to this as 'constant negotiation'. Smith (2006:269-271) refers to festivals as being 'not just of the past but that the present is celebrated as well', through an experience 'continually recreated through the festival'. Smith continues to emphasise that 'this is not a static process but one in which change is inbuilt'. Lumley (2005:19), quoting York (1984), refers to the notion of heritage as 'a strategy for enabling change, rather than representing decline'.

Within the case study festivals there were various examples of heritage, both content and processes, which illustrated innovations and adaptations in order to continue and

survive. At the MG, the festival had a competitive element as participants competed with each other to produce new compositions and art forms using the Northumbrian dialect, playing traditional instruments or using time-honoured craft skills. New music was commissioned for the festival using digital methods to interpret folk traditions. At the OGF, the traditional costumed parade had to adapt to several years of wet weather by innovating new variations on the costumes, holding workshops beforehand to "dress" umbrellas which would be carried by the parade participants. At HC, the traditional carnival dance had evolved over the years into a disco and thus continued to have a popular place in the event. Here too, the central opening parade with its combination of walking and driven floats, had adapted over the lifetime of the event. Contemporary floats, taking their inspiration from celebrities and film (as in Figure 6.2), may initially be mistakenly perceived as bearing no heritage element, changing and creating new forms each year.

Figure 6.2 Film inspired float arriving at the festival field, Haltwhistle Carnival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

The underlying processes and overall format are, however, an important and innovative form of local community inheritance. The GF had taken aspects of the local wool farming heritage and interpreted this in a display of "guerrilla knitting", which linked the traditional production of wool to the contemporary phenomenon of knitted graffiti. The connection to the surrounding agricultural district was shown through the number of food stalls, many of which used traditional methods or local ingredients in innovative recipes and combinations to attract new customers.

Organisers expressed the importance of using innovation in their festivals in both specific references to heritage and more general references to the survival of their host communities. The MG and GF organisers stated respectively:

Traditions shouldn't be preserved in aspic and that is part of the evolving process. You want to make things continue and need to have new life breathed into them. For example, we work with the folk degree and a digital composer. We were approached by a digital composer for dialect voices to use in his composition at the Sage (Org MG, 2012).

The cultural heritage content will vary from time to time. It may be the heritage of the sheep farming, the food, the dance and we try to incorporate the younger elements. It's not only the old stuff, Morris, clog, but belly dancing, street dance and stuff like that. We think it will be good for Glendale (Org GF, 2012).

The visitors at each festival were asked to consider whether the festival heritage helped to keep local culture alive or stifled it, ranking replies from "5" (strongly feel it keeps culture alive) to "1" (strongly feel it stifles culture). Of the 160 visitors who responded, 96 (60%) replied "5", 41 (26%) replied "4" and 21 (13%) replied "3", illustrated in Figure 6.3.
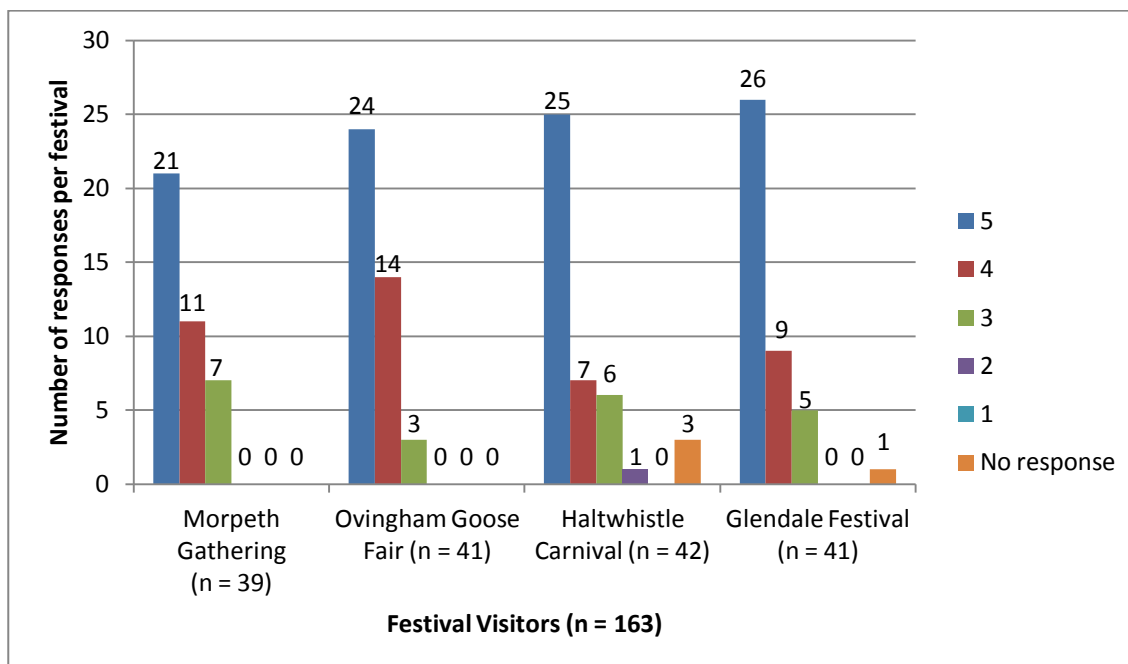
Figure 6.3 Visitor responses (n = 163) at all festivals to the question: 'Do you think the festival heritage helps to keep local culture alive or stifles it and stops it from developing?' Answers recorded on a scale of 5 (keeps it alive) to 1 (stifles it)

Considering a reply of "5", "4" or "3" as positive, the overwhelming majority (99%) of the 160 visitors who replied, stated that they felt the festival heritage *keeps culture alive* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). When asked to qualify their responses, visitors

at MG, OGF and HC all repeatedly commented on the *living heritage demonstration* and on the contribution of the event to *keeping culture alive* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, 2013). GF visitors made various allusions to opportunities to promote and educate about the local cultural heritage at the festival. One visitor stated, [festivals] *inspire interest by seeing something demonstrated and living and then that provokes an interest* (Visitor GF, 2013), whilst another commented on how *the festival gives opportunities to revisit culture through a festival interpretation* (Visitor GF, 2013).

Key figures and focus groups likewise referred to the educational and promotional value of the heritage content in terms of opportunities to show changes within the local culture. HC key figures described the traditional farming machinery and methods displayed in the festival field, providing a link to contemporary farming practices and the modern tractors and farm vehicles involved in the carnival floats. OGF focus group respondents referred to the changing interests and demographic of a community, reflected in the type of local groups and stalls who participate. The ability to adapt to societal changes was seen as being necessary for the survival of the festival. This is illustrated in comments made by an OGF focus group respondent who had been involved with the parade:

> *I thought a lot about how the Goose Fair was organised back then was probably to do with mothers and children more than it is now and that's changed. One aspect behind it (today) was creating something. They're not so creative now, less time, more working mothers. Possibly with the fancy dress thing, people just go and buy them now. The beauty of it was that people came together to make them* [the umbrellas] *and you can't just go to Asda and buy these things, you have to make them* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

Festivals provide an opportunity to highlight changes through history. Key figures at both MG and GF expressed this as *being able to show both the good and bad history* (KF MG, 2013) and as *an opportunity to show heritage in new ways* (KF GF, 2013). Focus group respondents described the actual festival as reflecting local change through its own changing character; *it* [HC] *organically changes through history, new things happen but it's not forced, it's not stagnating either* (FG HC, 2013).

6.3.3   Innovation in the Process of Inheritance
At the core of transmitting, promoting or preserving the cultural heritage is the process of inheritance, the means by which the heritage is passed on. To refer again to

Duarte (2010:859), who emphasises the importance of preserving the social process of practising heritage rather than the preservation of the culture per se:

> 'It is imperative that heritage becomes wholly part of people's lives and, at the same time, adjustable to their lives. According to this idea of heritage as encompassing fluid knowledge and practices and in constant negotiation, it will be devised as an updatable performance, therefore serving towards the construction of coeval identities and playing an effective role in promoting the development of communities'.

Questions were put to all interviewees (except strategic decision-makers) to determine what processes of inheritance were taking place, how they occurred and what aspects of innovation they may contain. These questions referred to opportunities to acquire new skills, to showcase local talent and for creative engagement through the festival.

Three of the four organisers strongly believed their festivals contributed to learning and developing new skills, whilst the fourth organiser felt the festival partially contributed to skill development. All highlighted educational opportunities alongside chances to gain leadership and organisational abilities. Visitors at each festival recognised some educational opportunities, although responses suggested more opportunities could be developed, particularly regarding local heritage. Some visitors referred to a *lack of innovation in this area* [education/information about local heritage] (Visitor OGF, 2013). Key figures echoed the visitors' sentiments on education with only seven out of 16 responding positively when asked if the festival contributed to skills acquisition.

Organisers, key figures and focus group interviewees, with the exception of visitors, were also asked whether they considered the festivals showcased local talent. Figure 6.4 illustrates the responses, which were predominantly positive: 11 out of 16 (69%) key figures, 22 out of 37 (60%) focus group participants and all four (100%) of organisers acknowledged that festivals provide the opportunity to showcase local talent. However, to qualify these statistics, there was a perception amongst some of the key figures that this opportunity was restricted to certain groups and was *very specific. For example* [they] *might phone up and say we're having a circus group, can you ask the jugglers to come down or make some banners in the textile lesson – it's quite specific* (KF MG, 2013).

Questions were put to these interviewees regarding opportunities to continue these processes of creative engagement, knowledge and skill sharing beyond the festival. Responses to these questions related to both consistency (in terms of sustaining connections and activities) and opportunities for innovation and creativity and are discussed in section 8.5.1.
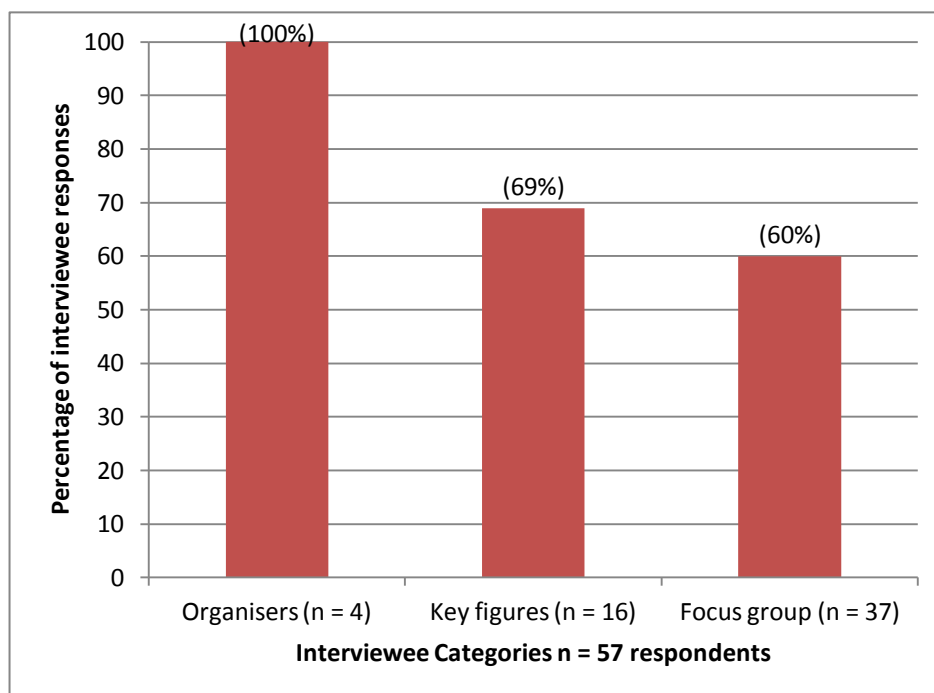
Figure 6.4 Positive responses by % of organiser, key figure and focus group interviewees, to the question of whether the festival provided opportunities to showcase local talent

The acquisition of skills and transference of experiences at the festivals was described by many respondents as contributing to keeping the culture alive. Comments from visitors at MG, HC and GF referred to the importance of sharing knowledge of the local culture with younger festival goers in order to *keep the event going* (Visitor HC, 2013) and for *things to live on* (Visitor GF, 2013), explaining that this occurs when families visit together or work on activities together. Festivals were considered to give opportunities to exchange knowledge and skills between generations.

While the value of inheriting skills may appear to make predominantly consistent connections, through intergenerational exchange (section 5.4.4), inheriting skills may contribute to innovation through opportunities to reinterpret traditional processes (for example, the reinterpretation of intangible cultural heritage (ICH)). Organisers and key figures described the difficulties of engaging young adults and teenagers in the events. This lack of youth engagement could in part be accounted for by perceptions of a lack

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of innovation within the festivals. Comments made by the MG focus group (2013) that the festival was *boring* and *uncool* were related to the young people's perception of heritage, something they considered in a more static display form rather than in a living, practiced format. When asked about seeing live heritage at the festival respondents replied: *why can't you just have a display or a museum exhibit to show the heritage? Why would you put it in a festival?* (FG MG, 2013). At HC, which had a greater number of young people involved on the organisational committee than the other case study festivals, both organisers and focus group participants emphasised the *need to innovate for young people to be interested* (Org HC, 2013).

6.4 **Innovation: Festivals and Place**

When considering innovation in the connections between festivals and place, evidence of innovative opportunities and practice was in most evidence in attitudes to vibrancy of place and through the liminal aspect of the festival. These are described in the subsections below.

6.4.1 Contributing to a Sense of Place

Interviewees were asked to comment on whether and how the festival contributed to the image and understanding of 'sense of place', as defined in section 2.4.1. Consideration was made as to whether the festivals made an impact conducive to innovation within the host town/village, in other words, a place which positively enabled new ideas and change to occur. Conditions for innovation are 'tremendously complex' (Centre-for-Social-Innovation, 2014); however, certain criteria have been identified which include the following:

> 'the spaces that provide people with exposure to new ideas [and] connections with incredible people. [...] Social innovation occurs best in environments that are diverse. Innovation rarely occurs within homogenous or staid structures. It happens at the peripheries, where differing approaches bump up against each other and stimulate new ways of thinking' (Centre-for-Social-Innovation, 2014).

Festivals undoubtedly provide spaces where interaction between a range of cultural participants occurs. However, there was little evidence amongst the non-organiser respondents as to change amongst the content or performance; *the same format every year, the usual craft show etc* (FG MG, 2013); *people know what to expect each year [...] on the whole it follows the same format* (KF GF, 2013). Several of the respondents did acknowledge that the festivals were attempting to represent the diversity of the

area by *complete representation of the area* (KF HC, 2013); *I think most groups* [in the village] *are involved* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

Arguably, the environment for innovation needs to be dynamic and the festival, as one key figure put it, *is a little piece of the bigger picture of the place* (KF GF, 2013). The same respondent continued by explaining how the festival offers *the invitation to get involved* […] *to do something in a different context, to link and spark to other things* (KF GF, 2013). These words imply a contribution from the festival to an input of new life and energy to the place.

Figure 6.5 illustrates the positive descriptions of the festivals' contributions to the image of the respective town/village as made by 100% of organisers, 94% of visitors, 84% of key figures and 60% of focus group respondents.
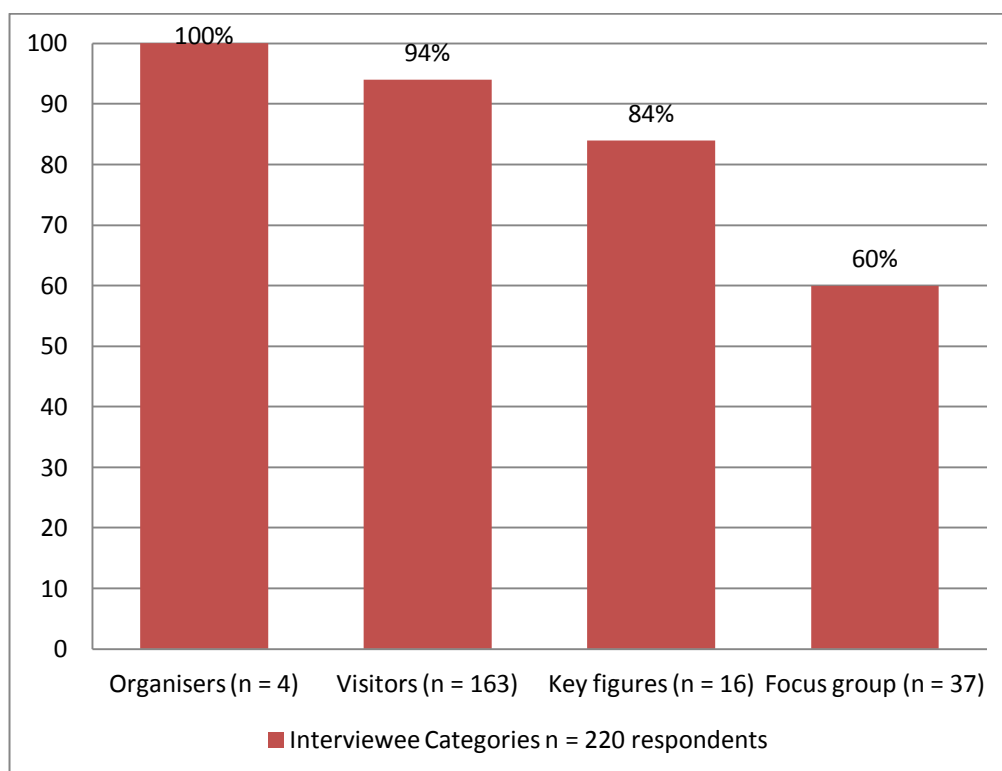
Figure 6.5 Positive responses by % of organisers, visitors, key figures and focus group participants as to the contribution of the festival to the image of the host town/village

Visitors described the festival as bringing a *lively, vibrant* atmosphere (Visitors MG, HC, 2013) whilst focus groups referred to the event as *buzzing* and *sparking* (FGs HC, GF, 2013). Key figures described the festival as *bringing the town alive* (KFs MG, HC, GF, 2013) though at GF, two out of the four mentioned the *temporality* of this vibrant effect (KF GF, 2013). Although many factors may contribute to a positive place image,

the qualitative comments made by respondents suggest that the festivals act as a net contributor to the potential for innovation in a host town/village. In addition to place image impact, respondents were questioned about the educational aspect of the festivals, knowledge being a component of conditions for innovation (McKinney, 2011). Visitors were asked specifically about knowledge and understanding gained of the place in which the festival was held. There was a wide consensus that little was learnt about the place with reasons for this predominantly given as *we already know all about it* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). This was stated by both locals and non-locals alike, although both categories referred to the potential to learn things. This potential appeared to be widely unrealised however, as many comments suggested that the festivals could do more to promote knowledge of the town. It was implied that festivals lack innovative approaches to interpreting their town/village and that desires to learn more about the contemporary and historic place exist but are largely unmet.

6.4.2 The Liminality of the Festival: New Integrations with Place

Festivals have been described as providing liminal experiences, outside of a normative context of place and time (Turner, 1982). The brevity and temporality of festivals allowed for visitors to meet up *in a normal place but not in the normal routine* (Visitor MG, 2013), as was previous examined in section 5.3.1. In addition, this temporality allowed for the transformation of a site into a place of celebration or display, challenging and provoking new and innovative means of engaging with that place. Innovative reinterpretation of public spaces can provide new points of contact and reinvigorate existing ones. As Gibson and Connell (2011) have explored in rural communities, this reinvigoration may have an impact on feelings of integration and belonging for long-term residents, incomers and outside visitors alike and ultimately contribute to the sustainability of the town/village.

At each of the case study festivals (all held for three days or less) public parks and buildings, high streets and privately owned venues were utilised for the purposes of participation, performance and exhibition. Spaces were adopted for purposes outside their everyday use and regular activities were suspended. At MG, OGF and HC the high street was temporarily closed to traffic for the parade or procession at the start of the event. At GF, the high street housed the stalls and many of the performances and was

closed all day to traffic, as illustrated in Figure 6.6. At MG the town park staged a battle and at GF the town bus station became a concert venue. At each festival there was evidence of churches and shops transformed into exhibition halls and buildings commonly closed to the public were opened for festive activities.

Figure 6.6 The high street is temporarily transformed into a festival site at the Glendale Festival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

Evidence was sought as to whether this transformative aspect of the festival was considered to have a positive or negative impact on respondents. Amongst the positive comments, visitors to each festival described opportunities to explore parts of their locale that would not normally be accessible mentioning for example that, *you get to visit places you wouldn't otherwise go* (Visitor GF, 2013). In addition they referred to the opportunity to meet up with people in a familiar setting yet within an experience outside the norm; *there's the chance to meet up with people in a familiar and normal place but not in the normal routine* (Visitor MG, 2013). The temporal aspect of the festival, the short window in which an opportunity to visit these parts of the locale or to engage with people within them, was mentioned as being inspiring or provoking activity and engagement. MG visitors referred to *seizing the opportunity to visit places that are usually closed off* which enhanced a sense of understanding of place: *I've lived here all my life but before the festival I never knew what was in that tower* (Visitors MG, 2013).

Overall comments from visitors regarding transformative changes to place were positive, which could be ascribed to the fact they were purposely attending the event. Key figure and focus group respondents, who were not necessarily attendees,

described some negative remarks on the effect of these alterations which focused on traffic and car parking issues. In each case these remarks were qualified as being exceptional, using words such as *niggley* and *whingey* and the belief was that the majority of people accepted the temporary disruption to daily routine.

6.5   Innovation: Festivals and People

Chapter 5 drew attention to bonded forms of social connections, generally considered to be of a more consistent, internal-looking nature. In this chapter, analysis focuses on bridging connections, considered to be more external-reaching, pliable and potentially more changeable and innovative. Evidence described below shows the need for festival accessibility and for an event to be perceived as having innovative qualities, in order to attract new audiences and to make bridged connections to wider (non-local) communities. As stated previously, (section 5.1), a sustainable community requires both bonded and bridged relationships, a level of consistency and innovation within each social structure.

6.5.1   Innovative Connections: Creating Bridges to a Wider Community

Each host community had experienced some degree of demographic change in terms of population dynamic and impact from increases in tourism during the period of research, 1980-2012 (ONS, 2014). A perception amongst key figures and organisers was that their respective town/village had seen an increase in the number of new residents and all organisers stated that the number of outside visitors to their festival had increased. Visitor interviewees reinforced this perception of an increase in non-local visitors. Evidence was sought within the data as to how the festivals may have responded to these changes and, in particular, whether innovative opportunities for bridged connecting with incomers and the wider community were made.

The festivals provided temporary windows on the more consistent undercurrents of the respective communities, promoting local groups and opportunities to join different sector of the locale. Owing to the brevity of these festival windows (one to three days) in which the local groups could promote themselves, there was evidence amongst the interviewees (who participated in these groups) that it was important to find innovative ways of displaying what they had to offer was important. These included changing displays, running competitions and creating new art works, which in turn

could contribute to greater diversity at the event. Opportunities were described for inter-group interaction, not only for individuals to recognise new activities but also for organisations to get involved with. This was important for the community as, *it gets the motion going* (KF HC, 2013) and *makes bridges to the wider community* (Visitors HC and GF, 2013).

This opportunity, to bridge beyond the perceived boundaries of a town/village, was described by respondents as being an important feature of the festival. Rural towns such as Wooler, host to the GF, acted as a hub for a wider hinterland of villages and farming communities. One key figure interviewee described the role of the festival in the following terms:

> *It's about the hinterland – it's nearly 20 miles to all other settlements. Wooler is the only substantial settlement and what happens here is very important to that rural hinterland. Running a community festival like ours makes a contribution to the whole area. It can't be run in a community the size of Powburn or* [other examples of small villages given]. *It has to be run somewhere the scale of Wooler and it contributes to the town being a social centre for the area. People want a smaller place to visit other than urban Berwick. It would damage the life of people over a very large geographical area if the life of Wooler as a social centre, and that includes the festival, were to disappear* (KF GF, 2013).

The emphasis was placed on the town as a local social hub and the contribution that the festival makes by helping to make bridges between the wider community and that hub. The suggestion in this statement is of an open and inclusive festival, a perception agreed with by all other GF key figures. One key figure described the festival as, *bringing in exclusive groups* [...] *significantly crossing the boundaries* (KF GF, 2013).

OGF key figure respondents also spoke in support of the accessibility of their festival though one had some reservations. MG key figure respondents likewise were more hesitant to state they believed their festival was inclusive. At HC, all key figures stated that the festival was accessible although there was recognition that their town may be *very inward looking, people living this bubble* and that although the festival aimed to be open to all, may be seen as *off-putting* [...] *unless you've got an outgoing personality!* (KFs HC, 2013).

The notion of the festivals as being inclusive and open to connecting with a wider community could contribute positively to the survival or benefit of the host place in all

cases. Interviewees spoke of the positive vibe from the festivals in terms of potential to *build capacity* and *opportunities for new investment in the town* (KF GF, 2013). At OGF, a key figure respondent believed that the festival helped in *breaking down the stereotype* of rural villages. At HC, a similar comment reflected on the festivals ability to connect beyond the immediate community, to *challenge the perception of small, rural towns as being insular* (KF HC, 2013). As demographic changes were evident in each host town/village, the festival could make a positive contribution to the integration of incomers, as *welcoming new people and new ideas* (KFs HC, GF, 2013).

If there was evidence of changes within the population dynamics of each place, there was also evidence from the organisers of an increase in non-local festival visitors in the previous three decades to 2012. The organisers all stated that the festival was open to all, though with the exception of MG, the events aimed primarily towards locals. When questioned on perceptions of to whom the event was aimed at, visitors at OGF and HC believed this to be predominantly local people, while those interviewed at MG and GF felt that their festivals (whilst appealing to both) were aimed predominantly at outsiders. MG visitors believed the nature of the event, with a broader focus on Northumbrian culture, was more outreaching and appealed to outside visitors more than locals. Some visitors attributed reduced local appeal to a lack of innovation in the festival, expressing the belief that locals would not visit as *little changes from year to year* (Visitor MG, 2013).

Local visitors and focus group respondents at GF also felt that the festival was *more for outsiders, it reaches out* (Visitor GF, 2013) although the reasons differed from those given at MG. At GF the perception, given predominantly by long-term residents, that the event was more for tourists, was accredited to the relative newness of the event and to its external origins and non-indigenous organisation. In contrast to MG, local visitors considered GF aimed at tourists, owing to the perception of festival diversity, and the broader reach of the cultural content. Comments referred to the event being *only a new thing* and to it being *cultural in a broader sense, not local* (FG GF, 2013). Interestingly, the tourists or non-local visitors interviewed at GF entertained the opposite view, perceiving the event as being *more for the locals* and not a *tourism event* (Visitor GF, 2013).

6.5.2   The Participatory Nature of Festivals

Festivals are by their nature participatory events, where audiences can engage through workshops and demonstrations, performances and as spectators. Delanty (2011:194) emphasises this participatory nature, describing the living culture being produced and performed at festivals. The participation may come at many levels from intensive organiser to casual onlooker, with the day of the event offering immediate opportunities to get involved with forms of arts and culture. Case study examples of forms of participatory engagement included performance competition classes in spoken dialect, playing musical instruments and singing (MG); fancy dress/carnival float parade (OGF, HC) and art and craft taster-sessions (MG, HC, GF). Figure 6.7 illustrates participation in the opening parade at OGF, 2013.

Figure 6.7 Participants in the opening parade, Ovingham Goose Fair, 2013 (Black, 2013).

As Matarasso (2010:5) states, participating in cultural and arts activities provides benefits which include 'questions of creativity, identity and cultural diversity among others', placing particular emphasis in his report on the participatory aspect of engaging with the arts and culture. Evidence in the data suggests respondents recognised participatory benefits at festivals in terms of social and creative benefits and that taking part in some way encouraged them to come up with new ideas. This can be seen in the remarks from a key figure at HC who described the interactive and creative qualities of their festival in the following way:

> *The festival helps stop people becoming insular, crosses boundaries. You can't be a spectator alone, because of all the interaction on the streets, it's not just a*

passive event. It has to be creative. If someone said 'all the floats have to be a certain theme this year' then that would kill it, it has to be what people want to do rather than feeling they 'have to do it', they have to be inspired (KF HC, 2013).

Further evidence of participatory benefits at HC related to participants' choice, in how to participate and through freedom to be innovative in building the floats. The predominant perception amongst key figures showed that people participated in preparing for the festival primarily for social reasons; *the biggest skill it gives is being part of a team and working together and getting a good end result* (KF HC, 2013). The creative skills and opportunities came as a secondary element of the participation, or were not recognised as being artistic engagement. Key figure comments expressed the levels of ingenuity and creativity in the float making but emphasised that participants are *not really thinking about that* [being creative or artistic] *when they do it*. Another key figure responded, *people said, 'Haltwhistle people don't do art' but the whole carnival is about art. Every float is artistic, the skills involved are amazing* (KFs HC, 2013).

Visitors and focus groups acknowledged the innovation and *resourcefulness* (Visitor HC, 2013) of participants in creating the festival displays, and stated that the festival *gives an opportunity to express oneself and be creative* (FG HC, 2013). Participation was recognised within the focus group as contributing to creative skills. These skills extended beyond the actual event; *I'm sure some people in the community have made something and then realised they liked that and took it beyond the event. Whether they've taken it to a higher level or kept it as a hobby. And just creating the floats in their own right extends the creative opportunities* (KF HC, 2013).

Opportunities to be creative and innovative, and to acquire new skills through participation, also occurred at MG (evidence was observed by the researcher when attending the competitions and through informal discussion with participants). At the MG, a range of competitions allowed participants to enter this festival with the express aim of creating new compositions or art works. Commissions (where the intention was to reinterpret traditional methods and art forms in a contemporary manner) also featured at this festival. Stallholders and performers demonstrated predominantly traditional methods and crafts, with examples of contemporary interpretations. Some

of these groups had attracted new members to learn skills from previous events and all desired to promote their activities to new recruits.

The recruitive element to creative groups was apparent at all the case study festivals, whether to join a specific group set up for the festival or a permanent organisation. At OGF, a group was set up to prepare for the festival by bringing together local people to make costumes and articles for the opening parade. Opportunities to learn new skills through groups either promoted at the festival or set up to prepare for the festival, were emphasised by GF and HC visitors. The innovative, participatory aspects were credited with bringing a sense of pride to the host town. This was specifically attributed at GF to *opportunities to create and perform music in a live environment* (Visitor GF, 2013).

Although all categories of respondents replied positively to the festival creating a sense of pride in place, few associated pride with festival innovation. Where referred to in connection with innovation, this was through a sense of pride formed through the opportunity to be creative at the festival; *we had the chance to create a band, the steelpans, which is really identified with the town now* (KF HC, 2013).

The participation of the community was observed as a critical element of festival continuity and survival, being as they were predominantly independent of extrinsic funding or support. Respondents typically acknowledged that the events were largely *self-sufficient* or *stand-alone* and *dependant on the support of local businesses and local people* (mixed respondents MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). Funding and donations were recognised as coming predominantly from within the community. Media publicity was also recognised as being limited beyond the immediate locale, owing to the scale of the event and budgetary restrictions. Emphasis was placed on holding interesting and varied publicity events and activities throughout the year, to engage the local population for support both before and at the event. The participation of the community in supporting the festival, whether in-kind or financially, needed to be innovative in order to keep interest alive with respondents stating that they had to *come up with new and innovative ways to drum up support for the event* (KF GF, 2013).

6.6 **Summary**

Evidence of innovative processes and content exist within the case study festivals, although the degree to which these are recognised varies considerably between events. The respondents held quite varied perceptions of innovation within their respective festivals, often in particular, between those organising the festival and the host community.

Motivations to innovate predominantly originate internally, although influenced by wider societal and political pressures. External influences, funding in particular, are limited. Innovative interpretations of culture, 'introducing new things or changes', are deemed an important feature of the survival of both the event and the culture displayed within it (Collins, 1981:110). The continuation of this culture is dependent in part upon adaptations and new interpretations through the processes of inheritance within the festival. The liminality of festivals, the manner in which they utilise public spaces to display and perform culture (often in innovative or even subversive ways) enabled new connections with place and place-related-culture. Evidence showed that this led to the making or remaking of social connections, particularly forms of bridged relationships beyond the immediate community. The participatory nature of festivals was a contributory factor in enabling these bridges to form, and for the gaining of creative skills and innovative approaches to producing and promoting the festivals.

There are many and varied forms and processes through which social connectivity occurs between groups and individuals and with heritage and place through festivals. The following chapter, Chapter 7, considers these means of making connections and the positive and negative impact they may make upon the hosting community.

7 Chapter 7. Festival Social Connectivity within Communities

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 7, the third of the three data analysis chapters, considers the theme of **connectivity**, the 'spaces for recognition, re-connection, conversation and debate' (Putnam and Fieldstein, 2003:294). Connectivity, the state of being interconnected at individual or group level (section 2.5.6), is considered an important determinant of social sustainability. 'Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, *connected* [my emphasis] and democratic and provide a good quality of life' (McKenzie, 2004:18). The potential for festivals to enable or inhibit social connections, or social impact, has drawn increasing attention within the literature, albeit with acknowledgement that the subject is largely under-researched (Fredline and Faulkner, 2000; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Picard and Robinson, 2006; Moscardo, 2008). This chapter continues the analysis process of the previous two chapters, assessing the data for the positive and negative social impact of the festivals within each respective case study. Connections between festivals and people are identified, as in Chapters 6 and 7, using forms of connectivity through Putnam's (2000) theory of 'bridges and bonds'.

To begin the chapter, section 7.2 examines perceptions of the connective potential or aim of the festival. This is followed in section 7.3 by examining the variety of connections with heritage, which a festival makes, considering the impact of these connections upon belonging and identity. Connectivity and place is explored in section 7.4, through the concept of being an insider or an outsider, and the sense of localness within festivals. Section 7.5 considers the participatory or immersive nature of festivals as a contributor to the connective value of these events. Aspects of commonality and belonging, at individual and group level, are examined including the networks through which the connections take place. The chapter concludes in section 7.6 with a summary of the connectivity findings.

7.2 Perceptions of Connectivity within the Case Study Festivals

Perceptions of the case study events as social activities (and thus potentially enabling connectivity) were investigated through the following questions. Organisers were asked if connectivity was included in the aims of the event and whether this was

evidenced. Visitors were asked directly if they perceived the festival as a social event ,
while key figures were asked if they perceived it as an informal meeting place. These
latter interviewee categories, and the focus groups, were also asked if they perceived
any negative impact from the festival.

Amongst the organisers three, with the exception of MG, stated that it was an aim of
the festival to enhance and support connections within the community, in one case
being *necessary for survival* (Org GF, 2012). The MG organiser stated that although
community connectivity *hadn't been targeted as such* [it] *had evolved* (Org MG, 2012).
When asked if there was evidence (formal or anecdotal) of increased connectivity or
networking as a result of the festival, MG and HC organisers both responded positively
whilst OGF and GF organisers said there was no evidence to point to this. Organisers
were also asked to comment on any negative reports of the festival and the responses
were analysed for negative social impact. The organiser at MG (2012) stated that there
was some opposition to the event locally but *nothing fundamental*, while the
organisers at OGF, HC and GF stated no negative or anti-social reports.

Visitors showed an emphatically positive response to the question of whether they
considered the festival a social event. All the 42 visitors at HC and 41 visitors at GF
(100%) stated this was the case, with 34 of the 39 visitors (87%) at MG and 40 of the
41 visitors (98%) at OGF giving positive responses.

When asked whether the social connections made were likely to be with established
friends/family or new connections, the responses were predominantly both at each
case study. However, there was a greater perception of making new contacts at MG
and GF while at OGF and HC visitors emphasised the greater likelihood of meeting up
with existing friends.

Key figure respondents were questioned as to whether the festivals provided
opportunities for networking with existing friends and neighbours. They were also
asked whether the festivals provided opportunities to make new friendships. All key
figures believed the events provided positive reconnecting opportunities within the
community and some opportunities to make new relationships. At MG, the responses
showed a mixed perception of the social element of the event, reflecting the nature of
the festival as both attracting a wider audience and being specifically heritage themed.

OGF key figures acknowledged the opportunities to *renew friendships, people you might not see without this kind of event*, where *everyone goes and chats* although one respondent doubted that the event was perceived as a social gathering place (KFs OGF, 2013). At HC the response from all key figures was that the festival provided an opportunity to network with the implication being that this could be with existing and new contacts. Likewise at GF, key figures commented on their presumption of meeting people at the festival, in part owing to the small scale of the town and the event; *everybody knows everybody anyway ; there's so many people there you know that maybe you wouldn't have the time to meet new people. It's not that big, you can't get lost!* (KFs GF, 2013).

Responses from visitors, key figures and focus groups were examined for references to negative impact of the festivals on connectivity. Only one visitor (out of 163) responded negatively to the perception of connectivity and the social element of the event. Key figure respondents at MG made no comments of anti-social behaviour and only minor remarks which reflected disruption to connectivity, acknowledging that the event caused brief disruption to daily life. OGF key figures commented on the event as having potential to make *wedges. People cross one another. I know there were rifts about people wanting to do it their way* (KF OGF, 2013). These comments were qualified as relating to the organisation but suggested that rifts could occur within any group. GF key figures also commented on the potential negative impact upon connectivity of the organising committee. However, in this case, the comments appeared to emphasise a feeling of division between perceived incomers and locals with regard to event organisation in the town; *they're not locals, it's a clique.*

HC was unique in reflecting perceptions of anti-social behaviour arising from the festival. The comments revealed interesting observations on the nature of the community and the impact of the festival on social connectivity, both positively and negatively. Two out of the four key figures commented on this behaviour, stating: *lots of people don't like it, due to the drinking and the history of the fights in the evenings* (KF HC, 2013). One respondent commented at greater length:

> *There's an element of negativity as in the aftermath. People's behaviour, some years worse than others, there's a tradition that the night afterwards with the drink, sometimes before and after and all day, there's got to be some families*

that have an awful time after having a lovely day. And it's got to affect the people who live in close proximity to the pubs, it's not just one or two, it's lots of people coming back from the pubs. The people who live there must have mixed views about it (KF HC, 2013).

It was apparent that the festival could create a negative impact and that not all connections made at the event were positive. However, the key figures comments implied that although the festival may trigger the reaction, it was not the cause as such and that the event acted as a release of underlying pressures within the community. It was suggested that the event may actually act to dissipate the build-up of social tensions as the following comment describes:

> *When you're living in a small community, things get tense at times. It's a release of energy, carnival day, a sigh of relief, like a big phew, everyone can relax, no one has to drive anywhere and you can go and have a drink. Is that a good thing or a bad thing because there's quite often trouble at the end of the night? But people get on each other's nerves, when you're living with five generations of families in the same town who are all interconnected with other families. There's an element of competition, everyone's trying to win, you're dressed up in ridiculous costumes, having a drink together, you've got makeup running down your face, your kids are running around and you know they're safe, they're on the field. It's a great release really* (KF, HC).

These comments on release of tension and relaxation, seemingly in contrast to the norms of day-to-day life, appear to echo back to pre-20th century festivities. There is a suggestion of somewhat anarchic celebration and of 'shared activity and ritual' (Ehrenreich, 2007:21), albeit both positive and negative connections and of the continuation of life in the face of adversity (Frazer, 1976).

The HC was the only case study to reflect on a communal release of tension or to refer directly to anti-social behaviour (see also section 7.5.4). In other respects, the positive perception of the festival in terms of social connectivity resembled positive perceptions within the three other case study events. The majority of respondents appeared to perceive of the festivals as strongly social activities, providing opportunities for re-establishing old contacts and making new ones.

7.3   Connectivity: Festivals and Heritage

Festivals contain a variety of processes and content which may be considered as heritage. A variety of questions were raised at interview relating to a sense of belonging (for example, connecting people with place) and to identity (through for

example, the contribution of heritage to memory exchanges). Responses were then considered to determine whether heritage content, and the processes by which this was transmitted, contributed to connectivity.

The longevity and continuity of an event impact on a sense of belonging, in part through providing a recurring opportunity for sharing memories and stories. The authenticity of the heritage content was called into question in relation to memory and belonging, with some respondents commenting on the subjective nature of some aspects of festival heritage. Whilst respondents refer to an enhanced sense of belonging through engaging with the heritage elements of the festival, this occurred predominantly through the processes and consistency of the event, above specific heritage content. A consistently recurring process within a festival, as for example, the procession at the start of the MG (Figure 7.1) may thus make a greater, positive impact on connectivity than the specific content.

Figure 7.1 The procession at the start of the Morpeth Gathering (seen here in 2012) has been an element of the festival since inception in 1968 (Black, 2012).

7.3.1 Belonging and Heritage Processes within the Festival

The majority of key figure (84%) and visitor (76%) respondents emphasised that the festivals contributed strongly to a sense of belonging in the community. However, they did not accredit this, at least initially, to connections through heritage, nor considered the inclusion of heritage content as a contributor to a sense of belonging. Many of the interview subjects did not consider the festival made links between heritage and contemporary culture: as identified in section 5.2.1, 42% of all visitors and 44% of key figures failed to recognise heritage in the festivals. Where heritage was acknowledged

in festivals, it may be associated with historic content and linked to past culture, for example, traditional crafts and performances, rather than contemporary processes. Some respondents suggested that the inclusion of heritage content was not the purpose of the festival, as seen in comments from OGF focus group1: *I don't think that's why we have festivals; I don't think it really matters, that's not significant.* [It's about] *people wanting to get together, having fun* and *keeping your area alive* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

However, when asked to qualify in what way the festivals enhanced belonging, respondents referred to many of the processes of holding the festival, in particular inherited social practices. As interview discussions continued, the inherited aspect of these processes, an almost "hidden" heritage aspect of the festivals, emerged. These included temporal and cultural processes, illustrated below with evidence from the interview data.

Respondents across all categories referred to a non-specific sense of heritage which connected people together. The emphasis appeared to indicate an abstract emotional attachment and implied a commonality of place amongst the people. This may be broader than a town/village, rather a sense of being northern or Northumbrian. The organisers drew attention to the desire to demonstrate or provide access to a potential commonality of culture, referring to a connection with a local heritage as being *valued a lot. It's partly the people, they're very friendly. Is that the culture – I don't know? Maybe it's having to knuckle down together* (Org MG, 2012). The GF organiser referred to the festival as being *about protecting and promoting the local culture* (Org GF, 2012).

Typical and frequently repeated visitor comments referred to a sense of belonging through the *continuity of the event* and the *annual celebration of the community*, through passing on or inheriting cultural aspects in the *opportunities to keep the culture alive through the festival* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF,2013). The opportunity to share a common culture was perceived through the comments of focus group participants at HC, commenting on the contribution of the event to *keeping the place together. It unites people. When you talk to people who've lived in the village all their*

lives, they share a lot in common. They have a shared heritage and part of this is the festival (FG HC, 2013).

The processes of holding a festival were seen as elements which were inherited by the festival community. The event itself was seen by many respondents through its recurring nature as *something to look forward to* (FG GF, 2013) and *a traditional thing that people looked forward to, focus for a fun day, people to get together* (Org OGF, 2012). This led to certain aspects becoming a form of ritual or repeated occurrence, *aspects which people come to expect* (FG HC, 2013). These were not necessarily recognised as heritage, or not immediately or explicitly, and some were referred to in a diminutive sense as *little ways* such as *the throwing of sweets from the floats* (FG HC, 2013).

The annual staging of the event did appear to bring with it the expectation of an opportunity to share in a common culture, thus enhancing a sense of belonging, although the longevity of an event impacted on this ability. A HC key figure interviewed expressed the festival as having *more a sense of tradition, rather than heritage. It's something that's gone on for years, has its own momentum* […] *it's heritage in that it's passed on. People need a sense of where they've come from* (KF HC, 2013). This emphasises again the variations in perceptions of heritage as were explored in section 5.2.1.

Although GF is a relatively newly established festival, in contrast to the other case studies, it was acknowledged as being able to provide an *opportunity to express the cultural heritage from this part of the world* but that:

> *Only time will tell. Other statements of the local culture go back years for example the local shows. They've carved out the right to make a statement one day a year but I see nothing wrong with other groups arising that in the course of time will make an equally strong statement of what a place is. I hope the festival can address this agenda and ask the question about what needs to be encouraged to happen to make a cultural statement about the place. Where people can say, "this is where we show-case the place for one day a year"* [...] *it's about do we have a common heritage and can we share it with others?* (KF GF, 2013).

7.3.2 Connecting to the Roots of a Festival

It is arguable that the heritage of a festival in a location and the consistent recurring of the event, contribute to a sense of belonging and connectedness with that locale (Gibson and Stewart, 2009). Many respondents referred to a sense of pride in having a festival with a long history in their home town/village. However, few had any knowledge of the origins of their respective events. When questioned, some respondents expressed embarrassment that they had not considered the origins previously, coupled with a desire to find out more: *I feel sad I don't know much about our local history; it's lovely to learn about it* (FG1 OGF, 2013) and [I] *haven't really registered the origins of the festival, bit embarrassing, but it's steeped in so many things* (KF OGF, 2013). At OGF, respondents from all interviewee categories referred to the intention to return to a *more traditional, not commercial event* (KF OGF, 2013). Some respondents stated that *people want to go back to the way things were, they want tradition* (Org OGF, 2012).

The desire to return to a traditional model of the festival appears to be associated with a perception of a time and an event when there was greater social connectivity:

> *A while ago, there used to be, before it went commercial, every organisation would be involved and do something. Often it was simple, traditional games and a lot of people have said we need to get back to the games for children to have a go on, rather than buying as there's a bit of an emphasis on buying at the moment* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

The FG discussion continued by reflecting that:

> *Society has changed, demographics have changed and people don't get to know each other so well. The OGF can provide a component of this* [social connections] *and all these things do create reference points which do bring people into contact with each other.* [Discusses reflections on the origins of the festivals and continues...] *We're all just passing through and this made me feel more a sense of belonging* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

Remarks were also made at HC, MG and GF to the roots of the festivals and to the wider community social impact. At HC (2013), the organisers referred to *trying to bring back the old traditional things* whilst MG and GF (2013) key figures referred to the festival allowing visitors to *see how the place was*. These comments emphasised a sense of belonging through connecting to the origins of a festival and thus a greater sense of rootedness within the community.

7.3.3 Heritage and Sense of Identity

An increased understanding of the locale can contribute to identity, helping to determine feelings of being more of an "insider" or a local, as opposed to an "outsider" or non-local. All interviewee groups were asked to comment on their perceptions of the festival heritage as contributing to a sense of identity. They were asked whether including heritage aided understanding and integration into the area or reinforced cultural stereotypes and prejudices. All organisers commented on the heritage content as contributing to understanding, although predominantly in terms of integration: *consolidating community* (Org OGF, 2012); *takes commitment. People get together* [...] *and another year, different people take part and that's a sense of belonging to the community* (Org HC, 2013). For the GF organisers, including heritage in the festival in a "fun" way was seen as an important aspect of encouraging understanding and community connectivity particularly cross-generational. The MG organiser considered *it is possible that some people who can't see beyond their noses think it continues the stereotype. But that's because they don't know what it's about* (Org MG, 2012).

Amongst visitors (n = 163), 152 (93%) stated that they felt the festival contributed to a sense of local identity by keeping the heritage alive as opposed to stifling or stereotyping it. Many qualified their responses by stating this was achieved through greater connectivity between festival participants. Regarding enhanced knowledge of local heritage, visitors to HC and MG stated that the festival contributed to a greater sense of understanding of the heritage of the area. In contrast, visitors at OGF and GF made few positive remarks on this subject. Visitors to OGF did state that the festival was part of the local fabric, and that the festival reinforces identity, although it was not perceived as occurring through knowledge relating to local heritage.

Questions of identity through festival connections with heritage were varied amongst the key figures interviewed. At MG the respondents all believed that the inclusion of heritage was important but had mixed reactions as to whether the festival really contributed to identity as it was seen by some as *too themed, too subject specific* [and] *could bring people together, to identify with each other, but only by chance* (KFs MG, 2013). At OGF, the majority of key figures believed that the heritage element contributed to *breaking down the stereotype and taking people out of their comfort zone* (KF OGF, 2013). HC key figure responses to the question of heritage aiding

integration or reinforcing cultural stereotypes were unanimously in favour of integration, with the focus lying primarily on the social benefits. Connections and integration occurred through the processes of holding the festival, processes inherited or passed on annually. These processes were recognised as the heritage, rather than the heritage content:

> *Whatever the motives are behind it, the people go out each year and make floats. It's so important, if it didn't happen I don't know what people would be involved with. You need something to focus on in a town like this [...] even if they're fighting they're still involved. It's that one day when everyone gets together. They see it as part of their heritage really* (KF HC, 2013).

All key figures at GF likewise commented on the opportunities a festival could provide to aid understanding and integration although there was equally little perception that heritage content contributed to identity within the festival.

All focus group respondents, with the exception of OGF focus group1, reinforced the findings from other interviewee categories; there were few positive acknowledgments of festival heritage content but in contrast wide acknowledgement of the ability of the festival to bolster pride and identity within the community through the social processes.

7.3.4 *Heritage, Authenticity and Memory*

A final consideration on the connections between the heritage in festivals and the formation of identity is the question of perceived authenticity. Although not originally designed as part of the interview schedule, several respondents referred to aspects of authenticity of heritage and it was deemed to contribute to the overall analysis. With regard to enabling or hindering connectivity, the question of heritage authenticity, the potential inclusion of Hobsbawm's (2013) 'invented traditions' (as discussed in section 2.3), may be manipulated to strengthen existing bonds within a community, potentially to the exclusion of others.

At OGF there appeared to be evidence that defence of the authentic nature of an event was being used by one section of the community to prevent change by another. Possible tensions were referred to between *newcomers – if you're not born here* and *the old guard* who were perceived to be *maintaining the old ways* and preventing *tradition being disrupted* (FG2 OGF, 2013). The focus group drew attention to concepts

of heritage authenticity, to how *genuine the traditions are anyway. A lot of those traditions only go back to the '60s anyway, like a Victorian creation, steal some stuff from the old and now it's a tradition from 1969!* Others commented that *a lot of heritage is invented anyway* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

In similar context, a GF key figure respondent questioned, *how old is old?* and suggested that much of the heritage content of the festival could be *at different levels. It does not have to be ancient, for example, the Steel Pan Band which goes back a few years, alongside the Morris Dancers* (KF GF, 2013). The key figure continued to argue that both these forms of content reflected the *cultural heritage of Northumberland* [being] *truly of the place* [for] *when does heritage begin?* He suggested that both forms of local culture were neither more or less authentic, describing how one showed the evolution of musical culture in the host town of Wooler (Steel Pans) while the other (Morris Dancers) *speaks of a more general social heritage of England*. Morris dancers have performed at each of the case study festival, although their "local" authenticity was questioned, as discussed in section 5.2.3, by some interviewees (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2 Morris dancers have performed at some time at each of the case study festivals.
Seen here at Ovingham Goose Fair, 2013 (Black, 2013).

Perceptions of heritage authenticity are, as Graham (2002:1004) has described, subjective: 'there are many heritages, the contents and meanings of which change through time and across space'. The festival community selects which aspects it deems authentic in many ways through the heritage it wishes to remember, and through the creation of collective memories, which are reinforced year on year at the event. As

authors such as Waitt (2000) and Smith (2006) have emphasised, the authenticity is arguably contained in each subjective interpretation or story. Through the sharing of these stories, a collective heritage is created, one which individual memories contribute to. The close link with memory, between heritage and contemporary community, was commented on by one key figure:

> *I think there's a lot of reminiscing goes on, it's such a community thing and you hear the reminiscing. Some of them are from last year, some from 50 years ago. Whether that's a heritage thing, sharing stories? It's a vocal thing, it's not terribly obvious but you know it's going on around you. Families will reminisce for years. The old men were reminiscing about the ploughing, standing along the fence together* (KF HC, 2013).

The connective value inherent in the reminiscing was highlighted through the sharing of these stories and memories, with the occasion for this sharing to take place provided by the festival.

The social aspect of sharing memories was emphasised, as in the above quote, more frequently than aspects of authenticity. During field-work, the researcher noted conversations next to heritage displays which remarked on similarities and differences to local culture (for example, farming machinery and methods at HC, and displays of craft and dance at MG). The heritage on display sparked several conversations between onlookers and participants and made connections between these particular groups. Visitors at all festivals, when asked how the festival contributed to keeping heritage alive, mentioned the opportunities to reminisce with friends or family through seeing performances or demonstrations of the heritage. Although there was undoubtedly some debate regarding the authenticity of aspects of the festivals (as discussed in 5.2.3), the opportunity to gather and recall memories of cultural practices, even if this was to argue about them, was valued amongst respondents.

7.4   Connectivity: Festivals and Place

Festivals make connections with place, through physical connections with the host town/village and through cultural associations with the locale, as evident in the literature (section 2.4). Festivals provide opportunities to connect to both traditional and contemporary local culture, to tangible and intangible aspects of place. They may contribute to identity construction through highlighting distinctive local features, creating pride in place and may reinforce a sense of belonging in a place. In particular

they may potentially create "bridged" relationships through the inclusion of non-locals or new participating local parties within the event. The potential for festivals to reinforce place-based culture may, however, also create division or exclusion within a community, particularly if connections are too "bonded". Festival connections may thus contribute to belonging and being "inside" a place but conversely may emphasise the feeling of being an "outsider". The notion of insider/outsider was briefly explored using data from the interviews to consider variables of proximity to place and potential impact of feelings of belonging. The interview data was analysed with regard to the potential of the festivals to connect to the indigenous culture or localness of their host town/village. The ability of the events to enable place connections for non-locals was also examined. Consideration was made as to the contribution of a festival to the integration of incomers in a place, the enabling of place connections for external visitors and integration with neighbouring communities.

7.4.1   Perceptions of Belonging in the Locale: Insider or Outsider?

A festival may create a community, even if only temporarily, through which people connect via shared interests in place and culture, a socio-cultural space. The notion of communities suggests a sense of belonging, of making connections and associations This is therefore suggestive of being distinguishable from others, denoting the apparent binary nature defining who is 'inside' and who 'outside' (Cohen, 1985:12). The ability to identify place with feelings of familiarity and 'home' contributes to a sense of belonging, of considering oneself as an insider (Relph, 1976:49).

Residential proximity to the festival may be a contributing factor to responses concerning perceptions of belonging in the locale. All respondents (n = 220) were asked to state how close to the host town/village they lived: those respondents living within 10 miles of the festival were recorded as "local residents" and those living 10 plus miles away as "non-local residents" (section 4.3.3.1). Table 7.1 illustrates that amongst these 220 interviewees, the majority (71%) could be described as locals with 29% of respondents as non-locals. These consisted of 105 out of 163 visitors, 33 out of 37 focus group participants and each of the four organisers. Amongst the key figures, 14 out of 16 lived less than 10 miles from the festival host place, while only two out of 16 lived more than 10 miles from the festival.

Table 7.1 Distribution of respondents by residential proximity to host town/village by interviewee category

Interviewee Category	Resident ‹10 miles from host town/village	Resident ›10 miles from host town/village	Total interviewees per category
Organisers	4	0	4
Visitors	105	58	163
Key figures	14	2	16
Focus group participants	33	4	37
Total interviewed	156 (71%)	64 (29%)	220

Living in a town/village, whilst appearing influential, is only one contributory factor to a sense of being an insider. Of the key figures (n = 14) within a 10 mile proximity, only eight out of 14 (57%) considered themselves as insiders. Of the two key figures living more than 10 miles from the festival, one (50%) considered them self an insider, as illustrated in Table 7.2. Proximity of residence alone does not contribute to a feeling of being an insider. Six out of 14 key figures (43%) who reside within 10 miles, and one out of two key figures (50%) who reside more than 10 miles from than the festival, do not consider themselves insiders. As key figures, by their nature, all held positions of responsibility within the community (paid and/or voluntary in education, trade, local councillors or as a religious leader) participation is a contributory factor to the consideration of being an insider. Several key figures stated their role in the community was a contributing factor to their sense of belonging in the locale. Comments included; *part of my existence is being totally immersed in the community* (KF OGF, 2013) and, *I'm part of the community through my job but not local* (KF HC, 2013).

Table 7.2 Key figure responses to questions of whether they considered themselves as insiders by residential proximity to the host town/village

Festival Key figures (n = 16)	Resident ‹10 miles from host town/village		Resident ›10 miles from host town/village		Resident ‹10 miles and ›10 miles from host town/village
Festival	Total	Consider oneself an insider?	Total	Consider oneself an insider?	Total considering themselves as insiders
Morpeth Gathering	3	2	1	1	3
Ovingham Goose Fair	3	1	1	0	1
Haltwhistle Carnival	4	2	0	0	2
Glendale Festival	4	3	0	0	3
Total	14	8 (57%)	2	1 (50%)	9

Data was obtained from key figures and visitors for consideration of festival contribution to a sense of belonging in place and analysed between local and non-local resident respondents. There were positive responses to festival contribution to feelings of belonging in place from 13 of the 14 key figures living less than 10 miles away and from one of the two living more than 10 miles away, illustrated in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Key figure positive responses to questions of festival contribution to a sense of belonging in place by comparative proximity of residence

Festival Key figures (n = 16)	Resident ‹10 miles from host town/village		Resident ›10 miles from host town/village	
Festival	Total	Positive response	Total	Positive response
Morpeth Gathering	3	2	1	0
Ovingham Goose Fair	3	3	1	1
Haltwhistle Carnival	4	4	0	0
Glendale Festival	4	4	0	0
Total	14	13 (93%)	2	1 (50%)

All visitors (n = 163) were asked whether the festival made them feel more a part of the local host town/village. Tables 7.4 and 7.5 illustrate responses according to visitors' residence, whether less than or more than 10 miles from the host town/village. The results show that, although the festival contributed to feeling part of the host place for both local and non-local residents, the contribution was marginally greater for local visitors (80%), as opposed to non-locals, (67%), as discussed further in section 7.4.3.

Table 7.4 Festival Visitors resident ‹10 miles from host town/village. Responses to the question of whether the festival made them feel more a part of the host town/village

Festival Visitors n = 163	Resident ‹10 miles from host town/village n = 105						
Festival	Yes		Don't know		No		Total per festival
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Morpeth Gathering	16	67%	7	29%	1	4%	24
Ovingham Goose Fair	28	82%	3	9%	3	9%	34
Haltwhistle Carnival	22	84%	2	8%	2	8%	26
Glendale Festival	19	90%	0	0	2	10%	21
Total	85	81%	12	11%	8	8%	105

Table 7.5 Festival Visitors resident ›10 miles from host town/village. Responses to the question of whether the festival made them feel more a part of the host town/village

Festival Visitors n = 163	Resident ›10 miles from host town/village n = 58						
Festival	Yes		Don't know		No		Total per festival
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Morpeth Gathering	7	47%	5	33%	3	20%	15
Ovingham Goose Fair	3	43%	1	14%	3	43%	7
Haltwhistle Carnival	11	69%	2	12%	3	19%	16
Glendale Festival	18	90%	1	5%	1	5%	20
Total	39	67%	9	16%	10	17%	58

The positive responses from both key figures and visitors suggested that the festivals contributed to feelings of place belonging. The qualitative responses from the key figures and visitors provided a greater insight into the features of the festival contributing to that sense of belonging. These are examined in the following sections.

7.4.2 A Sense of Localness of Place: Connecting to the Local Community

Each case study festival was referred to as helping to establish a sense of place through creating feelings of pride, of celebrating a place, of bringing the local community together. Responses across each interview category made numerous references to a sense of community ownership of the festival and of the event being important for the host town/village. Visitors at each case study, repeatedly referred to the contribution of the festival to the overall appeal or attractiveness of the place (Figure 6.5, section 6.4.1). The following comments typically arose more than once at each festival: *it celebrates where you live*, *it gives a positive image*, *it's attractive* and referred to the festival being *part of the fabric of the place* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC and GF, 2013). When asked if it was deemed important that the festival was held in the existing location (or could be held anywhere), 93% of all visitors (n = 163) responded positively that it should.

The importance of a local connection and of creating a sense of place was apparent amongst the organisers who stated this to be a *really important* intention (Orgs OGF, 2012 and HC, 2013) and to highlight the local culture. To investigate these intentions further, questions were asked of organisers regarding the sourcing of content within the festivals to determine a sense of how "local" the participants were. The organisers'

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responses indicated a desire to show and include locally sourced content overall, although elements from outside were brought in too. Figure 7.3 illustrates an example of a festival stall (at GF) selling locally produced and sourced food. The MG organiser described the inclusion of non-local content as intended to deliberately highlight the local culture through contrast: *there's a hard core of Northumbrianness – which allows us to bring in others to show similarities and differences. Time to time bring in outside elements which connect* (Org MG, 2012).

Figure 7.3 Stall displaying locally sourced food, Glendale Festival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

The mixture of local and non-local content at HC appeared less intentional, occurring as part of the evolution of the festival's connections: *the food's not sourced locally, it could be from anywhere. I pick up everybody's cards and then contact them. If they're worth a try – they can come along. Just really ideas over the years which have evolved* (Org HC, 2013). The intention to display predominantly local content was most prominent amongst the GF organisers who described the sourcing process in the following way:

> *Food is all local suppliers; growers and music side is predominantly from a 50 mile radius. If it's further away it's locally, culturally Northumberland based - pipes, Hexham bands, local dance if possible. It's got to be local, craft etc, all produced in the area, handmade. Don't allow people to buy stuff in as that's not what it's all about. Go to the high street for that. What's the point in getting someone who's nothing to do with the area. You might as well get someone local. Representative of the local rather than just another free bash somewhere* (Org GF, 2012).

The organisers overall appeared to believe that their festival *definitely displayed a sense of place* (Org HC, 2013).

The responses of the key figures and the focus groups were assessed to see if their comments reflected those of the organisers. Questions were asked to ascertain perceptions of the events as displaying local content and whether they demonstrated a sense of place. Responses alluding to localness were coded where they appeared throughout the interviews alongside replies to specifically themed questions. Key figures were asked what percentage of local groups (i.e. groups which meet in the town/village) they perceived as represented at the festival, and whether they felt this fairly represented the host place. Several respondents felt they could not answer as to the proportional representation at the festival of local groups and thus, although some quantitative responses were gathered, the remarks used to qualify these answers were deemed more revealing.

Responses from key figures were often contradictory, particularly between the quantitative perceptions given and the remarks to qualify these figures. The MG key figure responses suggested that approximately 50% of local groups were represented; their qualitative comments however, suggested that the festival did not reflect a sense of locale specific to their town, more a broader sense of "Northumbrianness". At OGF, key figure perceptions of the percentage of local group involvement were uncertain and respondents varied greatly when quantifying this level of involvement with responses ranging from *most* to *12%*. One OGF key figure emphasised a feeling that although the festival was attempting to make connections within the locale through including local participants, it was not achieving this at present:

> *The uniqueness is the thing which could be celebrated more. I did see it as something positive this year, if it was intentional, that the top field seemed to be more like the local stuff. But even there I don't know if they filled it. I followed a jam and chutney stall from Newcastle but it wasn't a local house industry. So how much they were local stalls, I don't know. It didn't seem to be our kids that were dancing, seemed to be coming from far away. There doesn't seem to be any representation of those kinds of things* [lists sports and other clubs that the local children are involved with]. *I think there's big chunks that aren't represented* (KF OGF, 2013).

This negative perception of festival engagement with the locale was identified amongst GF key figures who, with one exception, suggested that the festival did not

reflect a sense of the locale. The reasons for this negative perception varied widely. Some placed emphasis on the voluntary nature of participation; *it's representative of those who will be involved. Let's remember it's a voluntary organisation. People must be free to take part* (KF GF, 2013). Others commented on a sense of *cliqueyness* which prevented more wide spread involvement and a desire that *they should stay closer to their origins and promote the locale more* (KF GF, 2013). In contrast, responses from the key figures at HC showed a more positive response to reflecting the locale and in addition, more consistent quantitative and qualitative responses. Respondents perceived that the festival was *about 80% locals* and *represented a good cross section of the community* and *it's all town people. It wouldn't have survived all these years if it wasn't a town thing* (KFs HC, 2013).

A sense of locale may be associated with *being territorial,* as was observed in the responses from OGF and GF focus groups. This in turn appeared influenced by whether respondents had visited the event or not. Respondents at OGF focus group1 perceived reasons to attend a festival as being territorially based and thus suggested that the events were predominantly supported by locals. The following comments illustrate this point:

> *You go to your own, there's only so many village fund-raisers you can go to; People love it who live in their village, it's not for outsiders. We do it for us and for our children.* One respondent suggested, *I think there must be a thing between the villages, tribalism* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

The attitude within this focus group towards the OGF's ability to reflect its host place was predominantly negative, although this negativity appeared based on hearsay as the majority stated they had never, or rarely, visited. The following conversation was typical of the negative attitude towards a sense of locale prevalent in this group discussion:

> (A) *Locals don't bring their things, it's from outside;* (B) *Well, they never approach you. I don't think they approach local businesses. There must be local people who want to showcase their talent;* (C) *They might expect you to approach them if you've been;* (B) *It does seem very cliquey – I wouldn't know who to approach* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

A sense of territoriality was partially reflected by OGF focus group2, with one respondent commenting: *certain groups have dropped off* […] *my daughter's school,*

half the kids aren't from Ovingham, they're from outside so if half the kids aren't local maybe they don't get involved (FG2 OGF, 2013). The following section from the focus group interview reflects their response to the sense of locale in the festival:

> (A) *Most of the groups are local;* (B) *the other aspect of togetherness is that local village people are participating in stalls, probably 15 or so stalls with local people;* (A) *it's that kind of thing, people coming in from all parts of the village* (FG2 OGF, 2013).

A different aspect of territorialism was seen at GF. The focus group referred to a sense of rivalry between the festival and the original carnival, implying that the different events had their own territories of supporters:

> *The carnival is for them, for the people who've always lived here, their children and grandchildren [...] whereas the festival is, not an arty, that's the wrong word, a cultural thing and it sells things, whereas the carnival, this is where the children dress up and have a procession and the whoopy dance in the evening. And they dress up and make fools of themselves and it's in the paper but very, very Wooler people whereas the festival reaches out more* (FG GF, 2013).

7.4.3 A Sense of Place for Non-local Visitors

Many of the key figures at each festival commented upon the perception that the festivals had a positive impact on contributing to a sense of belonging, and accessibility for non-local or external visitors (i.e. living more than 10 miles from the host town/village). All MG key figure respondents commented very positively to a sense of accessibility for non-locals, in contrast to their more negative response to festival impact upon a sense of belonging among the local community. These key figures stated that the event was aimed more at external visitors than local people.

OGF, HC and GF key figures also felt the festival was accessible to non-locals although they perceived that the event was predominantly aimed at locals. Consideration was given by HC and GF key figures to the impact of the local demographic and the character of the towns. Three out of the four HC key figures, whilst emphasising the friendly and close-knit nature of the community, acknowledged that Haltwhistle could be *very inward looking, living in a bubble really* (KF HC, 2013). One key figure pointed out the exuberant atmosphere of the event and queried whether this, combined with the enhancement and reinvigoration of bonded connections with place through the festival, could prove exclusive to non-locals. The key figure stated *maybe it does depend if you've got quite an outgoing personality. You'd have to be quite brave to go*

into that kind of atmosphere (KF HC, 2013). Another commented on the character of the town, suggesting it be might be easy for external festival visitors to make initial or temporary connections as *people are very friendly and welcoming on the surface,* but that its apparent insularity might ensure that *over time this changes. Different levels to chip through* (KF HC, 2013).

The potential for the festival to be inclusive to non-locals was questioned by GF key figures with references to the event being *cliquey* (KF GF, 2013). Respondents recognised the possible value of the festival as a tourist attraction, yet appeared more hesitant to comment on how inclusive they believed it to be. These respondents expressed the hope however, as one key figure said, *that maybe visitors will meet new friends and go back or consider moving here* (KF GF, 2013).

As Table 7.4 illustrated, 85 out of 105 (80%) of local visitors (as opposed to 39 out of 58 (67%) of non-local visitors), felt the festival made them feel more part of the place. When asked to qualify their responses, local visitors at each festival predominantly visited for social reasons and *to have fun* and many stated they visited out of *habit – it's what you do!* (local Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). Different responses were more apparent amongst the non-local visitors from 10 plus miles away. At MG, the non-local visitors stated cultural reasons for attending and in general commented more positively on the impact of the event on the image of the town. At each of the other three case studies, many of the non-local visitors mentioned habitual reasons for visiting, often through connections with family and friends, and at HC and GF through return holiday visits, as many were staying locally. Amongst the holidaying (non-local) visitors to GF, there was evidence that the festival had contributed to a positive local impression. One commented, *it's so friendly, a lovely place, it makes you want to move here*, whilst another couple stated that they *made their holiday booking because of the festival* (non-local Visitors GF, 2013).

A greater proportion of non-local visitors at GF (n = 18 out of 20 (90%)) and HC (n = 11 out of 16 (69%)), than at OGF (n = three out of seven (43%)) or MG (n = seven out of 15 (47%)), felt the festival contributed to them feeling part of the town/village, as shown in Table 7.4. Regarding whether the festival contributed to a feeling of being part of the place, non-local visitors at MG, OGF and HC experienced less connection to place

than locals, while GF locals (n = 19 out of 21 (90%)) and non-locals (n = 18 out of 20 (90%)) equally stated that the event helped a sense of belonging. At GF, both local and non-local visitors referred to the rural aspect of the festival's host place, and described how the event helped by *showing real life* and *educating visitors about the countryside* (local Visitor GF, 2013), and by *explaining the rural lifestyle* (non-local Visitor GF, 2013).

7.4.4 *Perceptions of Belonging in the Locale: Incomers*

In addition to analysis of the data by proximity of residence, an additional sub-category was identified as "incomers". This sub-category was compiled of respondents who lived within 10 miles of the festival (demographically a local) but who perceived themselves as being new to the area, and did not identify themselves as insiders. Responses across all interviewee categories were analysed to consider whether the festival contributed to "bridged" connections, enabling greater integration and belonging for incomers within the locale.

Organisers were asked to comment on the festivals' abilities to contribute to the identity of incomers, particularly through the local heritage. The MG organiser commented on having direct evidence of *positive contribution of the festival to incomers inclusion in the town* (Org MG, 2012), whilst organisers at OGF, HC and GF all referred to the festivals' networking aspect. The GF organiser implied that the festival's local culture and heritage was particularly important to incomers and gave this as a reason for their involvement, stating: *it may well be why so many newcomers get involved. Maybe people who've always lived here take it for granted* (Org GF, 2012).

The local demographic and changes to population dynamics appeared to be a significant factor in considering the role of the festival in aiding connections with non-local visitors and integrating incomers. At OGF key figures stated the event was important for engaging commuters and/or incomers:

> *This is quite a commuter belt, some people train in, train out and they don't really participate. There was a lot of outsiders from the town* [Newcastle] *coming in. The Goose Fair can do that, bring everyone together, everyone goes and chats and they're all happy down there* (KF OGF, 2013).

Another OGF key figure also commented how there are *a lot of people here who, in the working week, just don't see each other and this sort of event brings them out*

together, absolutely (KF OGF, 2013). Key figures at both HC and GF recognised the potential of the festival to be *a good inroad for incomers to integrate* (KFs GF, 2013), whilst a HC key figure commented on the different levels at which the festival functioned to serve different aspects of the community: *there are two dimensions to the carnival. The local, long term residents have their own agenda – one big party and then there's the community groups who are doing a separate thing. So it's got a real multi-level thing* (KF HC, 2013).

One GF incomer visitor respondent described the positive impact of visiting the festival as an outside visitor and now as a new resident. She stated that after many years of holidaying in the area and visiting the event, she and her husband had moved to the town and she was visiting the festival to *get to know the place better, meet people and start to feel like I belong more* (Visitor GF, 2013).

7.4.5   Festival Connections to Neighbouring Communities

Questions were asked to perceive how the festival contributed to social relations with neighbouring communities. Visitors, local and non-local, at all festivals stated that they believed the event contributed to bridging communities through offering opportunities for wider engagement with neighbours. Organiser's responses were positive if varied: at MG, the festival's wider Northumbrian emphasis was reflected through the statement that there *you can't really have a border* [...] *it's for the wider community* (Org MG, 2012). OGF organisers had engaged through management of the festival with neighbouring communities, borrowing and lending equipment for example, though a mixed reaction was given to the success of this exchange. Neither HC nor GF organisers stated that any real engagement occurred with neighbouring communities. HC stated that *we manage our own* (Org HC, 2013) whilst at GF, despite recognising *an understanding of the need to work together* the organiser said *there's remarkably little networking. All work in little puddles* (Org GF, 2012).

Key figure responses to festival relations with neighbouring communities differed at each festival. MG key figures responded the most positively although there was mention of neighbourhood rivalry and cultural differences between neighbouring communities which prevented interconnections. HC key figures referred the least positively to connections with neighbours, either through no experience of this

occurring or as a negative: *no desire to do this. I don't think they wish to connect with neighbouring communities. They're never going to connect with Hexham, but even Greenhead* [the respective neighbouring town and village]*, it's very territorial* (KF HC, 2013). OGF key figures reported a mixed response as did GF key figures where two respondents described the importance of connections made by the event with the *hinterland* or with *satellite communities* (KFs GF, 2013).

7.5   Connectivity: Festivals and People.

Social connections and exchanges occur at festivals, particularly through the process of participation. Participation in a festival can take many forms, from the active role of organiser, through the numerous performers and stallholders, to the more passive visitor. These social connections occur informally (through meeting and making friends and through sharing fun and entertainment at a social occasion), and formally (through groups' membership and through engagement beyond the actual event). Derrett (2003:40) described 'the complex relationships that festivals provide [through] exchanges [of] information and energy'.

The type of connections enabled by the festival were examined, whether "bonds", by which intrinsic and local-level connections were reinforced, or "bridges" between local insiders and outside visitors. This section of the chapter begins with an initial focus on the actively participatory nature of festivals, as sites where people can 'create meaningful frameworks of their being together' (Picard and Robinson, 2006:12). It then examines informal and formal social connections enabled or disabled through the festival, considering evidence of positive and negative impact. This section also considers whether and how the events influence a sense of community togetherness within a place of collective celebration (Durkheim, 1954; Duvignaud, 1976).

7.5.1   The Process of "Active" Participation within a Festival

Opportunities to participate in the festivals occurred in a variety of forms including for example, "active" opportunities as organisers, performers, stallholders or voluntary helpers, and more "passive" visitors. The term passive is problematic as many visitors engaged actively in the festival, for example, joining in with demonstrations or taking part in dance or craft workshops. As previously considered, the participatory nature of festivals may encourage connections and impact on networks (sections 2.5.6 and

5.4.3.2). The connectivity value of more active participation (as described above), was examined through comparison of quantitative data between visitors and key figures and qualitative responses from organisers and focus groups.

All interviewees were asked questions relating to the participatory nature of the festivals, perceived opportunities and actual participation. As all organisers were participants they were asked what rewards they got from participating and how they engaged others in the festival as helpers/volunteers. Comments from the organisers at OGF and HC referred to personal feelings of satisfaction at helping to run an event where there was a sense of community well-being:

> *Satisfaction of seeing a day that goes well, well organised, people having a good time. For me to see the young people having a really good time. To see the faces of the little people at the Punch and Judy. Feel good factor. On Sunday think, never again but then you think it's only once a year!* (Org OGF, 2012).

The HC organiser commented in a similar fashion: *satisfaction. Seeing everyone's had a good day. Smiling faces. It gets to the end of the day and everything's gone as smoothly as it could. Fantastic pictures in the Courant* [weekly local newspaper] (Org HC, 2013).

All organisers' comments on engaging volunteers to help run the festivals reflected the importance of *networks within the community* to recruit people *by word of mouth* (Orgs OGF and GF, 2012; Org HC, 2013) and of how the *same volunteers returned each year* (Orgs MG, OGF, GF, 2012; Org HC, 2013). They all stated they offered some opportunities to the volunteers for informal training and skills development in return for participation and that, as they return, *they must be getting something* (Org MG, 2012).

Comparisons were made between local and non-local visitors to determine the impact of participating in the festival on a sense of belonging to place, and whether this was influenced through locality of residence. The findings relating to visitor participation, if living less than 10 miles from the festival, are illustrated in Table 7.6. Table 7.7 shows the number of visitors living more than 10 miles from the host town/village who had a participatory role in the event.

Table 7.6 Visitors' participatory role in the operation of the festival if resident ‹10 miles from host town/village

Festival Visitors n = 163	Visitors per festival	Resident ‹10 miles from host town/village n= 105					
Festival	n	Participating Role		No participating role		Total local Visitors	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Morpeth Gathering	39	6	25	18	75	24	62
Ovingham Goose Fair	41	6	15	28	85	34	83
Haltwhistle Carnival	42	7	27	19	73	26	62
Glendale Festival	41	1	5	20	95	21	51
Total	163	20	19	85	81	105	64

Out of a total of 163 visitors interviewed, 105 (64%) were local residents of which 20 (19%) participated. In contrast, 85 (81%) of these local visitors had no participatory role in the festival.

Table 7.7 Visitors' participatory role in the operation of the festival if resident ›10 miles from host town/village

Festival Visitors n = 163	Visitors per festival	Resident ›10 miles from host town/village n = 58					
Festival	n	Participating Role		No participating role		Total non local Visitors	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Morpeth Gathering	39	1	7	14	93	15	38
Ovingham Goose Fair	41	0	0	7	100	7	17
Haltwhistle Carnival	42	4	25	12	75	16	38
Glendale Festival	41	0	0	20	100	20	49
Total	163	5	9	53	91	58	36

Amongst the 58 visitors who resided more than 10 miles from the festival (non-locals) only 5 (9%) participated with 53 (91%) being non-participants.

Out of all 163 visitors interviewed, 25 (15%) had a role or participated in some way while 138 (85%) did not participate. Further analysis of the data was made to determine whether participation in the festival contributed to a sense of belonging and greater connectivity with the host place. Each visitor (n = 163) interviewed was

asked the question as to whether the festival made them feel a part of their town/village. The positive responses to this latter question, from the 25 visitors who participated in their respective festivals, were compared with the number of positive responses from the 138 visitors with no participating role (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8 Visitor responses to the question of whether the festival contributes to feeling part of host town/village (by category of participating or no participating role in the festival)

Festival Visitors	Visitors per festival	Participating role Visitors		Positive response participating role Visitors		No participating role Visitors		Positive response no participating role Visitors		Total giving positive response	
Festival	n	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Morpeth Gathering	39	7	18	4	57	32	82	18	56	22	56
Ovingham Goose Fair	41	6	15	6	100	35	85	25	71	31	76
Haltwhistle Carnival	42	11	26	8	73	31	74	25	81	33	79
Glendale Festival	41	1	2	0	0	40	80	35	88	35	85
Total	163	25	15	18	72	138	85	103	75	121	74

In conclusion, whether visitors actively participated or not appeared to make marginal difference to feelings of belonging. Of those 25 visitors who actively participated, 72% responded positively while 75% of passive visitors responded positively. HC had the greatest number of actively participating visitors (11 or 26%) while MG had seven (18%) visitors who had a role in the festival. At OGF six (15%) visitors had some role of active participation in the event. GF had the least number of visitors (one or 2%) who played an active participatory role.

Key figure respondents were also asked whether they participated in an active, operational way in the festival and if so, what they gained from this. They too were asked if the festival contributed to a sense of belonging. Their quantitative, positive responses were recorded, as in Table 7.8, by comparison of having a participating role or no participating role in the festival. The findings are illustrated in Table 7.9. The qualitative comments made by the key figures outline the capacity in which they participate and the motivation behind their involvement.

Table 7.9 Key figure responses to the contribution of the festival to a sense of belonging (by category of participating or no participating role in the festival)

Festival Key figures	Total festival Key figures	Participating role Key figures	Positive response participating role	No participating role	Positive response no participating role	Total giving positive response
Festival	n	n	n	n	n	n
Morpeth Gathering	4	3	1	1	1	2
Ovingham Goose Fair	4	2	2	2	2	4
Haltwhistle Carnival	4	3	3	1	1	4
Glendale Festival	4	4	4	0	0	4
Total	16	12	10	4	4	14

Table 7.9 demonstrates that of the 12 key figures who had actively participated at some point in the life of their festival, 10 (83%) stated a positive response to festival contribution to belonging. When asked to specify, n=5 of the 10 key figures who gave positive responses, stated they participated as a member of a group (including community groups, a band, Chamber of Trade, a school or as a councillor) and n=5 stated they participated as individuals *for the community* (KFs MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). Passive participation also contributes to a positive response to festival contribution to belonging. Where key figure participation was passive (n=4), the response was 100% positive to the festival's contribution to a sense of belonging. This suggests that opportunities to participate, and visiting the festival in a non-participatory role, are important contributors to a positive sense of belonging.

Key figure respondents also commented on the participatory nature of the festivals for those visiting. At HC, the event was perceived as highly participatory; *you can't be a spectator alone, because of the interaction with people going by on the streets, it's not just a passive event* (KF HC, 2013). In contrast, MG and GF key figures suggested that elements of their respective festivals were *more like performances, more for spectating than participating* (KF MG, 2013).

Across all focus groups there were varied comments relating to the importance of the participatory nature of festivals. These included opportunities for creative participation (making floats at HC, and costumes and parade articles at OGF), and social opportunities to get involved at MG, OGF and GF. The MG focus group suggested they would be more inclined to visit the festival if they participated. The group gave

examples of other events where they took part, and thus enjoyed it and felt greater connections to the event. GF focus group described *sharing what's happening* whilst both focus groups at OGF stressed the need for events which gave opportunities to participate in society. OGF focus group1 discussed the changes which had occurred in the work place and impact on communities; [There's a] *need to get together – even more so now, different now we don't work with the people we're neighbours with. Maybe these events are trying to get people together to make other people have fun* (FG1 OGF, 2013). Respondents at OGF focus group2 suggested that they *feel there's more of a need of something which brings people out to meet other people and get involved today, what with computers, tv etc*. (FG2 OGF, 2013).

7.5.2   *Informal Social Connections*

Evidence was sought as to whether festivals provide informal opportunities to reinforce social bonds (between existing friends and neighbours) and additionally, whether they build bridges (between elements of the community which would otherwise remain apart). In addition, analysis occurred as to whether festivals provide an informal setting for external visitors and incomers to the host town/village to interact socially and form new relationships.

When asked to comment on any evidence perceived concerning individual friendships made through the festivals, the organisers at HC and MG commented positively. The HC organiser remarked on opportunities for incomers to the town to make friends: *Yes, there's friendships in the new estates. People that moved here just recently, helps break the ice and to become part of the community. Get together to make a float* (Org HC, 2013). In contrast, the OGF and GF organisers stated they had no evidence of increased individual friendships.

Visitors were asked to consider if the festival was a social event and if so, whether this was predominantly to meet up with existing friends, to make new friends or both. Their responses are recorded in Table 7.10, illustrating that 100% of visitors to OGF, HC and GF, and 87% of MG visitors, considered the festival a social event.

Table 7.10 Festival visitors who responded positively to whether the festival was a social event divided by categories of potential friendship opportunities

Festival	Total Visitors per festival	Number of Visitors replying to question	Number of Visitors responding positively	Meet existing friends	Make new friends	Both
Morpeth Gathering	39	39	34	6	6	24
Ovingham Goose Fair	41	40	40	13	4	24
Haltwhistle Carnival	42	41	41	15	2	24
Glendale Festival	41	40	40	6	7	27
Total	163	160	155	40	19	99

Of the 155 (95%) visitors who responded positively to the festival as a social event, 40 (26%) stated the festival made opportunities to meet up with existing friends, 19 (12%) stated the opportunity to make new friends and 99 (64%) stated both. Regarding the informal opportunities to meet people, comments referred to the opportunities to interact with non-festival goers on the high street and *outside the usual social sphere* (Visitor HC, 2013).

Responses from key figures and focus group members regarding the potential of the event as an informal meeting place varied considerably between respondents and the respective festivals. At MG, the event was considered structured and formal rather than informal, with much of its format consisting of organised competitions and performances. As a result of this, opportunities to meet friends were considered more likely to occur between participants or performers, rather than between visitors in an informal setting. MG key figures suggested that new, bridged friendships were likely to occur rather than opportunities to meet up with existing friends or family members. OGF key figure respondents perceived their festival to have a positive impact on renewed friendships (bonds) but stated that although new friendships (bridges) could be made, this was not something they consciously associated with the festival.

Neither MG focus group, nor OGF focus group1, identified their respective festivals as opportunities for informal social connections. Although both these groups expressed an interest in festivals generally for social opportunities, neither group perceived their local event as something with which they could connect. Neither focus group had much interaction with their respective festival attributable, at least in part, to age

demographic at MG group (as discussed in section 5.3.2), and to a lack of perceived local connection at OGF focus group 1 (see section 7.4.2).

Contrastingly, the OGF2, HC and GF focus groups did perceive their specific festivals as social events, particularly for bridging connections, commenting on them being *good for newcomers* (FGs OGF2 and HC, 2013) and *good for reaching out to the wider community* (FG GF, 2013). Similarly, all HC and GF key figure respondents remarked upon the casual, relaxed atmosphere of the day, where *it's easy to talk* (KF HC, 2013) and where:

> *For one day of the year we can walk down the street and mingle with local folk and there's a lot of people together in one day and there's a chance to chat to people. Also in a space without traffic, in the high street; a chance to own the place spatially* (KF GF, 2013).

These contributing factors helped to create an informal meeting place and within that opportunities to bond and make bridges.

Factors of entertainment and enjoyment are important elements of all the festivals which make a considerable contribution to providing an informal meeting place and to which frequent referrals were made. All interviewee categories referred in many ways to the "fun factor", perhaps best summed up in the words of the GF organiser: *it's got to be entertaining or the festival will fail* (Org GF, 2012).

7.5.3   Formal Social Connections

Festivals provide both informal and formal opportunities for social connections. More formal forms of connections arise through the various groups and organisations represented, opportunities to interact prior to, during and after the event and through festival organised activities. Putnam (2001; 2003) has described the benefits of belonging to both formal and informal groups as enhanced belonging, the development of trust, engagement and interaction (section 2.5.6). Evidence of group interaction and involvement and perceived democratic representation of groups at the festival was sought through questions addressed to organisers, key figures and focus groups. Visitor interview responses were coded for remarks concerning group interactions. Organisers stated that *local group involvement* (Orgs MG, OGF, GF, 2012; Org HC, 2013) was the intention of the festival although in the case of MG *local* referred to the wider locale of Northumberland. Organisers at both OGF and HC firmly

expressed the intention to represent local groups and felt that a broad representation was achieved (Figure 7.11). The OGF organiser (2012) stated, *I think almost every organisation in the village is involved*, whilst the HC organiser (2013) said, *I can't think of any group that's not represented, as either a float or during the week*.

Figure 7.4 Local groups participate in the procession of floats,
Haltwhistle Carnival, 2012 (Black, 2012).

Many of the visitors interviewed acknowledged the opportunities at their event for gaining *awareness of local groups and what's on* (Visitor OGF, 2013) and for *opportunities to join local groups and get involved. The local factories give people time off to join in with the float* making (Visitor HC, 2013). Visitors also described how the promotion of local groups and the opportunities to join them were *a shop window* (Visitor MG, 2013) and enabled community participation outside the event. Local visitors were more able to recognise potential within the festival for formal social connections to continue beyond the festival. Locals suggested this was owing to their wider knowledge of, and motivation for, opportunities for community participation beyond the event whilst non-local visitors in contrast made comments typical of the following; *it's not relevant to me* or *I'd probably find things if I lived here* (non-local Visitors GF, 2013).

Key figure respondents at all festivals also affirmed the opportunities given at the festival for the promoting and strengthening of groups. Specific comments related to *collaboration between groups* (KF MG, 2013), *providing a positive role model for teens*

(KF OGF, 2013), *a good cross section of community groups* (KF HC, 2013) and the *affirmation of group status* (KF GF, 2013). GF key figures commented upon the event's capacity to be inclusive and cross boundaries through the groups involved; *it's inclusive to me. It can draw in exclusive groups which I see as significant as the festival crosses a barrier, it's an invitation to all to get involved* (KF GF, 2013). This was however, influenced by the degree of local group representation (section 7.4.2). The opportunities to develop connections with groups were perceived to increase with greater local representation. HC key figures referred to a high representation of local groups and emphasised the interconnectedness between these groups. Contrastingly, MG key figures suggested that few group connections occurred owing to a lack of local group participation.

The majority of visitor responses regarding opportunities to engage with groups at a festival were positive, emphasising *the chance to get involved* (Visitor HC, 2013) and *chances to join in with the village* (Visitor OGF, 2013). These were important for the groups (through the strengthening of membership, promotion of aims and activities) and for the individuals; many respondents referred to being able to gain local social connections and develop new skills and experiences. The most frequent response given by respondents (all categories), as to how they might continue connections formed at the festival, was by *joining a group* which provided activities and meeting points beyond the event. As all festivals were of short duration, group participation provided the potential for prolonged social connections, a link between the temporality of the event and the continuous life of the host community.

Visitor, key figure and focus group respondents gave other examples of opportunities for connectivity through the festival, including opportunities to participate in activities/groups linked to the festivals beyond the day of the event. The number and percentage of positive responses are illustrated in Table 7.11.

Table 7.11 Visitor, key figure and focus group positive responses to festival opportunities to engage in activities beyond the event itself

Festival respondent category	Total respondents per category	Positive response to question	
	n	n	%
Visitors	163	122	75
Key Figures	16	9	56
Focus Groups	37	22	59
Total	216	153	94

The majority of examples given of opportunities to engage in activities outside the festival referred to pre-event activities in the build-up to the event. However, while 75% of visitors, 56% of key figures and 59% of focus groups participants stated that these opportunities existed, responses appeared to vary between different festivals. Varied perceptions of opportunities in turn appeared to impact on perceptions of ease of involvement and connectivity. There appeared more opportunities for pre-event involvement at HC (with float preparation and fundraising; *there's excitement in the build-up for weeks* (KF HC, 2013)) and, though to a lesser extent, at MG. The GF was perceived as more of an isolated event with visitors stating that there were *not many opportunities to participate beyond the event itself* (Visitors GF, 2013).

At OGF, whilst respondents across all categories gave a limited recall of opportunities for pre-event involvement, responses suggested the importance of the preparation and participation around the festival. The OGF focus groups commented variously on how *the build-up is important for making connections and participating for non-financial reasons and other rewards. Preparation brings people* together (FG2 OGF, 2013) while OGF focus group1 described how participation over time lent a greater sense of commitment and connection and *could lead to a greater sense of ownership and care for the place* (FG1 OGF, 2013).

7.5.4   Commonality and Togetherness

This section examines specific references within the data to aspects of connectivity which determine a sense of commonality or togetherness within the case study festivals. Respondents were asked to comment on positive perceptions of togetherness, and also to consider any perceptions of festival impact upon the community which might create division or exclusion.

The organisers, when asked if it was an aim of the festival to encourage community engagement, replied affirmatively at OGF, HC and GF with MG stating that, although not an aim as such, the event was evolving that way. The OGF organiser (2012) commented *it's a day when there's a feeling of unity, even after three horrendous years of rain people still turn up. It consolidates community*. The GF Organiser (2012) commented on the ability of the festival to improve the local networks: *it does improve*

networking. People who only know each other to look at, it certainly promotes networks and contacts.

Although negative remarks concerning social connections were few in number, each case study revealed some evidence of an antisocial impact connected to the event. At MG, OGF and GF there were several comments that the commonality of the event was dependent upon the people involved: *it only connects to a minority* (KF MG, 2013); *it will never be for everybody* (KF OGF, 2013); *it's up to you* (KF GF, 2013). Some comments suggested that the event could be divisive, suggesting some festival activities *alienate aspects of the community* (Visitors OGF, 2013) and that because of this *locals may stay away* (Visitors MG, 2013). The suggestion of exclusion or cliques was apparent at GF; *the first year it* [the festival] *happened they didn't ask permission, they stepped on a few toes. They're not locals, it's a clique* (KF GF, 2013). At MG, a key figure suggested that *the festival creates its own community* (KF MG, 2013). HC key figure and focus group respondents commented on the potential for the festivals to *keep people away* through the rowdy behaviour accompanying the festival and the quantity of alcohol consumed: *lots of people don't like it. Due to the drinking and the history of the fights in the evenings* (KF HC, 2013). Overall, it must be emphasised that the majority of respondents made either no negative remarks or referred to minor interruptions to daily life (temporary street closure, parking issues) rather than any more lasting impact.

There was a very wide spread range of comments from all interview categories which referred to a sense of community togetherness enhanced by the festival. While many of these positive remarks were repeated by respondents across all the case studies, the following were emphasised at individual events. At MG, a sense of togetherness was expressed through *bringing people into town* (Visitors and KFs MG, 2013) and a feeling that the festival did *contribute to common cohesion* (KF MG, 2013). OGF respondents drew attention to a sense of togetherness, *all parts of the village engage* (Visitor OGF, 2013), with one interviewee expressing that *I do believe it's part of the social cohesion of the area, the fact that folks do come together like that* (KF OGF, 2013). At HC the festival was compared to Christmas: *it does bring people together even just for that one day and that brings togetherness. Rather like Christmas, brings that sense of togetherness* (KF HC, 2013), whilst another response noted that the

festival *gives them a sense of involvement, even if they're fighting they're still getting involved* (KF HC, 2013). An *active commonality* (KF HC, 2013) was mentioned and a sense was conveyed of *needing it* and *depending on it* within the community.

Respondents at GF referred to *a common foundation* and *pulling together* (Visitors GF, 2013), seen as being particularly important in a rural place. Remarks included how the festival provided *one day of mingling together* (Visitor GF, 2013); *it is about togetherness: it's one of them days when everyone comes out and mingles together and you see them all talking together. On the actual day it makes the community come together* (KF GF, 2013). One remark considered the festival as contributing to the fabric of the place *like a weaver, maybe putting more threads in to make the cloth stronger. There's a need for a statement of commonality and the festival provides an opportunity for this* (KF GF, 2013). Other GF respondents suggested it *provided a social glue* (KF GF, 2013), and that *they all go*, *from every road, bound to know someone* (FG GF, 2013)*.* Comments also referred to *needing* and *depending* on the festival to keep the town together (Visitors GF, 2013).

7.6 **Summary**

It is argued that the case study festivals exhibited positive potential for connectivity. Regarding the connections made through festival heritage, this predominantly occurred through the processes of holding an event as opposed to heritage content, enabling a greater sense of belonging through these processes. The social connections enabled through the festivals were perceived as contributing to a greater understanding of the community, connecting to its roots and traditions as displayed at a festival. However, contestation of the authenticity of certain festival traditions could bring division within communities through perceived ownership and a need for preservation on the one part, and a desire to adapt on the other.

The festivals were shown to make connections with the host place, through providing the opportunity to identify with the image of the place conveyed through the event. This enhanced a feeling of belonging and aided in the 'construction of identity [which] involves developing a relationship with place' (Hannon and Curtin, 2009:126). The events could contribute to perceptions of being an "insider" within a 'specific socio-cultural space' through the festivals' ability to connect to culture and place in

combination (Hage, 2006:1). Respondents provided evidence that the festivals contributed to a sense of place, particularly emphasising the desirability of promoting localness and of enabling connections and a sense of togetherness within the local community. These were seen as contributing to strengthening existing bonds, creating new internal bonds and bridging opportunities to engage external visitors and incomers to the events, although neighbourhood connections were generally low.

Participation was seen as being an important factor in festival connectivity, often occurring through a formal, organised involvement with a group. While some respondents were more reticent regarding the informal opportunities for connectivity, visitors were emphatic about the opportunities to meet up with existing, and meet new, friends. The emphasis was again on the need for localness. The degree to which a festival community was perceived as achieving localness impacted upon its ability to connect, and the levels of bonds and bridges enabled. The sense of commonality and togetherness which the festival contributed to was widely recognised, although minor levels of anti-social or negative impact were recorded. In balance, the negative impact was outweighed by the sense of "pulling together" which the majority of responses implied.

Connectivity is influenced by the longevity and scale of the festival and respective impact of these variables on consistency and innovation. Comparative levels of longevity and scale within the case study festivals are considered within Chapter 8 with a discussion presented drawing together the data from this and the previous analysis chapters to consider the potential impact of festivals upon their host community social sustainability.

8   Chapter 8. Indicators of Social Sustainability within Small-scale Rural Festivals

8.1   **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the impact of the four case study festivals upon the social sustainability of their host communities, grounding the findings in the theories discussed in the literature review. Social sustainability refers to the connective qualities within a community, including the responsibilities as well as the personal advantages to well-being that connectivity entails. A socially sustainable community may be summarised as one in which the majority of its members experience a sense of well-being, a positive cognitive evaluation and assessment of life (Deiner, 2009; Phipps and Slater, 2010). Taken within Max-Neef's (1991:18) concept of sustainable development it is an important component of a community in which, by and large, the 'universal human needs' of its members are satisfied.

The evidence in the literature, including that of the aforementioned authors, suggests that social sustainability is desirable, even a requirement, within a community. This chapter argues that a small-scale cultural festival can contribute to sustainability and contribute to the community's collective well-being. The data shows this is achieved through the bringing or enhancing of connections with heritage, with place and between individuals and groups of people, further supporting the literature which refers to this potential (Gursoy, 2004; Robertson *et al.*, 2009).

In addition, the literature implies that social, and alongside it cultural, sustainability can only be achieved through a balance of consistency and innovation, allowing for a stable framework within which to allow change and adaptation to address human needs (Max-Neef, 1991; Sachs, 1999). The festival data supported theoretical frameworks for social sustainability through findings that a combination of consistent opportunities to connect must be in balance with innovative and culturally adaptable ways of making connections. A more comprehensive methodological explanation of how these principles were identified is given in section 4.2.

It is proposed that, in order to demonstrate contribution to social sustainability, a festival must:

    a. contribute to community localness and pride
    b. enhance knowledge and understanding
    c. contribute to the continuity of local culture
    d. enable networks of connectivity

The seeming simplicity of the four indicators belies the complexity of each individual festival situation. Each community of place and of interest is unique, bringing with it multiple variations within the members of each community and within the responses both from and to the festival. Yet despite their variations, festivals share common traits as participatory and celebratory events within their communities. They may thus contribute to the satisfying of 'fundamental human needs [which] are finite, few and classifiable [...], the same in all cultures and all historical periods' (Max-Neef, 1991:18).

This chapter is subdivided by these four indicators (sections 8.2 to 8.5) and draws together the data analysed in chapters 5, 6 and 7, presenting evidence from within the host communities that small-scale, rural festivals contribute in many and varied ways to the social sustainability of their communities (Aim 3). Evidence gathered in Northumberland showed that, aside from the continuous events, festivals were created, re-established and ended during that time period. Section 8.6 considers the impact of varying longevity upon the ability of an event to contribute to community social sustainability (Aim 4). In addition, this section assesses evidence of strategic influence upon the case study festivals (both financial and logistical support, at origin and ongoing) and considers the intentions behind these strategies. It considers the evidence within the case studies to suggest that smaller, community based festivals are only marginally influenced by strategic decision makers and consequentially, how this affects festival impact upon social sustainability. The chapter closes with a summary of its contents in section 8.7.

8.2   **Contributions to Community Localness and Pride**

The first principle indicator by which a festival contributes to the sustainability of its host community is through contributing to a sense of localness and pride associated with belonging. For a community to have a sense of localness the individuals which

make up that community must share a sense of affinity in recognising what is local culture, where it is sourced and share a sense of its accessibility (section 3.3.5). The local culture of a festival hosting town/village predominantly includes the products and processes associated with a community of place, directly linked to the individuals and groups who reside, work or participate in that place. There may be cultural links beyond the geographical boundary of the place through the wider community of interest which a festival creates. Whilst there is evidence that festivals make cultural connections both within and beyond a geographical place boundary, as Duffy and Waitt (2011) have explored, the evidence found within this research data suggests that a sense of localness is primarily based within a boundary of proximity to place.

8.2.1 *Contributing to a Sense of Localness*

Including local content in a festival was repeatedly emphasised by respondents as being instrumental in keeping local culture alive and contributing to the appeal of the festival to local visitors. As authors such as Edwards (2011) and Quinn and Wilks (2013) have implied, including local resources and reflecting local identities and culture contributes to the social stability of a place. There was a strong desire amongst interviewees for the festival to be seen to demonstrate a sense of place, a "snap-shot" of the town/village with displays of local products and organisations.

Although this desire was apparent amongst all interviewee categories, the perception of how successfully festivals display this sense of localness varies between the groups. In particular, there are discrepancies between the organisers (who are predominantly responsible for selecting the content) and the non-organising interviewees (key figures, visitors and focus groups). Some interviewees from the latter categories failed to perceive the level of localness which the organisers envisage in their respective events. Factors which contribute to these conflicting perceptions include knowledge of the festival and, in particular, the individual standpoint of an interviewee regarding what constitutes localness. If the interviewee recognises a group or participant in the festival, then his or her response to that sense of localness is more positive. This is perceived at each festival where interviewees referred by name to stalls or performers as being present or absent.

Geographical localness is important, for the opportunity to engage with the locale and connect to activities and groups being held locally, and to strengthen the identity of the festival through display of place-based culture. Derrett (2005) suggests that support and contributions from local stakeholders may help sustain the festivals themselves. Rose (2002) considers the impact festivals make towards people's sense of place through displaying geographically local culture. Perceptions of localness are influenced by the perceived openness and accessibility of the organisational committee, including whether its members are considered insiders (locals) or outsiders (non-locals). The opportunities to participate (in the organising or display of the event) also influence how respondents consider the localness of the festival.

Consistent elements of the festivals, annual repetition of date, place and elements of the format, contribute to the sense of localness through earning the festival a place in the local community. The repetition of set patterns and practices within the festival implies continuity with the past whether as invented traditions or customary practices. Through providing a consistent link with the past, the purpose, as Hobsbawm (2013:12) states, is to 'legitimate action and cement group cohesion'. This supports Derrett's (2005) findings that the temporary and annual frequency of this type of event contributes to community relevance and contemporary responsiveness. Festivals are described as being *part of the fabric of the place* (KF MG, 2013), reflecting changes in the local cultural dynamic and contributing to a positive, sometimes tacit, image of the place.

The festivals become part of the local identity through their consistent recurrence and yet respondents are keen to emphasis the dangers of an event becoming too consistent. References are made to the time gap between events as being long enough to work on new ideas (renew energy to participate) and yet not long enough to repeat things and become complacent. Without elements of innovation in the form of new content and some changes to the format, there is evidence that festivals would lose their audiences. However, respondents stated that it is important that the origins of the innovation emanate from within the locale and that the scale of change is not too great, as this could lead to disengagement and feelings of detachment from the locale. Innovation within the local cultural content has the potential to challenge perceptions

of insularity and stereotypes associated with small, rural towns, thus seen as a positive contributory factor to local identity by some interviewees.

8.2.2 *Contributing to Community Pride*

The festivals contribute to the social sustainability of their communities through enhancing shared pride in the locale. The recognition of localness in the festivals is associated with an increased sense of belonging and place attachment. Respondents refer to this as contributing to a sense of pride, predominantly expressed in place-based terms. The festivals are described as showing-off the town/village, being beneficial and necessary for the place and in marking the unique or special qualities of the locale.

The inherited processes involved in holding a festival are important contributors to creating a sense of community pride. Within the interview data, many references are made to an occasion for this inheritance, through coming together and reminiscing, and through the opportunities to learn and participate in the event. These opportunities are enabled through a combination of consistent and therefore anticipated elements of the festival. Derrett (2003) refers to this as a reflective opportunity to exchange stories and memories associated with the event and/or the place. Consistency through the longevity of a festival is also identified as contributing to community pride.

Increased pride, associated through the festival with place, strengthens bonds between locals and can enhance territorial attitudes within a community. There is evidence that, in the words of one focus group member, *you support your own* (FG1 OGF, 2013). There are some negative perceptions of festivals as being territorial, or exclusively for locals, primarily amongst focus group respondents who never or infrequently visited the festivals. The respondents who visited the festivals showed in contrast, less perception of territoriality. Pride in place and community through the festival is more commonly emphasised through expressions of desiring to "show the festival" to visitors, particularly the younger generation. The pride created through a feeling of ownership or enhanced belonging is translated into opportunity to share the positive sense of place created through the event. Community pride, although associated with a territory or bounded place in a geographical or administrative sense

(the village/town boundary), crosses beyond the fluid boundaries of the festival (Delanty, 2005; Fabiani, 2011) and is a positive contributor to sustainability.

8.3   Enhancing Knowledge and Understanding

Festivals contribute to the social sustainability of their host communities through the enhancing of knowledge and understanding of the culture associated with the place where they are held. As the MG organiser states, *the event can overcome ignorance of the culture* (Org MG, 2012). Fabiani (2011) and Delanty (2011) in particular, highlight the potentially inclusive and cosmopolitan nature of festive events regarding opportunities for knowledge exchange. Through their varied forms and content festivals contribute to a 'more democratic, locally representative understanding of community' (Dicks, 2000:96). Derrett (2005) refers to the ability of festivals to more readily transfer and share power amongst stakeholders through a broader range of culture on display.

The evidence within the interview data predominantly corroborates this notion of democratic cultural display. The transfer and enhancement of knowledge, through both formal and informal means and between a wide range of groups and individuals, occurs at the festivals on a variety of levels, contributing to a 'socially shared understanding which provides a framework to enable the functioning of groups in an environment' (Fiske and Fiske, 2007:284). These include opportunities to enhance understanding in the build-up, during and after the event.

 An internal, bonded sense of understanding and knowledge exchange occurs through predominantly informal means. In addition, the inclusion of more formal means of purveying knowledge provides outsiders with bridges for understanding and relating to the host community. The opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding is enhanced through the consistent process of holding the festival, the repetition of the date and place and of some elements of the format. Figure 8.1 illustrates the younger community members at GF with their steel pan band, which is *becoming part of our heritage* (KF GF, 2013) through its repeated inclusion in the festival since the origin of the event. Introduction of more innovative means of displaying culture is an essential element in maintaining vitality and interest amongst visitors and participants, and a means through which relevant frameworks are created.

Figure 8.1 The steel pan band represents the local culture at Glendale Festival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

8.3.1 Formal Knowledge Exchange

Festival content intended to be educational or informative is predominantly linked to place, and/or heritage connected to place, in the form of both tangible and intangible culture. Examples of this include demonstrations of craft or workshops to teach cultural skills which are particularly in evidence at MG, reflecting its heritage theme and aim to transmit, promote and preserve cultural practices. Further evidence of intentional passing on of information or knowledge is found at all the case studies in the form of displays informing visitors of the activities of groups participating in the event, often with the intention of recruiting support and new members. The knowledge passed on to visitors by these groups forms part of the "shop window" on the locale, demonstrating what Picard and Robinson (2006:12) have referred to as the 'meaningful frameworks' underlying the community. The display of local organisations and groups undoubtedly provides knowledge on what is available locally for the community or place-based community information.

Alongside these local groups, all festivals studied have participating groups from beyond the immediate town/village "geographical" boundary, participating through connections of "interest" which allows for fluidity within the festival community boundary. The potential range of "voices" on display contributes to what Lavenda (1992:100) has called 'the public culture [...] a field of both political and cultural forces,

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constituted by events satisfying different tastes and subject to the play of varying interests'. This mix of content attests to what Bowen (2013) describes as the positive potential of festivals for multi-level exchange. This arguably provides knowledge exchange at both a bonded, more localised level and at a bridged level to extend connections beyond the limitations of the immediate locale. As Putnam (2000) argues, a socially sustainable community needs both bonds and bridges: the exchange of knowledge through both these avenues is important and is evident in each of the case study festivals.

The range of participants involved in the festivals correspondingly caters for a broad range of interests and opens access points for a variety of people, supporting the aforementioned findings of Lavenda (1992) and Picard and Robinson (2006). However, despite the undeniable influence of the visitors and of the funders and supporters (strategic or non-strategic), the inspiration and motivation to select and provide that knowledge through the participants lies predominantly with the organisers. The power of the festival organisational committees, and the perception of these committees within their communities, is therefore significant in how democratic and inclusive these events are perceived to be, particularly with regard to the information they purvey and the understanding of the community they represent.

There is some discrepancy between the perceptions of the organisers and non-organisers (key figures, visitors and focus groups) regarding the role of the festival to promote local knowledge and educational opportunities about the place-based traditional and contemporary culture. Whilst organisers believe they provide some educational opportunities (including skills inheritance and development) through their respective festivals (sections 5.2.2 and 6.3.3), visitors, key figures and focus groups are less convinced of these opportunities. Visitors in particular imply that the festivals are missing an opportunity to promote knowledge about their local area, particularly with regard to heritage. Dominant perceptions of heritage, equated with an often finite past and predominantly with tangible content over intangible processes, appear to interfere with festival goers' ability to recognise the link to local culture on display. Although the organisers, in selecting the cultural content, are aware of the link, gaps exist in conveying that link to the audience, in particular the local visitor.

In order to best communicate the connections or links between community and festival content, there needs to be a two-way flow of information between the organisers and the community. Evidence within the interview data implies that the level of change and adaptability within the committees influences community perceptions of inclusiveness and accessibility within a committee. An open and responsive committee is perceived as engaging with as wide a range of the host community as possible, and as a committee less likely to be overshadowed by *dominant personalities* or be *cliquey* (KFs OGF and GF, 2013). Perceptions of organisational stasis or domination by strong personalities can lead to feelings of exclusivity, resistance to new ideas or innovation and risks alienating certain sectors of the community. This in turn diminishes collective exchange of understanding within the host community, expressed through feelings of inability to participate.

In contrast, a level of organisational change appears to earn regard from key figure and visitor respondents, whether that change is the involvement of incomers or younger members. This contributes to a more accessible committee, more responsive to the needs of the community. New committee members may introduce new interpretations and adaptations of local culture, in contemporary form or as a reinterpretation of heritage in the 'process of active identity making and remaking' (Smith, 2006:274). Respondents describe these adaptations as the educational opportunities at the festivals, stimulating interest from both visitors and participants to engage.

8.3.2   Informal Knowledge Exchange

A significant proportion of the knowledge exchanged and opportunities for enhanced understanding of the community takes place informally. Festivals are sites where stories are swapped and memories transferred and where much of the content is motivated with the intent of entertaining the audience and of a celebratory nature. The contribution of these performances, displays and social exchanges to cultural and place knowledge is often implied as a secondary or subconscious addition rather than the raison d'être. The interviewees widely acknowledge the importance of these informal means of gaining information and understanding although the responses vary as to the impact upon the recipients of the knowledge.

Organisers at each festival state that they believe the festivals contribute primarily to understanding of the locale through community consolidation and integration rather than through formal, educational displays of culture. All visitors felt that the festivals pass on knowledge about the locale, although the majority of visitors believe they personally learnt little about the place through the festival, particularly if they reside within ten miles proximity of the event. Visitors interviewed suggest that information is passed primarily to outside visitors and through the transfer of cultural information to a younger generation. The intergenerational sharing of knowledge and cultural links are frequently mentioned by interviewees when referring to increased understanding which the festival contributed to. The events are described as *reference points for a community* (KF GF, 2013) which could help explain the vagaries of local living and, as Gibson and Stewart (2009) found, enhance place understanding to outsiders, incomers and young members of the community whilst maintaining levels of interest amongst local residents.

Referring again to the temporal and annual nature of each case study festival, respondents from each event describe the importance of the yearly and short-term nature of the event with regard to enhancing knowledge and understanding. The annual recurrence provides a level of stability, a consistent occasion to share memories and stories amongst participants and visitors alike. Organisers refer to the annual repetition of certain skills and demonstrations as being important in reinforcing local knowledge, particularly of heritage culture. The temporary nature of the event in turn provides opportunities for reinterpretations of the local culture and allows for adaptation to cultural change, described by Larson (2009:289) as a form of innovation. This reinforces the need for both consistent connections, with place and the place culture, and opportunities to adapt and innovate within a socially sustainable community.

8.4   Continuity of Local Culture

The continuation of local culture infers a community's heritage. Festivals consist of many displays and performances, some of which carry heritage value, 'the living expressions and traditions inherited by communities and transmitted to their descendants' (UNESCO, 2003). In contributing to social sustainability festivals act as a

platform for cultural survival through providing a consistent opportunity for this cultural display, participation and engagement. The interactive, "living" demonstration of local culture is important to emphasise with the capacity for adaptation and innovation within the more constant framework. The perception of a consistent link with previous cultural forms, as manifested through the repeated staging of a festival, is identified as an important contributor to a sustainable community. However, recognition of the linking processes, between contemporary and past cultural forms, may be hampered through a failure to recognise aspects of change and innovation within these forms.

8.4.1   Perceptions of Heritage as Representing Local Culture

It is apparent from the data that perceptions of heritage amongst respondents are problematic and appear at odds with the UNESCO (2003) notion of heritage as providing continuity (section 5.2.1). A narrative emerged in the interview findings which equates heritage with what Duarte (2010:856-8) calls a 'dominant preservationist norm' associated with things finite and historic. Although respondents' perceptions change as the interviews proceed, the initial equation of heritage with the past suggests that many of the cultural scopes and expressions of creativity within the festival communities are not primarily or explicitly recognised as heritage. The implication of this finding points to a potential failure to acknowledge much of the inherent heritage processes within the festivals.

Duvignaud (1976) refers to the part festivals play in providing cultural and historical continuity. Despite a general consensus amongst interviewees that heritage help to keep culture alive, many of these interviewees fail to identify heritage content within their respective festivals. The preservationist interpretation of heritage appears dominant particularly amongst visitors and focus groups who, where they identify festival heritage content, refer to predominantly historical elements (as for example, the traditional craft illustrated in Figure 8.2). Festival heritage is also equated with tradition, a view which the majority of organisers adhere to. This is seen as a positive attribute, driven within the community by the desire for the festivals to recover a "traditional", arguably idealised, form of community which has been "lost".

Figure 8.2 Traditional craft on display at the Morpeth Gathering, 2012 (Black, 2012).

Delanty (2010:7) notes that 'the modern discourse of community has been dominated by a theme of loss'. It is arguable that this contributes to the preservationist perception of heritage which dominates an understanding of what the festival represents. Many interviewees comment that heritage is important for the continuity of their community and feel that the festivals could do more to transmit local cultural heritage, particularly emphasising a return to a more traditional format and through display of more historical links. It may be argued that, where a festival has a consistent existence within the community, the process of staging it is, in itself, part of the local tradition and community heritage. The festival processes are the means through which aspects of local culture are inherited from year to year.

There is potential for these processes to go unacknowledged as part of the community heritage and in turn, a failure to consider them as important contributions to the continuity of local culture. The predominant focus of respondents on tangible festival heritage content, despite identifying heritage within the festival processes during the latter stages of the interviews, contributes to this lack of acknowledgement.

8.4.2 Processes of Continuing the Local Culture within the Festivals

Despite the lack of (particularly, initial) recognition of heritage within the processes of staging or holding festivals, many respondents refer to the festivals as important for the continuation of local culture. Respondents, whether as an organiser, performer or visitor, emphasise the social elements of participation in the event as critical elements

of cultural continuity. To cite from the interviews, the festivals are described as being *part of the town*, as *markers in the local calendar*, as *part of what you do here*, forming a *common foundation* through the event (various interviewees, all festivals). In particular, the timing and location of the festival and key aspects of the process of the event are perceived as significant and *set in stone* (FG1 OGF, 2013). Visiting the festival is seen in itself as part of the local culture.

All the case study festivals display a percentage of local organisations and groups representative of the host town/village. The event is seen as an important opportunity to gather these groups together as a "shop window" on the locale, where membership is offered benefiting both the individuals visiting the festival and the survival of the groups displayed. Festivals have been described as 'cosmopolitan' (Delanty, 2011:196) and 'non-elitist' (Rose, 2002:99), implying accessibility to a broad range of the community. Cross generational connections, the passing on of local knowledge and sharing of memories, experiences and skills are all cited as contributing to cultural continuity. Evidence within the data predominantly supports this, though difficulties are expressed in attracting the teenage/young adult sector of the community.

The balance of consistency and innovation in the process of hosting a festival is a critical component of continuing local culture. Over consistency is seen by some respondents as *a negative* [...] *the same each year* (KF MG, 2013). There appears a demand for certain new or creative elements for, as Finkel (2006) and Larson (2009) observe, a lack of innovation can be stultifying and lead to a declining audience. Interviewees from all categories suggest that innovative processes need to be relevant and not arbitrary; too many changes or inconsistencies with previous events can lead to feelings of disconnection between the festival and the community. Innovative elements and changes are more likely to be accepted if they are perceived to be authentic or connected in some way to the festival, whether that is linking to place, people or heritage rather than capricious inclusion. Respondents refer to the ability of festivals to adapt to the changing nature of the community, what Derrett (2005:13) describes as 'responding to the needs of the times', stating this adaptability as being important for a continuation of the local culture.

8.4.3 *Authenticity of Local Culture*

As has been described earlier in this chapter (section 8.2), interviewees stress the importance of the localness of festival culture and consider this instrumental for its continuation. Where cultural content is perceived to be non-local or inauthentic within the festivals, comments from respondents indicate a negative impact upon connections and discontinuity of the local culture. Too little continuity or over emphasis on bringing innovation to the festival can be detrimental to its survival and acceptance within the community. Reaction to this is reflected in some of the responses which call for a return to a traditional festival model (sections 5.2.2.1 and 7.3.2). This urge for greater "traditional" elements within the festival suggests respondents desire a stronger link to the past, as being 'socially desirable […] and thought to have been handed down from generation to generation' (Vlastos, 1998:3). While the authenticity of some of these traditional elements is questioned by respondents, for example, the parade route at OGF or the inclusion of some heritage aspects at GF (section 7.3.4), and may be better described as 'invented tradition' (Hobsbawm, 2013), the perception of a recognizable connection with the past is considered important amongst interviewees.

Although many aspects of the festivals are inherited processes which have become part of the anticipated format of the festival, adaptations over time in their content (for example, the evolution of the dance into a disco at HC), mean that the majority of respondents do not value these elements of the festival as heritage. Where respondents identify festival heritage content, it is considered to have a value in contributing to the continuity of local culture, only where it is recognised as being "of the locale". In contrast, if heritage content is perceived as inauthentic or non-local, connection with place is lost (section 5.2.3).

Some respondents consider aspects of the festival content, (heritage and non-heritage content), as inauthentic, being inappropriate or disassociated from place. These respondents perceive the inclusion of this content for marketing purposes or strategically included within a regeneration framework, supporting findings by Picard and Robinson (2006) and Finkel (2009). It is apparent that interviewees believe that this content appeals to outside visitors and tourists but may dissuade some locals from

attending (sections 5.4.3.2 and 6.5.1). The inclusion of non-local heritage content may have contributed to the strategic aims of One North East (ONE) in Northumberland (Anderson, 2007) by acting as a promotional attraction for outside visitors and tourists to the festival. However, it may have achieved this at the expense of local community cohesion. Some interviewees identify that rather than contributing to the continuity of culture, inauthentic or too broadly place-specific content may cause confusion and have a negative impact on local culture (section 5.2.3). A recognisable connection to the locale is a critical aspect of the content, whether this is seen as heritage or as an innovative take on the local culture.

Respondents recognise the need to appeal to both locals and non-locals, through the content and form of the festival, but emphasise that the balance should not tip too strongly in either favour (section 5.4.3.1). This reinforces findings within the literature which suggest that over emphasis on connecting with locals (bonds), or with non-locals (bridges), may have a negative impact (Putnam, 2001; Duffy and Waitt, 2011; Edwards, 2011; Curtis, 2011).

Perceptions of inauthenticity within the festivals are not limited to externally motivated content; disputes occur between local or insider members of the communities as to what constitutes authentic or genuinely local culture (section 7.4.3). These disputes can lead to the exclusion of some parts of the community, particularly if associated with a dominant and over-powerful organisational committee (section 6.3.2). These sites of contention can arguably be seen as necessary components of cultural survival, platforms where the continuous adaptation of local culture to external and internal influences is debated, challenged and acted out. Conversely, too narrowly themed or prescribed festival content could alienate some sectors of the community, bonding certain members but excluding others.

8.5   Enable Networks of Connectivity

Humans are, by and large, social beings for whom the making of interconnections is a critical element of belonging and survival (Fiske and Fiske, 2007). These connections occur both formally and informally, through groups and institutions and through individuals and more spontaneous connections. Social connections, when considered within the definitions of a socially sustainable society, require a certain balance of

stability or consistency whilst being adaptable to change or innovation (Brundtland Commission, 1987; IUCN/UNEP/WWF, 1991).

Festivals have been described as both facilitating and depending on networks of connectivity (Derrett, 2003; Gibson and Stewart, 2009; Phipps and Slater, 2010). Evidence within the data is rich with reference to social connectivity describing the events as *reference points* for socialising, as *hubs* for connections, at individual, group and intergroup level (various interviewees, all festivals). Figure 8.3 illustrates the festival as a site for social connections at OGF.

Figure 8.3 Crowds gather on the bank-side at Ovingham Goose Fair, 2013 (Black, 2013).

 Respondents overwhelming see the events as social occasions which potentially enable both old (or established) connections to be renewed and new ones to be created, although the majority believe that the renewal of existing connections predominate. Enhanced connectivity has been stated as one of the primary intentions of the festival by three of the organisers and an additional aim by the fourth.

8.5.1   Aspects of a Festival which Enable Networks of Connectivity

The spatial and temporal consistency of a festival enables networks to develop through providing a place and time where the community can anticipate meeting up with friends, neighbours and new acquaintances. Festivals are sites of display, whether those be of 'unique, important high-end art work [or] being of and for the community' (Bowen, 2013:n.p.). Place based consistency, provided through the annual recurrence

of the event in time and in physical location, may encourage a form of 'public or private ritual […] the creation of meaningful frameworks of their being together' (Picard and Robinson, 2006:12). Festivals enable connections with place at many levels. They contribute to immediate engagement with physical spaces in which the festivities take place and also through secondary connections with those who inhabit, work in or otherwise occupy the places which host the festival. By enabling opportunities for festival goers to share memories and stories from previous festival experiences with contemporary encounters with place, the events contribute to belonging and connectedness within a host area.

The festival can connect both traditional and contemporary aspects of place, making temporal and spatial connections. As Duffy and Waitt (2011:55) state, 'the space and time of the festival is a complex site for thinking about localness and belonging'. Festivals also provide opportunities to learn about or increase understanding of place, through direct experience of local culture proffered, or through linking to more permanent local organisations or groups beyond the actual event, 'a link between global space of flows and local space of place' (Richards and de Brito, 2013:223).

Their ability to enable connective networks is influenced by both the longevity of the event and the presence of any events perceived as serving a similar or potentially rival role in the community. Rather than enabling the intertwining of networks within a community, multiple events may cause tension or exclusion within the community particularly if the events are perceived as being motivated and aimed at separate networks of people. Some evidence of this is found within two of the case studies, MG and GF, as discussed in section 5.4.2. The town of Morpeth has two annual events, the MG and the town fair. Although recognised as distinct in their own right, nevertheless underlying tensions exist between the two events. In Wooler, the town plays host to the carnival in addition to the GF. Respondents at GF refer to these two events as being very separate from each other, having quite separate networks through which the events are organised and participated in. The origin of the GF, and the perception of the organising committee, influences respondents' interpretations of these events. The carnival is referred to as having a bonded, insider network of local inhabitants, whereas the GF is perceived as being organised by incomers and reaching out to a

wider network. Perceptions as to whether the GF enable social connections are more polarised, suggestive of a separation of networks within the community.

The brevity and liminality of the festivals is another contributing factor regarding the enabling of networks. Although the main event takes place on one day (OGF, HC and GF) or three days (MG), each festival has differing numbers of associated events throughout the year through which connections are maintained. These include fund-raisers, promotional and organisational activities which, although designed to benefit the festival, can provide social networks for the individuals who participate. In addition, formal and informally arranged activities linked to the festivals take place before the event to create art works, items for the stalls and cultural displays for the event itself. The localness of the festival content has a direct correlation to the opportunities for engagement within the town/village outside of the actual time of the event. Where a greater quantity of externally sourced content is included in a festival there are fewer associated creative build-up opportunities and less local networking in preparing for the event. This results in fewer potential social opportunities and fewer occasions for community connectivity.

The brief, temporality of the festival within a collective environment is suggested in the literature as providing a focal point for the promotion of participating groups or organisations (Goldblatt, 1997). All respondents note that opportunities to join groups, both in the locale and beyond, are available through the festivals (section 7.5.3). However, despite the importance placed on the opportunities which the festivals provide to join groups there are only a relatively small number of respondents who report becoming a member following the event. Passive knowledge takes precedent over active engagement; the knowledge gained of what is available and the potential to join contributes to a feeling of well-being without the need to actively join a group.

Festivals have been described, by some authors (Frazer, 1976; Ehrenreich, 2007), as points of celebration in the face of adversity, occasions where subversive or irregular behavior, which may not be tolerated in everyday circumstance, is permitted. There is evidence within the data that aspects of the festivals contribute to some level of subversion of "normal" behaviour and that this has an impact, both positive and

negative, on sustaining the connectivity of the community. On one level, all the case study events subvert physical places from their normal use (whether as a road, building or open space), allowing for Turner's (quoted in Ehrenreich, 2007) liminality of the festival to enable the crossing of cultural field boundaries (Rose, 2002). Respondents refer to the positive benefits of being able to inhabit familiar spaces in unfamiliar ways and how this contributes to social interaction. Festivals can provide the consistency and security of a familiar setting (the high street or park, for example) in which to experience innovative or alternative cultural displays, stimulating conversation and social exchange.

On a less positive level, subversive or anti-social behaviour may occur at a festival as visitors perceive an opportunity to "let off steam". One of the case studies (HC) highlights how rowdy behaviour is associated with the culmination of the event and that this could lead to division within the community and disassociation. The event itself is not described as the cause of the behaviour but rather the trigger for the release of underlying tension within the community. Although recognised as causing disruption for the duration of the event to some residents and visitors, it is suggested that the festival contributes to social cohesion rather than separation by providing a controlled outlet for stresses within the community (section 7.2).

8.5.2   *Bonding and Bridging Networks*

Festivals can provide close, bonded networks, characterised by relations between existing friends and/or family members often within a bounded place (the town/ village). They can simultaneously provide links to wider, bridged networks making connections beyond geographical or socially familiar boundaries. As Macnab *et al.* (2010) emphasise, a sustainable community requires a balance of both internal and external connections to avoid becoming too exclusive or inward looking. Amongst the case study festivals evidence exists of connections of both bonded and bridged types although to varying degrees. It appears that content type, perceptions of the organisation and aims of the festival (including to whom it is perceived to be aimed and how local the content is perceived to be) are important factors which contribute to the type of relationships and networks formed through the festival.

Multi levels of network are referred to by respondents at all festivals regarding more formal networks instigated through the involvement of community groups or organisations and informal personal networks through individual involvement. The intentions and the ability of the festival organisers to instigate and develop networks contribute to a festival's level of connectivity. Intentions alone are insufficient however, for if the organisers' aims at connectivity are not apparent, and respondents perceive low levels of local content and opportunities, then a festival is seen as less able to connect and contribute to a network of belonging (section 7.4.2). Figure 8.4 shows the information point and hub of the organising committee at HC, central to the festival field.

Figure 8.4 The organising committee's caravan at Haltwhistle Carnival, 2013 (Black, 2013).

If an organisational committee is seen as being too dominant this can create feelings of exclusivity. This may occur both where the organisation is believed to be predominantly locals (insiders), as at MG, and where perceived to consist predominantly of incomers (outsiders), as at GF. In the former example an organisation can be seen as being too bonded, resistant to change and thus closed to non-members; in the latter, although incomers are described positively as bringing new energy and drive to a committee, feelings of "us and them" could occur between sectors of the community. The organisers and the conduct of the committee

potentially challenges as well as positively influences the ability of the festival to enhance networks.

The content of festivals, in particular the heritage content, is an influential factor upon the type of networks formed. There are variations between the case studies in the concentration of purposefully included heritage content and use of a theme. Whilst all four festivals have some deliberately included heritage content, only one event (MG) has a specifically heritage focus and a changing annual theme. The findings show that purposely included heritage content is considered to primarily enable connections with place and community for outside visitors (tourists) and incomers to an area, over and above any connections for locals or insiders (sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2). Many local visitors state they learnt little about the local culture from the festival. Respondents emphasise the educational purposes of including heritage (section 6.3.1) as more important for potentially breaking down stereotypes and aiding integration for outsiders (section 7.3.3). Although deliberately included heritage may enhance a bridged network of connections to a wider community of interest for incomers and outsiders, heritage content has less impact on local community connectivity (section 7.3.1). It may even exclude sectors of the local community through perceptions of inauthenticity or non-localness (section 5.2.3).

8.5.3   The Functioning of Networks through a Festival

Festivals contribute to networks through, in particular, their ability to adapt to the needs of that community and to offer opportunities to engage at a number of levels in the working of the community. Respondents refer to the ability of festivals to encompass societal changes including demographic change in terms of employment and migration. All festivals are perceived as offering opportunities for incomers to integrate into a town/village, a positive example of a bridging network. However if too great an emphasis is perceived as being placed on the needs of outsiders (whether participants or audience), this could lead to feelings of exclusion within a community. Evidence suggests that a balance is the desirable state, with sufficient allowance for local needs to allow bonds to grow, whilst ensuring the festival does not encourage overtly bonded networks making it inaccessible to outsiders. This reflects what Curtis

(2011:290) describes in the ability of festivals to make connections with 'the here and now and with other places and times'.

Festivals offer opportunities to engage with cultural forms at a variety of levels for a variety of stakeholders and are participatory activities. The value of the participatory nature of festivals is arguably a collective social value. Performances, artworks, carnival floats and parades are produced collectively for the festivals by groups of people. Individual craftspeople and artists also produce art work which contributes to the festival but many will also encourage visitor participation at a stall or exhibition, whether that is passive observation or actively joining a creative activity.

Participation in cultural activity at a festival contributes to the creation and maintenance of networks which, by definition, are reliant on participants to function. In turn this contributes to the survival of networks within communities. The data reveals that participation is motivated predominantly by social rather than creative reasons. The opportunity to interact with other members of the festival community is stated as most important, with creative benefits coming as a secondary bonus, and that joining in is much more important than having artistic skill. Respondents refer to the contribution to cultural continuity which participation between the generations made as this is seen to strengthen networks between young and old. This intergenerational participation was also seen as being necessary for the survival and continuity of the festival, continuing the cultural practice and providing the next generation of organisers and volunteers.

Promotion of the festivals occurs to some extent through both formal and informal networks (through "word-of-mouth"), although respondents warn against over reliance on this form of marketing. It is suggested that festival information tends to circulate more within than outside a community: certain respondents refer to the territorial nature of small festivals and there is little evidence at any of the case studies of much connectivity with neighbouring towns/villages. However, the impact of word-of-mouth promotion is perhaps unrecognised; there is evidence of external visitors travelling to the festival on recommendation from an extended or bridged network.

In contrast, strategic promotion or marketing of a festival tends to be aimed at developing a wider network of weak ties, in particular creating links across place boundaries (section 3.3.6). Focus may be so intent on place promotion to tourists or non-locals that the meaning or impact of the festival for local people is reduced. As authors such as Lavenda (1992) and Fabiani (2011) have examined, scale can have negative impact on community connectivity and in particular the internal bonded networks. Regional strategies focused predominantly on larger events and had little impact upon the case studies owing in part to their size. The potential impact of strategic influence is discussed in greater detail, alongside variables of longevity, in the proceeding section 8.6.

8.6 The Impact of Variables of Longevity and Strategic Influence upon Social Sustainability between the Case Study Festivals

There are a number of factors which influence the ability of festivals to contribute to social sustainability or affect the four principle indicators outlined at the start of this chapter. These include the potential impact of variables of longevity and strategy upon the contribution of festivals to social sustainability, as set out in Aim 4 of the thesis. The four case study festivals varied in the length of time and consistency of existence with origins ranging from the 13th century (OGF), the 19th century (HC), the 20th century (MG) and 2000, i.e. the millennium (GF). The data presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7 suggests that variables of festival longevity do impact on community social sustainability. This assertion is further examined in section 8.6.1.

Regional strategic decision makers (i.e. Northumberland County Council (NCC) and ONE tended to emphasise the development of new festivals and support of larger events, linked to developing regional tourism and economic incentives (Anderson, 2007; Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011). Section 8.6.2 examines the impact of a strategic approach upon the case study festivals.

8.6.1 Variables of Longevity

Many festivals within Northumberland have a history of existence stretching back far beyond the limitations of the research period, though with varying levels of continuity. Variations in festival longevity by district throughout the county, are illustrated in section 3.4.2, and summarised in Table 3.1. While their origins date back over a

hundred years or more, OGF and HC have experienced breaks in continuity before being re-established. MG and GF, while more recently founded, have run consistently from their origins. With the exception of GF, each event has had a presence for (at the time of writing) at least 25 years within its host community.

Results show that the longevity of an event is considered important in both giving status to the festival within the identity of a place and, in turn, contributing positively to place image. Respondents from the three festivals with the longest existence refer to their respective events as being *part of the fabric* or the *heritage* of the place and like a *legend* in the local calendar (various respondents, MG, OGF and HC, 2013). In contrast, respondents at the more recently formed GF, comment on the *potential* of the festival to gain a place in the community as a focal point, referring to the need for such an event whilst acknowledging that it is currently too *new* to attain this status (various respondents, GF, 2013). The festival's potential to become part of the identity of the town is also hindered by the presence, albeit a diminishing presence, of another local community event (the old carnival) with a considerably longer history.

The longevity of an event is considered important in the acceptance of a festival as a symbol to represent the community, one through which social connections can be created or reinforced. An event's long existence is however, only a contributing factor in constructing its place in the community. In turn, negative perceptions of the festival (for example, as being unrepresentative of the local community) could impact on the longevity of the festival, through lack of connections or inconsistency. Additional factors may contribute to greater longevity, for example the origins of a festival (examined below), the accessibility of the organising committee (section 5.4.2) and the sense of local representation (section 5.3.1). The potential strategic impact upon festival longevity is not specifically considered in this thesis, although further research in this area is recommended (section 9.5).

There is additional evidence within the case studies of some correlation between the origin of an event and its longevity. MG, OGF and HC each originated intrinsically within their respective communities. MG and OGF were in continuous existence between 1980 and 2012 (the research period), and HC has continuously existed from the date of its revival in 1989. These three festivals each have a history of longevity

stretching back before the research period. In the OGF and HC cases, the festivals have been held since, respectively, the 1400s and the 1890s, albeit intermittent at times. GF originated through combined extrinsic and intrinsic sources in 2000, and is thus the more recent of the case studies. These findings were contextualised within the broader picture of small, rural festivals in Northumberland. As illustrated in Table 3.3, Northumberland Small-scale Rural (NSR) festivals (n = 105), with continuous existence during the 32 year period of the research (n = 23), are predominantly of intrinsic origin (n = 16) (70%). These quantitative findings contribute to the qualitative interview data which suggests that festivals with intrinsic origins may be more likely to have a continuous existence, enhancing the potential for festival longevity.

Respondents refer to the sense of originating in the community, of the festival *being part of the fabric of the place* (Visitors MG, OGF, HC, GF, 2013). Respondents at OGF refer to the urge to return to a traditional, original form of the event, stating that there were too many changes from the roots of the event and a growing lack of local connection. This urge to keep original features of the festivals is also emphasised at MG and HC, both events with longevity of existence. Although a festival's ability to adapt and innovate makes a positive contribution towards social connectivity (section 6.5), too much change can prove negative. A level of traceability, of inherited continuity or consistency, is needed through the event in addition to changes and new elements.

The majority of respondents state that the ability to trace patterns of longevity in displays of local heritage is a positive thing to do and could contribute to understanding, pride and a sense of belonging through connectedness with the locale. In contrast only a minority believe their respective festivals demonstrate heritage, irrespective of the longevity of the event. Many express a missed opportunity on behalf of the festivals to show the local heritage and consider that more could be achieved (although some felt it was not the role of a festival to show heritage). These responses reflect predominant perceptions of heritage, the equation of the term with the past and a preservationist norm which arguably interrupts the very process of inheritance and continuity of culture by which it is institutionally defined (UNESCO, 2003). Rather than perceive (and potentially value) the longevity and continuation of

the process of the festival occurring within the community, respondents look primarily for identifiable historical content (section 5.2.1).

Although clearly valued for social reasons, many recurring festival features, inherited from previous events, are not valued as heritage by the local community (section 8.4.3). These included the disco, the refreshments' tent and the funfair. These features are an important aspect of a festival with a lengthy existence, potentially contributing in a two-fold manner. Firstly, their recurrence, the longevity of their place in the festival, can provide a consistent thread to a community's roots and origins, what Smith (2006:274) refers to as the festival's role in the 'process of active identity making and remaking'. Secondly, by considering the importance of defining heritage through 'constant negotiation' (Duarte, 2010:858), the value of the ability of the festival to adapt to changing societal needs within its content and processes must be recognised. This combination of adaptability within a consistent thread needs to be acknowledged and reflected by the organisational committee and within the processes and the content where a balance of the two should exist.

8.6.2   Variables of Strategic Influence

Strategic incentives for rural development and regeneration in Northumberland, emanating from central government through the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and disseminated through the district councils, focused on economic development and growth (section 3.4.1). The aims of ONE were to develop the regional 'visitor offer' and concentrated on the development of larger events with a more national profile (Anderson, 2007:13). As a result of this strategy, many of the small, community festivals within Northumberland fell below the radar of the development agency. Amongst the case study festivals, GF is the exception, receiving initial development funding when established in 2000 by the Glendale Gateway Trust (a rural development trust, itself set up through council support in 1996).

Beyond the possibility of additional small grants available, predominantly through what were the district councils and charities, small festivals are reliant on local support and fundraising largely from within their host community. This arguably increases their durability, and the likelihood of survival compared with their medium sized counterparts. This reinforces the findings of Gibson and Stewart (2009:33) who suggest

that smaller festivals present greater resilience to market forces, being less reliant 'on funding and expensive ticket sales'. Festivals remain susceptible to outside forces however much they were felt to be an integral part of their host communities. Independence from the vagaries of market and political dictates can be beneficial but an event can only ever be partially independent as support from local sources is influenced by economic and social fluctuations. Additionally, festivals may need on occasion to be able to pull on resources beyond the sphere of their immediate community whether to bolster the effects of bad weather or poor visitor numbers or to fund new, innovative aspects of the event.

Evidence in the literature points to an increasing impetus from the 1980s to strategically support and encourage rural development, particularly through a community-led, bottom-up approach (Bennett *et al.,* 2000; Shucksmith, 2000; Hood and Chater, 2001). This would suggest, as explored by Shepherd (1998), a strategic investment in festivals as part of a growing emphasis to be involved in sustainable, community-based initiatives. However, little evidence exists within the primary data to support this suggestion. Festival organisers at all case studies state their events receive very little statutory contributions to their events, beyond some support with logistics of staging the event (road closure, signage for example). Reasons for the lack of support, as given by the organisers, implies that their festivals are either too small or do not meet the demographic requirements of the funders or award making bodies. Despite the rural location of the case study festivals, the organisers consider that their respective festivals fall outside the remit of rural regeneration programmes such as Leader (or from 2000, Leader+) as *we don't put anything agricultural on* (Org GF, 2012) and are felt to be *not sufficiently rural or poor* (Org MG, 2012).

Place related funding is often very specific (for example, from the National Parks or the landowner); *they provided bunting for the market stalls* (Orgs GF, 2012). The organisers' responses are reinforced by remarks from the visitors, key figures and members of focus groups whose predominant perceptions are that the festivals function largely independent of statutory support or funding. When asked to qualify the reasons believed to be behind this lack of statutory influence, responses echo

those of the organisers, relating to the scale of the festival, the demographic of the host community and/or the location (in rural/urban terms).

Although all festival organisers stress the financial struggle involved in keeping festivals going, strategic support is not necessarily beneficial. The introduction of external funding may be limited in short-term availability and in limitations of application and may have a negative impact upon the festival. Organisers state several examples of negative impact, commenting on the willingness of some external funders to fund new content whilst failing to support the underlying, on-going structure in which that content would be displayed. In addition, the raising of standards and expectations at an event through increased funds can mean subsequent increased pressure to maintain those standards once that funding is withdrawn. In the case of the MG, limited funding was granted for the employment of a festival arts officer which subsequently raised levels of performance and content. These levels were stated as being very hard to maintain once the funding was withdrawn, creating *a roller coaster idea of funding* (Org MG, 2012). The festival may thus become inconsistent through increased dependency on external funding.

There was no direct support offered from ONE towards small-scale festivals as identified in the response from the ONE director: [the focus was on] *events which would be big, which would be a catalyst for bringing people in, create economic activity, employment and have ultimately an economic output. The feeling was that councils supported small scale events* (ONE Director, 2013). This supports findings identified in the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies' (IFACCA) (2007:83) report into festival policies and public authority support, that on a national level RDAs had no 'direct role in supporting festivals'. In addition, the report found that 'the local and community dimension [...] is more typical of local authorities' (IFACCA, 2007:88).

Whilst 'stimulation of community cohesion' is supported as an aim in the Northumberland strategic plan, the 'overarching strategy' is to support the 'wider cultural and tourism offer' (Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011:3-8). As a result of strategic emphasis on tourism and economic development,

statutory funding is predominantly distributed towards medium to large events. This is supported by primary interview data with strategic leaders, influential in the development of festival strategy within Northumberland between 1980 and 2012, who suggest that the predominant impetus was towards medium to large events (NCC Director, 2012; ONE Director, 2013). The provision of statutory support to an event primarily on terms of scale, may at first appear a logical route to take if funding is dependent on benefitting a wide number of recipients. However, although a festival may be defined in terms of scale by applying "fixed boundaries" to the numbers of visitors and of income, its boundaries of connections are much more fluid and difficult to define. Whilst quantitative measurements may be used to define the scale of a festival's audience (Finkel; 2009) or its income (BAFA; 2008), the scale of an event's impact regarding social sustainability is more difficult to measure.

There is evidence from within the literature, and backed up by findings within the data, that the encouragement of growth, so much a requirement of strategic motivation (IFACCA, 2007), can in contrast be detrimental to a festival and particularly the social sustainability of its host community. Several authors refer to the potentially negative impact upon a hosting community as a festival increases in scale, in particularly where it comes under corresponding commercial pressure (Rolfe, 1992; Quinn, 2000; Macleod, 2006; Finkel, 2006; Delanty, 2011). Quinn (2000) points to the increasing detachment from place which occurs as an event grows in scale. Fabiani (2011:105-6) has stated that expansion of an event makes it less likely to be 'the place for an affirmation of a cultural unity, built (instead) on the assessment of cultural differences and variations'. A larger event is more likely to attract a diverse and fluid community with less of a common connection through place, more of an interest in a theme. The community involved has a more transient nature, drawing together for the purposes of the event but lacking in any greater level of mutual involvement beyond the festival.

The data shows that, where a festival is perceived as growing too large, the community pushes for a return to a smaller scale, closer to the original size of the event. At OGF in particular, responses in all interviewee categories refer to a desire for the organisers to refocus the festival on local connections, traditional format and to maintain the feeling of a small, village celebration. Respondents emphasise the need for such an event to

contribute to the bonding of a village through providing opportunities for social engagement. References are made to societal changes, including greater commuting, more working mothers, increased leisure time spent indoors, which make internal, neighbourly connections less likely to occur without the impetus of an event such as the festival.

The importance of local representation within a festival is emphasised repeatedly by respondents across all case studies, contributing to the feeling of connectedness and ability to identify the event with place. A smaller event can reflect more completely the character of the locale without diluting local content within externally sourced displays which, as Finkel (2006) notes, is more common at a medium to large size festival. Referring to a medium size event, she notes that where a festival 'has very little content embedded in the local community [this] makes it almost devoid of meaning to the town' (Finkel, 2006:34). A larger event is more likely to contain content from beyond the locale as local sources may be exhausted. The MG, the larger of the case study festivals, draws on a more externally originated range of participants, through its broader heritage theme and its scale, and of all the case studies reflects fewer local bonded connections between town and festival.

8.7 **Summary**

Insights from the research, brought together within this chapter, emphasise the need for consistency, innovation and connectivity and, in particular, the need for balance between these factors. The importance of connectivity and participation within communities (Partridge, 2005) has been demonstrated, reflecting what Becker *et al.* (1999:6) call the 'basically social' core of sustainability. Small-scale cultural festivals can satisfying the four indicators identified in the introduction to this chapter, and contribute to the social sustainability of their host communities. Findings from the case studies described in this chapter which support this concept, can be summarised in the following ways.

A balance is required between consistent processes in the organising and running of a festival, and opportunities for innovative approaches and adaptability. Festivals can provide frameworks of meaning through providing the time and space for networks both within and without the community to intermingle. The events offer in particular,

intergenerational connective opportunities. Their potential to enable both bonded and bridged forms of connectivity are shown through the combination of formal and informal means of knowledge exchange which occurs at the festivals. The bonded forms are more likely to occur in informal settings and through the variety of participatory processes made possible through the festival. Bridged connections are enabled through formal connections, through the representation of organisations and groups and through organised activities. These formal connections also play an important role in enabling or strengthening bonded connections within a community by offering a "shop window" on the locale and the opportunity to engage, even if this is not actively entered into. A festival can, it is argued, provide the combination of connective forms, important within society, as emphasised by Putnam (2003).

The content of the festival must have balance between consistency with the heritage of the place culture, and ability to bring in innovative and adaptable approaches to this content. The display of locally originated and authentic culture is important for social sustainability through enabling a sense of belonging and identity making. This needs in turn to be balanced with an openness to societal change and to reflect the wider, more cosmopolitan zeitgeist to avoid stagnation or becoming exclusive. This reinforces the findings of Rose (2002), who suggests that a festival can reflect the nature of a place whilst, as Duffy and Waitt (2011) propose, simultaneously revealing the nature of wider society. Where the festival is perceived as accessible and inclusive in terms of organisation and content, the consistent process of staging a festival may allow for a subconscious reinforcement of an understanding of the locale whilst offering an opportunity for contestation and adaptation. The perception of heritage, particularly where associated with historic content, can however be potentially detrimental. Heritage content predominantly bridges to outside visitors and incomers whilst the inherited processes (largely unrecognised as heritage) predominantly connect locals. Although local heritage is an important factor within a sustainable community, the inherited processes of the festivals are largely unrecognised and heritage content perceived as being aimed predominantly at outsiders. This arguably detracts from the inherent social value to communities of hosting a festival.

Although the longevity of an event contributes to its ability to connect and provide a sense of belonging for both insiders and outsiders to the community, the festival must demonstrate a wide range of participatory, locally based opportunities. The longevity of an event cannot be considered as contributing to social sustainability in its own right if it fails in perceptions of inclusivity for both locals and external visitors.

Statutory support for festivals in Northumberland focuses predominantly on larger, tourist events with little or no funding available for small-scale festivals. Evidence in the data implies that Northumberland Small-scale Rural (NSR) festivals provide connections of a bonded nature, increased trust and a sense of belonging within their place community whilst enabling bridged connections to the wider community. As such, it is argued that there is a strategic failure to recognise the socially regenerative resource within small festivals through their connective value.

Festivals are susceptible to the vagaries of external social, political and market forces and all case studies emphasise struggle in maintaining the event. However, their independence from external or statutory control, with less impetus to increase in scale or raise unsustainable expectations, can contribute more to the long-term survival of these festivals and in turn their contribution to the social sustainability of their communities.

9   Chapter 9. Conclusion

9.1   Introduction

This thesis set out to examine the central research question, **What is the contribution of small-scale, rural festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities?**, through a case study approach in Northumberland. The topic and themes were introduced in Chapter 1, with an initial outline of the case studies. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical concepts deemed the most relevant to the research question as a literature review, considering in particular, theories related to heritage and identity, social cohesion, community and social sustainability. To contextualise the research, Chapter 3 examined the historical development of festivals within the UK with a particular focus on the festival dynamic of Northumberland. Chapter 4 outlined the methodology chosen and detailed the processes of data gathering and analysis. The main body of the thesis took the format of the three analysis Chapters 5, 6 and 7, followed by the discussion in Chapter 8. The analysis chapters were structured around the emergent themes from the research process, consistency, innovation and connectivity. Chapter 8 considered the contribution of festivals to community social sustainability through four principle indicators identified through the grounding of the data within the literature and existing event social impact methodologies. The three analytical themes, of consistency, innovation and connectivity, were brought together and discussed in the context of these indicators to determine variable impact on the social sustainability of the host communities. In addition, variables of festival longevity and strategic influence upon the events were also examined to determine potential impact on community social sustainability.

This chapter brings together the key findings of the thesis and concludes the research. Section 9.2 outlines the Aims and Objectives underpinning the research design, where and to what extent within the thesis these were addressed. The following section (9.3) reflects on the methodology used in the research including its limitations. Implementations for the research are described in section 9.4, with recommendations and suggestions for further research presented in section 9.5.

9.2   Aims

This research was guided throughout by four Aims and their related objectives as introduced in Chapter 1. These are outlined in Table 9.1 alongside reference to the

relevant chapters where these are addressed. This section subsequently evaluates the extent to which the research met these Aims and conclusions drawn from the findings.

Table 9.1 Aims and Objectives Matrix showing the relevant position within the chapters of the thesis

Aim 1
Investigate the scope and dynamic of small-scale, rural festivals in Northumberland between the years 1980 - 2012 within the broader UK context.

Objectives		Chapter
1.1	Analyse (in brief) the historical context for festival development in the UK, within which to contextualise the contemporary festival.	3
1.2	Investigate the range and dynamic of festivals within Northumberland and define small-scale, rural festivals through a categorising of variables as listed in Objective 1.3.	3,1,4
1.3	Identify case study festivals having in common variables of genre, frequency, duration, scale and origination and differing in longevity, geographical location and date held.	4

Aim 2
Examine policies and strategies within a North East England regional context influencing the dynamics of festivals between 1980 - 2012.

Objectives		Chapter
2.1	Identify types of regional policies and strategies influencing festivals in general in Northumberland.	2,3,4,6
2.2	Identify regional strategies which influence specifically the case study festivals.	3,5,6,7,8
2.3	Analyse perceptions amongst case study festival stakeholders of potential strategic influence or input (including whether financial or non-financial input).	5,6,7,8

Aim 3
Identify determinants of social sustainability within communities and investigate those determinants indicative of potential festival impact on community social sustainability.

Objectives		Chapter
3.1	Evaluate current theory on social impact measures and sustainability, in particular in rural and semi-rural communities.	2
3.2	Investigate the development of a methodological tool for collection and analysis of data for the research question.	4
3.3	Identify key indicators of potential festival impact on community social sustainability.	2,8

Aim 4
Evaluate the impact of festivals on social sustainability in the host communities of the chosen case studies.

Objectives		Chapter
4.1	Determine the forms of festival connections between heritage, place and people.	5,6,7,8
4.2	Establish levels of consistency, innovation and connectivity within the case study festivals.	5,6,7,8
4.3	Identify and analyse the indicators of social sustainability within the respective festivals.	5,6,7,8
4.4	Identify and analyse impact upon social sustainability of variants of longevity and strategic influence within and between the case study festivals	8

Aim 1. Investigate the scope and dynamic of small-scale, rural festivals in Northumberland between the years 1980 - 2012 within the broader UK context.

The initial aim of the research was to establish the scope of the festival field within Northumberland between 1980 and 2012 through a focus on a number of variables including scale, genre, duration and origins of each event within this period. As no comprehensive database of festivals within the county existed prior to this research, a scoping exercise of all potentially festive events within Northumberland was conducted early in the process resulting in three databases, as outlined in Chapter 4. These were instrumental in providing a picture of the festival field dynamic and in selecting the case studies at the centre of this research. The dynamic of the festival field was illustrated through quantitative variations in the longevity and continuity of festivals within the county during this 32 year period. Festivals were recorded as having established, expired, revived or been continuous using the administrative locations of the former district councils (in operation until 2009, making up the majority of the time-period of this research). Chapter 3 considered the distribution of festivals across these former districts and sought to contextualise the variations within the Northumberland dynamic through a brief overview of festival development within the UK. The impact of changing cultural strategies, of developments in the heritage and tourism sectors and regional development and regeneration approaches, all contributed in various means, and to various degrees, to fluctuations in this dynamic.

The scoping exercise revealed 142 festivals existent in Northumberland between 1980 and 2012 of which a high proportion (105) could subsequently be considered as Northumberland Small-scale Rural (NSR) festivals by their scale and location. Data gathered within this scoping exercise also showed the origins and motivation behind these festivals revealing that the greatest percentage of festivals (n = 67, 64%) were intrinsically originated compared to those extrinsically motivated (n = 17, 16%), a combination (n = 8, 8%) or unknown (n = 13, 12%), as illustrated in Chapter 3. The origins of a festival could impact upon the longevity and sense of connectivity within a community as was discussed in Chapter 8. As shown in Chapter 3, of the 23 festivals in

continuous existence between 1980 and 2012, the majority (n = 16, 70%) had intrinsic origins suggesting a potential correlation between origin and continuity.

Aim 2. Examine policies and strategies within a North East regional context influencing the dynamics of festivals between 1980 - 2012.

The second aim of this thesis was to examine the existence of strategies or policies within the region which influenced festivals in Northumberland and subsequently identify how these strategic decisions impacted upon the festivals in question. Regional strategy concerning festivals focused predominantly on large scale events which aimed to support a burgeoning tourist industry within the county, supported by evidence from within the public sector (regional council), the quasi-autonomous regional development agencies (Chapter 3) and from within the case study data (Chapters 5 - 8). Motivation to support festivals in the county was driven primarily by an economic mantra which, while this may have filtered down through council initiatives towards small, community-based events, was predominantly focused on the origin and promotion of high-profile events which could draw external visitors to the region.

The outcome of a predominantly economic and tourism focus was the minimal or non-existent support for existing NSR festivals, supporting the evidence of Maughan (2007) and Picknell *et al.* (2007). Economic strategic focus did lead to the development of some new festivals, predominantly within more economically deprived and less rural districts of Northumberland: the majority of extrinsically motivated festivals are located in the least affluent areas. While some support was also forthcoming in the form of local authority grants and operational support for existing NSR festivals, restrictions on application categories limited accessibility for some festivals, considered to be not sufficiently rural or economically deprived (Chapter 3). There is little evidence to show that festivals were supported through a 'rural creative agenda' (Bell and Jayne, 2010) or within the 'new rural development paradigm' (Shepherd, 2007). In addition, despite the rhetoric from some cultural decision makers (Northumberland County Council (NCC)) and emerging evidence within the literature (Chapter 2) to suggest that small-scale festivals may contribute to social sustainability,

there was little evidence to suggest any shift in focus from the predominant emphasis on economic impact.

Responses from all categories at the case study festivals acknowledged the lack of strategic input. The festival organising committees, largely responsible for the staging of the events, recognised support as being predominantly non-financial and logistical. Despite the financial challenges faced by all organisers in running a festival, funding given may have negative as well as positive implications, leading to inconsistencies in process and content and additional expectations on delivery of future events (Chapter 8). Non-organiser respondents recognised that festivals were, to an extent, largely "self-sufficient" within their host communities and relied heavily on support from within that community (Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

Aim 3. Identify determinants of social sustainability within communities and investigate those determinants indicative of potential festival impact on community social sustainability.

There has been little analysis of the impact of festivals upon their host communities within a model for sustainability, despite an increasing emphasis on identifying the social impact of festivals apparent within the literature (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Richards *et al.*, 2013). Bringing together the literature on festival social impact and social sustainability sought to identify common determinants which could be indicative of a festival's potential contribution to the sustainability of the community which hosts it. Through seeking to determine what constitutes a more socially sustainable community and in tandem, investigate how a festival may enhance, enable or disable connections with the community, it was apparent that both subjective and collective well-being and a satisfying of human needs were of paramount consideration.

The literature review (Chapter 3) examines the work of Max-Neef (1991) and Maslow (1943) who respectively emphasised the necessity of meeting certain human needs, for individual well-being and as contributors within a community to social sustainability. Max-Neef (1991) describes the universality of these human needs which are satisfied through more culturally specific and varied means. This satisfying of needs, or the meeting of expectations, are emphasised as necessary aspects of well-being within the work of Stoll and Michaelson (2011), Phipps and Slater (2010) and

Macbeth *et al.* (2004). For a community to be considered socially sustainable the individuals which make up that community must feel a sense of belonging or be able to identify with that community. This sense of belonging is mediated, as Putnam and Fieldstein (2003) explored, through being part of the numerous structures of that community, both formal and informal. A festival may create many and varied networks of both bonded and bridged connections, beneficial to both individuals and by extension their communities through the development of trust, engagement and interaction (Healey and Côte, 2001; Putnam, 2000).

The range of existing models for measuring social impact at festivals (Chapter 4) was analysed. Determinants of social impact were compared to social sustainability theory to identify overlapping identifiers and develop a specific method for the thesis. Through the use of this method it was possible to identify three key determinant measures or themes which contribute to a socially sustainable community: consistency, innovation and connectivity. A level of consistency is necessary in both existential and axiological resources for a sustainable community (Max-Neef, 1991; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006) whilst being able to respond to both external and internal pressures through innovative and adaptive means. There is a need for a balance between consistency and innovation, for 'change within continuity' (Sachs, 1999:32). Alongside these twin components of sustainability, the theme of connectivity was identified as the means by which the individuals within the community interact, where groups or individual members of a community come together to exchange, for example, friendship, information, and memories.

These three themes became the subject of Chapters 5, 6 and 7 respectively, under which the festivals' connections with heritage, place and people were analysed. As Chapter 4 described, the use of a Constructivist Grounded Theory Method (CGTM) enabled the identification of four indicators of festival contribution to community social sustainability:

  a. contribute to community pride and localness
  b. enhance knowledge and understanding
  c. contribute to the continuity of local culture
  d. enable networks of connectivity

An understanding of the notion of a festival community in the research context was sought and considered, to borrow Smith's (2001) definitions, as being both one of place and also of interest. A festival creates a community of interest (in the event) within a territory of the place-based community. Small-scale, rural festivals draw heavily for participants, organisers and visitors from this place-based community of the host town/village. In addition, much of the support, financial and in-kind, which sustains the running and operation of the event emanates from within the locale. To contribute to sustainability within the community the festival should have a two-way connection with the locale, being part of, and supported by, the place and rooted in the local community. In addition, a festival must endeavour to reflect and demonstrate a "shop window" on the community, thereby supporting the locale in return and enhancing pride in place.

The perception of a festival as being locally engaged and connected was deemed a vital element in indicating the contribution of the event to community social sustainability. Engaging with the locale could enhance belonging and a sense of identity with place and in addition, enable cultural continuity. Small-scale, rural festivals, being predominantly place-based communities, may have 'the ability [...] to help people identify more strongly with a sense of place but also break down boundaries' (Rose, 2002:100). Opportunities to participate, to enhance knowledge and understanding of culture and place made important contributors to sustainability, in accordance with the findings of Fulmer *et al.* (2010) and Phipps and Slater (2010).

Aim 4. Evaluate the impact of festivals on social sustainability in the host communities of the chosen case studies.

The impact of festivals on the social sustainability of their host communities was evaluated through the four indicators outlined previously in Aim 3, through identification of the festivals' connections with heritage, place and people and through a balance of consistency and innovation. Key findings relating to Aim 4 were identified as follows.

Heritage connections at festivals were hindered by perceptions of heritage as associated with a preservationist version of the past, rather than an inherited or

continuous thread of culture. These findings conferred with those of Duarte (2010:858) who argues that the 'preservationist tendency' within heritage definitions must be challenged, in order to ensure that '[Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)] is instrumental in the sustainability of communities'. Respondents' perceptions of festival heritage focused primarily towards heritage content. As a result, the potential impact on social sustainability, of the processes of staging and hosting a festival within a community, appeared to go unrecognised. These processes can make important contributions to a community's sustainability where they contain components of consistency and innovation. The findings identified that heritage links were valued at festivals, as explored by Arcodia and Whitford (2006) and Duvignaud (1976), although not always perceived as being present. This failure to perceive heritage links occurred primarily through the lack of recognition of the inherited nature of the processes and the links between current and previous events.

The perceived authenticity of the heritage was considered important and this was closely linked to connections with place. Festival content and processes were perceived as being more authentic if they reflected the sense of place or identity of the community. Heritage plays an important role in the potential of a festival to create and enhance connections with place, which aid belonging and identity within communities (as examined in Relph (1976) and Hannon and Curtin (2009)). More explicitly, acknowledged heritage content can create bridged connections to a wider community, enhancing knowledge and understanding, whilst the processes of staging a recurrent festival contained many inherent social elements, which reinforce or create bonds amongst those who engage in the event.

The data revealed a repeated emphasis at each case study on the importance of the festival having local participants and enabling local involvement. Without this connection to the locale, a festival not only failed to enable a sense of belonging and identity but could have a negative impact on the community, excluding some people or seen as being for outsiders. A breadth of participants reflecting the spectrum of the local community was important in order for the events not to appear cliquey or territorial. This broad display of the locale could be achieved through the accessibility of the organising committee and through a perceived democratic openness to participate in the festival, both before, during and after the event.

There is a need for a balance of consistency and innovation within a sustainable community, identified through the research process, particularly in the grounding of the emerging data within the literature and existent social impact models (as for example, by Sachs (1999), Abu-Khafajah (2007) and Ahman (2013)). Connections with place and the local heritage relied on recognisably consistent links (temporal and spatial). In addition, these connections should allow innovation and adaptability; to include new aspects of the community, to promote and display its culture, demonstrating the skills and strengths of the community and respond to changes external to the community. Adaptation and change are vital aspects of heritage, the evolutionary and inheritance processes critical to social sustainability.

These festival processes, the very existence and performance of hosting a festival within a community, were evident in contributing to positive social impact through opportunities to participate and through the extent of the potential networks they enable. Festivals were found to enable connectivity at both bridged and bonded level and although dependent on factors of accessibility and inclusivity, make networks of connections both within a community (community of place) and potentially beyond (through communities of interest). The work of Putnam (2000; 2001; 2003) was influential in identifying the impact of a festival upon individual and group connections within a community, particularly with regard to bonded and bridged forms of connections and the development of networks within festival communities. Festivals can provide an arena for both the transfer of memories, demonstrating a consistency with previous events and for the creation of new memories and new interpretations of culture, often through the contestation of content authenticity in the preparation of the festival. A festival has the potential to display consistent cultural links, alongside innovative responses to societal and democratic change, Delanty's (2011:195) 'contemporary need [of festivals] to have multiple forms of identity and belonging'.

The case study festivals each demonstrated measures of consistency and innovation and, when the various components of connections were assessed through the indicators of festival contribution to community social sustainability, were found to contribute to the sustainability of their host communities (Chapter 8). However, variations in the form and operation of each event ensured differences in the level of contribution. In addition, variable longevity may contribute to a festival's effect on

community social sustainability although this factor alone was not seen to be influential if outweighed by perceptions of inaccessibility or exclusivity. Strategic influence upon the case study festivals was minimal. However, as discussed in Chapter 8, the independence of these events from external strategic influence may contribute to their survival and ensure their longer term contribution to the community's social sustainability.

9.3   Reflections on the Methodology

The mixed method, case study approach, within a CGTM, was successful in addressing the central research question of this thesis. As the thesis sought to understand the social value and reasons attributed to a festival within a host community, the data obtained was predominantly qualitative, although quantitative data was also gathered. Grounding of this data in the theoretical and archival sources (including existing models for social impact measurement) allowed for the development of the research design which aimed to reveal the "social web" within a festival hosting community. In addition, grounding the data lent greater validity to the research, allowing for the conceptualisation of meaning within the empirical data.

The analysis of secondary archival and literary sources produced the databases and the theoretical framework within which to site the research. The cases used in the research were selected from these databases created early in the research design and were deemed appropriate for the investigation of contributory factors towards social sustainability. They allowed for geographical, temporal and longevity variation whilst bearing similarities in genre, frequency, duration, scale and origin.

The principle means of primary data collection from these case studies was the use of semi-structured interviews, the predominant schedules being in-depth and lasting approximately one hour. Visitor interviews, owing to the practicalities of the quantity and location in which they were sought, were semi-structured and relatively brief in duration. The sampling methods used in this research were initially purposive followed by a snowball sampling technique which was deemed to have produced an adequate sample size. The range of respondents was considered an important factor in determining responses in particular to gain the perspective of the "other", the respondents not involved in the festival. This was not without difficulties, primarily in

finding an individual or focus group in a small community who did not engage with the festival in some way or other, and who would be willing to participate in the project. It was considered that an "other" perspective was obtained as, although the majority of focus group respondents were familiar with the events in question, they predominantly played only minor roles and made no or only occasional visits.

Sourcing strategic decision makers was also problematic owing to issues of scheduling an interview with a high level councillor with a busy timetable and, in the case of the Regional Development Agency (RDA), sourcing a representative from a now abolished institution. An additional means of gathering primary data was through the field observation and in particular the creation of a mobile exhibition and activity. This was designed to encourage wider visitor engagement in the research process through attracting young people and their families, and through engagement through non-textual methods, primarily visual. As an exploratory method the exhibition/activity was a valuable experiment although the practical difficulties encountered meant that the data gathered was not included in the final analysis.

The interview data was analysed through a process of listening, transcribing, thematic colour-coding, identifying key words (nodes) and memo making. Each in-depth interview (all categories excluding visitors) was transcribed and a detailed thematic comparison made within the category types. The strategic decision maker and organiser interviews were the first to be conducted and were subsequently transcribed and analysed before the emergent thematic and nodular findings were grounded in the theoretical sources. These findings informed the construction of the visitor, key figure and focus group interview schedules which, although maintaining a systematic approach, necessarily varied from the organisers and strategists so as to be relevant to the context. The variations between the contexts of the interviewee categories meant that certain questions were not consistently included across all schedules and where this was the case, comparative analysis across categories could not be conducted.

One of the main challenges of this research project was that, prior to determining the contribution of small-scale rural festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities, it was necessary to identify these determinants and indicators of social sustainability. The author sought to establish a new model for measuring the potential

contribution of festivals using key indicators of social sustainability. Use of the grounded theory method was an essential component of creating this tool allowing for the cross-referencing between existing models as, for example, the Social Impact Perception (SIP) scale (Small, Edwards and Sheridan, 2005), the literature (in particular the work of Max-Neef, 1991; 2013) and the emergent data. Following initial analysis, the research focused upon an overarching theme of connectivity and specifically, connections between festivals and heritage, place and people. The subsequent stages of the research process revealed additional thematic nodes – consistency and innovation - which, upon grounding in the literature on social sustainability, were deemed important in determining a socially sustainable community. When added to the theme of connectivity these three predominant themes were deemed instrumental in identifying four principle indicators by which a festival may demonstrate a contribution to community social sustainability. It is hoped that this tool may be beneficial in future research applications, as are for example, described in section 9.4.

The researcher was aware that in carrying out this research it was necessary to be conscious of potential bias and to take an objective stance and remain reflexive throughout (Denscombe, 2003). The reflexivity and validity of the research design and process was discussed in depth in section 4.4. It is hoped that through a combination of thorough and objective data retrieval methods, the triangulation of these enquiry methods and the hypothetical replicability of the research that a reliable and valid thesis was achieved.

9.4   **Implementations**

The results support the notion that small-scale rural festivals contribute to the social sustainability of their host communities. The findings demonstrate the contribution of, in particular, the processes of holding a festival and the many and varied connections which ensue in and around such an event. As a result, festivals are considered to increase connectivity and a sense of belonging within place, to augment individual and group social relations and, ultimately, to enhance well-being. All these are important contributors to the social sustainability of a host community. The potential positive social impact of a festival is largely unacknowledged in strategic approaches to festival development within Northumberland. Evidence from statutory and quasi-autonomous

institutions (NCC, One North East (ONE)), show that festival strategies focused on economic impact for the region. Where support for festivals was forthcoming, it was directed to the promotion and development of new and primarily large-scale events with a national or international attraction.

The current and projected focus for festival support remains upon economic impact (Northumberland Culture and Tourism Sector Board, 2011-16). However, this research supports a future strategic intervention in festivals to support social development and social sustainability, particularly in areas of greater social deprivation. Interest was expressed at interview with the NCC that evidence of positive festival social impact would be welcomed for implementation. Evidence suggests that festivals with greater continuity, and with intrinsic origins within the community, contribute more extensively to community social sustainability. Further evidence is needed regarding the potential continuity and social impact of extrinsically originated festivals, as proposed in section 9.5.

On the basis of this, the research suggests that festival strategies concentrate on ways to support existing events, rather than investing funding and resources into establishing new festivals. In addition, emphasis upon growth and increasing scale of festivals within strategic documents is detrimental to the type of small, rural festival featured in this research. It is thus recommended that strategic approaches resist emphasis on growth.

Regarding the strategic support of existing festivals, which the research revealed as minimal or barely existent, further recommendations are proposed. All festival organisers interviewed within this research referred to the financial struggle in maintaining a festival and the rather "hand to mouth" existence of the events from year to year. Small-scale festivals rely on local support from within their communities and are thus reliant on the generosity and support of their community and stakeholders to continue and survive. Despite the benefits identified in this research of being strategically independent, the insecurities and dependence on the locale could be lessened through some extrinsic, strategic support. Findings suggest that, were it forthcoming, strategic support for existing festivals must not be delivered in the current format of short-term, capital funding, without a more sustainable framework

within which to position that funding. Based on the recommendations taken from interviews, an arms-length model of support in the form of a *safety net* (KF GF, 2013), an insurance policy which could be pulled upon in lean years or to fund specific projects or developments, may be a better alternative. It is recommended that strategic financial support adopts a long-term mechanism for assisting existing festivals.

The research emphasised the importance of a two-way engagement between the locale and the festival and of the benefits of connecting with the local heritage, place and people, the culture and sense of place. While a desire to connect to the locale was expressed by the festival organisers, there was often a disconnect between the perceptions of the visitors or wider community as to whether this was being achieved. It is thus recommended that where possible, local representation is encouraged both in the preparation and the delivery of the festival. In addition, the inclusion of heritage content in the festival must make connection with the local culture to be accepted by locals (insiders) and non-locals (outsiders). The importance of the inherited processes of staging an annual festival could be more widely acknowledged. It is hoped that organisers make use of the findings in this thesis to support claims to funding bodies and strategic decision makers, that their festivals are worthy of the extra support mechanism recommended above.

9.5   **Suggestions for Further Research**

This research highlights the nature of connections between festivals and heritage, place and people and the significance of these relationships upon the social sustainability of the communities which host the festivals. As a result of the study, three areas for future research were identified. These are, research into the impact of demographic variations (in festival hosting communities) upon connectivity, research into the longevity of a festival relative to its origins and research into the impact of agricultural shows on community social sustainability.

It was apparent that many factors influence the formation and continuity of festival connections, including the demographic of the communities themselves. There is scope for further research to examine how demographic variations may potentially influence these connections, in particular regional variations in relative affluence and

density of population. Some initial research was conducted into the demographic of the case study communities to ascertain the size of population and relative levels of affluence within the districts of Northumberland, obtained from the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2014) and from the study into wealth and well-being produced for the National Health Service (NHS) (Stewart *et al.*,2012). However, the limitations on time and resources of this particular research project restricted the development of these aspects of enquiry. Data recorded in Table 3.1, regarding the distribution of festivals throughout the county by former district authorities, showed that the 'south east of the county [which] holds some of the most deprived wards in the country' (Stewart *et al.*, 2012:12) had the lowest number of festivals in the former districts of Blyth and Wansbeck. In addition, these former districts are the most densely populated in the county. In contrast, the greatest number of festivals occurred in Tynedale and Alnwick, districts of relatively greater affluence and lower population density.

Further research is needed into the potential impact of relative affluence upon the festival dynamic of a region or district, in particular the impact this may have on the longevity of an event and its ability to sustain itself independent of extrinsic funding. The findings of this research showed that NSR festivals exist largely independent of strategic influence and support, whether financial or logistical, as extrinsic festival strategy focused on larger events as regional tourist attractions. While the evidence suggests that small festivals may be more resilient as a result, in part, of this independence, greater research needs to be undertaken into the ability of festivals to survive within areas of greater economic deprivation.

An additional opportunity for further research would be an investigation into the longevity of a festival relative to its origins, defined as being intrinsic, extrinsic or combined. Evidence from this research suggests that a festival with a longer and in particular, more continuous existence has greater impact on community social sustainability than its shorter-term, intermittent relations. In addition, there appeared evidence that an intrinsically originated festival with strong connections within its host locale was more likely to have an on-going existence. However, further research into the longevity of festivals with contrastingly intrinsic or extrinsic origins would enhance understanding of the implications of strategic support for festival initiation.

A final suggestion for additional research builds upon the development of the indicators of festival contribution to social sustainability as developed in this thesis. There is potential to apply these indicators to forms of events omitted from this particular research project which focused on small-scale, rural festivals within Northumberland (NSR festivals). NSR festivals took parameters of scale as defined by British Arts Festival Association (BAFA) (2008) and Finkel (2009), within a non-urban host location (Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), 2014). When selecting the case studies, the focus further narrowed to include (amongst others) the origin and management of the event as being primarily from within the host community and to those events with a broad cultural content. This narrowing of focus omitted certain events from the research, notably agricultural shows (section 4.3.2).

There is a rich tradition of holding agricultural shows in the UK in which Northumberland, being a rural county with an extensive and on-going farming industry, is no exception. Agricultural shows are, like festivals, numerous and various but in many ways bear a distinctive historical tradition, thematic content and system of management and funding. This may allow them the potential as a genre within their own right when considering further research into community social sustainability. The continuous presence of these shows within the counties of the UK, albeit a presence in which the content and form has often adapted and diversified from its origins, would merit further research, in particular using the indicators of festival contribution to social sustainability, into the potential impact upon their host community.

9.6 **Concluding Remarks**

This research set out to investigate the contribution of small-scale, rural festivals to the social sustainability of their host communities. Through the findings of the research, it considers that social sustainability is a worthwhile goal and enhances life within communities. Festivals have been shown to contribute to the duality of social sustainability, the need for development and maintenance, which may be desirable, even necessary, for the sustainability of communities.

The ability of a festival to contribute to the duality of sustainability lies in the combination of internal and external connections and its propensity for consistency

alongside innovation. A festival in itself may have a duality of being locally rooted and yet able to branch out beyond the spatial boundaries of place. Through a core local identity the community has a sense of ownership and belonging, in combination with a more fluid dynamic allowing for new interactions, ideas and inspiration from beyond the locale, enabling connections at many levels. As has been emphasised throughout the thesis, a balance of these dualities in festivals is critical to their contribution to the social sustainability of their host communities.

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Appendix 1: Database 1. All festivals in Northumberland (including agricultural shows) 1980 - 2012

Name	Date held	Duration (days)	Frequency
Acomb Carnival	May	Unknown	Annual
Allendale Fair	June	Unknown	Unknown
Allendale Show	August	1	Annual
Allendale Tar Bar'l Festival	December	1	Annual
Alnmouth Arts Festival	June	2	Annual
Alnmouth Beer Festival	August	Unknown	Unknown
Alnwick Castle Fête	July/Aug	1 or 2	Annual
Alnwick Christmas Carnival	December	Unknown	Unknown
Alnwick Food Festival	September	3	Annual
Alnwick International Fest	July/Aug	7 or 8	Annual
Alnwick Medieval Fair	July	5 or 6	Annual
Alnwick Northumbrian Gathering	October/Nov	Unknown	Annual
Alnwick Revel	May	3	Unknown
Alnwick Show	September	Unknown	Unknown
Alnwick Young People's Festival	October	Unknown	Unknown
Alwinton Folk Festival	May	3	Annual
Alwinton Show	October	1	Annual
Amble Carnival	June	Unknown	Unknown
Amble Jazz Festival	May	Unknown	Unknown
Amble Maritime Festival	Unknown	2	Annual
Amble Sea Fayre	July	2	Annual
Ashington Festival	Unknown	Various	Biannual
Ashington Miners' Picnic	June	1	Annual
Ashington Walking Fest	October	Unknown	Annual
BAA Fest	May/August	3	Annual
Bamburgh Show	September	1	Annual
Bardon Mill Carnival	June	1	Annual
Bedlington Miners' Picnic	June	1	Annual
Bedrock Festival	June	1	Unknown
Belford Carnival	July	7	Unknown
Bellingham Fair	May	Unknown	Unknown
Bellingham Show	August	1	Annual
Berwick Arts and Crafts Festival	August	4	Annual
Berwick Border Green Festival	July	2	Annual
Berwick Festival	Unknown	3	Unknown
Berwick Film and Media Arts	Autumn	Unknown	Annual
Berwick Film Festival	August	5	Annual
Berwick Food Festival	September	2	Annual
Birthright Summer Fair	July	Unknown	Unknown
Blanchland and Hunstanworth Show	August	1	Annual
Blyth Carnival	July	Unknown	Annual
Blyth Renewables Festival	June	2	Annual
Blyth Valley Heritage	Various	1	Annual
Boulmer Harbour Fête	May	1	Annual
Brinkburn Festival	July	3	Annual

Name	Date held	Duration (days)	Frequency
Byrness Midsummer Fête	June	Unknown	Annual
Bywell Arts Festival	June	3	Annual
Bywell Country Fair	June	Unknown	Unknown
Cambo Fête	July	1	Annual
Catton Village Show	June	1	Annual
Corbridge Carnival	June	1	Annual
Corbridge Chamber Music Festival	August	3	Annual
Corbridge Fair	June	Unknown	Annual
Corbridge Music Festival	July	2	Annual
Craster Harbour Fête	July	1	Annual
Dinnington Festival	August	8	Unknown
Falstone Border Shepherd Show	August	1	Annual
Felton and Thirston Fair	July	1	Annual
Fusion Festival	July	Unknown	Annual
Gilsland Show	August	1	Annual
Glanton Show	August	1	Annual
Glendale Festival	July	1	Annual
Glendale Show	August	1	Annual
Greater Morpeth Walking Fest	September	7	Annual
Hadston Gala	July	Unknown	Annual
Haltwhistle Carnival	July	1	Annual
Haltwhistle Folk Fair	September	Unknown	Unknown
Haltwhistle Walking Fest	October	10	Annual
Harbottle Show	September	1	Annual
Haydon Bridge Beer Festival	July	2	Annual
Haydon Bridge Strawberry Fair	June	Unknown	Unknown
Hedley Barrel Rolling	Easter	1	Annual
Hexham Abbey Festival	Sept/Oct	7	Annual
Hexham Book Festival	March/April	8	Annual
Hexham Carnival	July	1	Annual
Hexham Eating Festival	September	1	Annual
Hexham Gathering	May	4	Annual
Hexham Music and Arts Festival	April	Unknown	Annual
Hexham Regatta	June	1	Annual
Hexham Town Fair	July	Various	Annual
Hexham Folk Festival	May	3	Annual
John Barleycorn Festival	August/Oct	2	Annual
Kielder Forest Festival	May	Unknown	Annual
Kirkwhelpington Show	September	1	Annual
Kite Festival	July	1	Annual
Lesbury Flower Festival	May	Unknown	Unknown
Matfen Village Fair	July	1	Annual
Mighty Dub Festival	June	2	Unknown
Morpeth Fair	June	1	Annual
Morpeth Gathering	April	3	Annual
National Childrens Book Festival	November	Unknown	Unknown
NCEA Book Festival	June	1	Unknown
NE Wine Festival	June	Unknown	Unknown

Name	Date held	Duration (days)	Frequency
Newbiggin Fair	Unknown	Unknown	Annual
Norham Scarecrows	August	Unknown	Annual
North Alnwick Carnival	July	Unknown	Annual
North Tyneside Kite Fest	August	2	Annual
Northern Light Festival	Non starter	Non starter	Unknown
Northumberland Music Festival	Oct/Nov	10	Annual
Northumberland Show	May/June	1	Annual
Old Hartley Heritage Fair	June	1	Annual
Otterburn Festival	July	2	Annual
Ovingham Goose Fair	June	1	Annual
Ovington Fête	September	Unknown	Annual
Powburn Show	August	1	Annual
Prudhoe Fair	May	1	Annual
Redefest	August	1	Annual
Riding Mill Village Show	September	1	Annual
Riding Of The Bounds	April/May	1	Annual
Rock & Rennington Scarecrows	August	2	Annual
Rothbury & Coquetdale Walking Fest	June	7	Annual
Rothbury Carnival	May		Unknown
Rothbury Festival	July	3	Annual
Rothbury Food and Craft Festival	April	1	Annual
Rothbury Street Fair	May	1	Annual
Seahouses Beer Festival	April	Unknown	Unknown
Seahouses Festival	June	3	Annual
Seahouses Gala Day	August	Unknown	Annual
Seahouses May Week	May	9	Unknown
Seashanty Festival	September	Unknown	Annual
Sele Fest	July	1	Annual
Simonside Country Fair	August	1	Annual
Slayley Show	August	1	Annual
Spittal Gala	June	2	Annual
Spittal Seaside Festival	August	2	Annual
St Bartholomew's Fayre	August	2 or 4	Annual
Stanhope Show	September	2	Annual
Stocksfield Festival	September	1	Biannual
Three Horses Music and Beer Festival	July	3	Unknown
Thropton Show	September	1	Annual
Tramwell Show	May/June	Unknown	Annual
Tynedale Beer Festival	June	3	Annual
Tynedale Music Fest	March	14	Annual
Unique Millennium Festival	June	Unknown	Millennium
Wall Village Fête	July	1	Annual
Wansbeck Music Festival	March	Unknown	Annual
Wansbeck Regatta	July	Unknown	Unknown
Wark Fête	July	1	Annual
Warkworth Pageant	August	6	Annual
Warkworth Show	August	1	Annual
Whitfield Village Fair	September	Unknown	Unknown

Name	Date held	Duration (days)	Frequency
Whittingham Show	August	1	Annual
Wooler Carnival	June	7	Annual

Appendix 2: Database 2. Northumberland Small-scale Rural (NSR) Festivals (1980 – 2012) showing Genre and Scale

Genre: Community origin and organisation (non-themed); Themed, for example, music, beer or book (varied origin – as detailed in Appendix 3)

Scale: Small; ‹10,000 Visitors or ‹£30K income; Medium 10,000 – 50,000 Visitors or £31K - £100K income.

Database 2.

Name	Genre	Scale
Acomb Carnival	Community	Small
Allendale Fair	Community	Small
Allendale Tar Bar'l Festival	Theme	Unknown
Alnmouth Beer Festival	Theme	Small
Alnwick Castle Fête	Community	Small
Alnwick Christmas Carnival	Theme	Small
Alnwick Food Festival	Theme	Small
Alnwick International Fest	Theme	Small
Alnwick Fair	Theme	Small
Alnwick Revel	Community	Small
Alnwick Young People's Festival	Theme	Unknown
Alnwick Northumbrian Gathering	Theme	Unknown
Alwinton Folk Festival	Theme	Unknown
Amble Carnival	Community	Small
Amble Jazz Festival	Theme	Unknown
Amble Maritime Festival	Theme	Small
Amble Sea Fayre	Theme	Small
Ashington Beer Festival	Theme	Unknown
Ashington Festival	Theme	Unknown
Ashington Miners' Picnic	Community	Unknown
BAA Fest	Theme	Unknown
Bardon Mill Carnival	Community	Small
Bedlington Miners' Picnic	Community	Unknown
Belford Carnival	Community	Unknown
Bellingham Fair	Community	Small
Berwick Arts And Crafts Festival	Theme	Small
Berwick Border Green Festival	Theme	Small
Berwick Festival	Community	Small
Berwick Film Festival	Theme	Small
Berwick Food Festival	Theme	Small
Birthright Summer Fair	Community	Small
Blyth Carnival	Community	Unknown
Blyth Renewables Fest	Theme	Unknown
Blyth Valley Heritage	Theme	Unknown

Name	Genre	Scale
Boulmer Harbour Fête	Theme	Small
Brinkburn Music Festival	Theme	Unknown
Byrness Midsummer Fête	Community	Small
Bywell Country Fair	Theme	Small
Cambo Fête	Community	Small
Corbridge Carnival	Community	Small
Corbridge Chamber Music Festival	Theme	Unknown
Corbridge Fair	Community	Small
Corbridge Music Festival	Theme	Unknown
Craster Harbour Fête	Theme	Small
Dinnington Festival	Community	Small
Felton and Thirston Fair	Community	Small
Fusion Festival	Theme	Unknown
Glendale Festival	Community	Small
Hadston Gala	Community	Small
Haltwhistle Carnival	Community	Small
Haltwhistle Folk Fair	Theme	Small
Haydon Bridge Beer Festival	Theme	Small
Haydon Bridge Strawberry Fair	Community	Small
Hedley Barrel Rolling	Theme	Unknown
Hexham Abbey Festival	Theme	Unknown
Hexham Book Festival	Theme	Small
Hexham Carnival	Community	Unknown
Hexham Folk Festival	Theme	Small
Hexham Music and Arts Festival	Theme	Unknown
Hexham Town Fair	Theme	Unknown
Hexham Gathering	Theme	Small
John Barleycorn Festival	Theme	Small
Kielder Forest Festival	Theme	Unknown
Kite Festival	Theme	Unknown
Lesbury Flower Festival	Theme	Small
Matfen Village Fair	Community	Small
Morpeth Fair	Community	Unknown
Morpeth Gathering	Community	Small
National Childrens Book Festival	Theme	Unknown
Newbiggin Fair	Theme	Medium
Norham Scarecrows	Theme	Small
North Alnwick Carnival	Community	Small
Otterburn Festival	Community	Small
Ovingham Goose Fair	Community	Small
Ovington Summer Fête	Community	Small
Prudhoe Fair	Community	Medium

Name	Genre	Scale
Redefest	Community	Unknown
Rennington Scarecrows	Theme	Small
Riding Mill Village Show	Community	Small
Riding Of The Bounds	Theme	Unknown
Rothbury Traditional Music Festival	Theme	Unknown
Rothbury Street Fair	Community	Unknown
Seahouses Beer Festival	Theme	Unknown
Seahouses Gala Day	Theme	Small
Seahouses May Week	Community	Small
Seahouses Festival	Community	Medium
Seashanty Festival	Theme	Small
Sele Fest	Theme	Small
Simonside Country Fair	Community	Unknown
Spittal Gala	Community	Small
Spittal Seaside Festival	Theme	Small
St Bartholomew's Fayre	Community	Unknown
Stocksfield Festival	Community	Small
Three Horses Music and Beer Festival	Theme	Unknown
Tynedale Music Festival	Theme	Medium
Wall Village Fête	Community	Small
Wansbeck Music Festival	Theme	Unknown
Wansbeck Regatta And Show	Community	Unknown
Wansbeck Riverside Festival	Community	Unknown
Wark Fête	Community	Small
Warkworth Pageant	Theme	Small
Whitfield Village Fair	Community	Small
Wooler Carnival	Community	Small

Appendix 3: Database 3. NSR festivals showing dynamic of location, longevity and origination/motivation (1980 – 2012)

Legend: ■ Alnwick District ■ Berwick District ■ Blyth Valley District ■ Morpeth District ■ Tynedale District ■ Wansbeck District

Paler colour = likely festival took place (little evidence); IIA= Insufficient Information Available; CD = community development; MR = money raiser; SI = special interest

Festival Name	pre 1981	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05	2006-10	2011-	Origination	Motivation
Acomb Carnival	1950	Revived 1982							Unknown	Unknown
Allendale Fair									Intrinsic	CD, MR
Allendale Tar Bar'l Festival									Intrinsic	CD
Alnmouth Beer Festival									Intrinsic	MR
Alnwick Castle Fête		1983							Intrinsic	MR
Alnwick Christmas Carnival					2001?				Extrinsic	CD, MR
Alnwick Food Festival						2005			Intrinsic	SI, MR
Alnwick International Festival	1976								Intrinsic	SI
Alnwick Fair	1969						Ended 2008		Intrinsic	MR
Alnwick Revel									Extrinsic	CD, MR
Alnwick Young People's Festival		1984							Unknown	Unknown
Alnwick Northumbrian Gathering							Ended 2011		Intrinsic	SI
Alwinton Folk Festival									Intrinsic	MR
Amble Carnival									Unknown	Unknown
Amble Jazz Festival									Unknown	Unknown
Amble Maritime Festival			1988 - 1990						Unknown	Unknown
Amble Sea Fayre					1996	Ended 2008			Extrinsic	CD
Ashington Beer Festival									Intrinsic	MR

Festival Name	pre 1981	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05	2006-10	2011-	Origination	Motivation
Ashington Festival	1969 - 1981?								Intrinsic	SI
Ashington Miners' Picnic	1867 -								Extrinsic	CD
Baa Fest							2010		Intrinsic	SI
Bardon Mill Carnival		IIA							Unknown	Unknown
Bedlington Miners' Picnic									Extrinsic	CD
Belford Carnival				Intermittent/IIA					Intrinsic	CD
Bellingham Fair									Unknown	Unknown
Berwick Arts And Crafts Festival							2009		Intrinsic	SI
Berwick Border Green Festival						2004/5			Combination	SI, CD
Berwick Festival									Unknown	Unknown
Berwick Film Festival						2005			Intrinsic	SI
Berwick Food Festival							2008		Combination	SI
Birthright Summer Fair									Intrinsic	SI, MR
Blyth Carnival		1986							Intrinsic	MR
Blyth Renewables Fest							2009		Extrinsic	SI, CD
Blyth Valley Heritage									Intrinsic	SI
Boulmer Harbour Fête									Intrinsic	SI
Brinkburn Music Festival		1993							Intrinsic	SI
Byrness Midsummer Fête	1980								Unknown	Unknown
Bywell Arts Festival					1999				Intrinsic	SI
Bywell Country Fair									Intrinsic	SI

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Festival Name	pre 1981	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05	2006-10	2011-	Origination	Motivation
Hexham Town Fair	████	████	████						Extrinsic	CD, MR
Hexham Gathering				1994					Extrinsic	SI, CD
John Barleycorn Festival							2006		Intrinsic	SI, CD, MR
Kielder Forest Festival							████		Extrinsic	CD, MR
Kite Festival									Intrinsic	SI
Lesbury Flower Festival			IIA						Intrinsic	SI
Matfen Village Fair							IIA		Intrinsic	CD
Morpeth Fair									Intrinsic	MR
Morpeth Gathering	1968								Intrinsic	SI, CD
National Childrens Book Festival		1983?							Unknown	Unknown
Newbiggin Fair				Resurrected 1995		ended 2004		resurrected 2011	Intrinsic	MR
Norham Scarecrows							2006, likely earlier origins		Intrinsic	SI, MR
North Alnwick Carnival			████						Intrinsic	CD, MR
Otterburn Festival					2000				Intrinsic	MR now CD
Ovingham Goose Fair									Intrinsic	CD, MR
Ovington Summer Fête							IIA re earlier fetes		Intrinsic	CD
Prudhoe Fair		resurrected 1989			IIA				Intrinsic	CD, MR
Redefest							2006		Intrinsic	CD
Rock & Rennington Scarecrows							████		Intrinsic	MR

Legend: Alnwick District; Berwick District; Blyth Valley District; Morpeth District; Tynedale District; Wansbeck District

Paler colour = likely festival took place (little evidence); IIA= Insufficient Information Available; CD = community development; MR = money raiser; SI = special interest

Paler colour = likely festival took place (little evidence); IIA= Insufficient Information Available; CD = community development; MR = money raiser; SI = special interest

Festival Name	pre 1981	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05	2006-10	2011-	Origination	Motivation
Riding Mill Village Show									Intrinsic	CD
Riding Of The Bounds									Intrinsic	SI
Rothbury Carnival	ended 1980s								Intrinsic	MR
Rothbury Traditional Music Festival	1976								Intrinsic	SI
Rothbury Street Fair	IIA but probable earlier origins								Intrinsic	MR
Seahouses Beer Festival							2010		Intrinsic	MR
Seahouses Gala Day									Extrinsic	MR
Seahouses May Week		ended mid 1980s							Intrinsic	MR
Seahouses Festival							2006		Extrinsic	CD
Seashanty Festival							ended 2011		Extrinsic	CD
Sele Fest									Combination	CD
Simonside Country Fair									Intrinsic	CD
Spittal Gala									Unknown	CD
Spittal Seaside Festival									Extrinsic	CD
St Bartholomew's Fayre									Intrinsic	CD
Stocksfield Festival									Intrinsic	CD
Three Horses Music & Beer Festival									Intrinsic	MR
Tynedale Music Festival									Combination	SI
Wall Village Fête									Intrinsic	CD
Wansbeck Music Festival									Combination	SI

Legend: Alnwick District, Berwick District, Blyth Valley District, Morpeth District, Tynedale District, Wansbeck District

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| Festival Name	pre 1981	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05	2006-10	2011-	Origination	Motivation
Wansbeck Regatta And Show									Intrinsic	SI
Wansbeck Riverside Festival									Extrinsic	CD
Wark Fête									Intrinsic	CD
Warkworth Pageant									Intrinsic	CD, MR
Whitfield Village Fair									Intrinsic	CD
Wooler Carnival									Intrinsic	MR

Appendix 4: Interview Schedule for Strategic Decision Makers

1. **Identify types of regional policies and strategies influencing festivals: include name of policy, aims, drafting body.**
   a) What were the main policy documents/strategies which X worked with to support festivals in the region of Northumberland?
   b) The strategy of X appears to have been predominantly focused on large scale, flag-ship events. Do you have any comments on this?
      i. Were you aware of any strategies aimed at smaller, community festivals and if so what were they?
      ii. Why were policies aimed predominantly at large, international events?
   c) Regarding the regional policies, were these policies top-down, from Central Government or more regionally autonomously decided?
   d) In what way has this changed?
   e) How did rural regeneration policies influence festival support?
   f) How did sustainability policies impact on festival support?
   g) How did policies influencing cultural heritage impact on support for festivals?

2. **Identify regional policy criteria for providing funding or support?**
   a) Were Xs festival policies primarily focused on providing funding or offering assistance in non-financial form?
   b) Was support aimed more at starting up events or sustaining existing ones?
   c) What was expected from the festival in return for support?

3. **Determine whether evaluation of the regional policy was conducted and if so, what was the focus and conclusion?**
   a) Where evaluation took place, was this socially or economically focused?
   b) Did the evaluation results show that expectations were met?

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule: Festival Organiser

1. **Establish place and length of residence of interviewee.**

2. **Name, organisational structure and aims of the festival.**

3. **Content, size and history of festival (intermittent, consistent etc)**

4. **The contribution of the festival to the contemporary image of the festival locale**

    4.1.   What image of the community do you think the festival displays?
    4.2.   Do you ever carry out evaluation as to the perception of the festival's value in the community?
    4.3.   If yes to above, in what form (minutes, parish council newsletters, local reports etc) and is it accessible?
    4.4.   Do you think or has there ever been any reports stating that the festival contributes to negative perceptions of the contemporary image of *x*?
    4.5.   How does the festival contribute to new ideas/development of culture within the community?
    4.6.   How does the festival influence relations between this and neighbouring communities?

5. **The contribution of the heritage content of the festival to the perception of sense of place and sustainability of the community.**

    5.1   What cultural heritage is included in the festival content?
    5.2   How is this selected and transmitted?
    5.3   What is the aim of including cultural heritage in the festival?
    5.4   Does the inclusion of heritage reflect a 'sense of place'; is it specific to the locale?
    5.5   How important is sense of place to festival a) organisers and b) visitors?
    5.6   Does inclusion of cultural heritage contribute to the protection of the local culture?
    5.7   Does its inclusion contribute to acquiring/developing new skill sets?
    5.8   What does the inclusion of heritage contribute to the networks and connectivity (social sustainability) within the community*? Does it aid understanding and integration in the area or reinforce stereotypes or prejudices?*
    5.9   How do you think it contributes to the identity of a) established residents and b) incomers?

6. **The networking potential of festivals and the impact on the connectivity of a community.**

    6.1   Community Connectivity. Is it an aim of the festival to encourage engagement with the community?
    6.2   Would you say it is the festival's priority to attract new audiences or maintain and strengthen existing ones and what motivates this prioritising?
    6.3   Groups. (Formal connections) Does the organising committee deliberately set out to engage with local existing community groups? *What type and*

proportion of local groups is represented at the festival? Who gets involved and who doesn't? Proportion of external to internal groups?

6.3.a *Does it aim to encourage the setting up of new groups as a result of the festival?*

6.3.b *Is there any evidence that existing groups work together more as a result of being involved with the festival? Or evidence of disagreement between groups?*

6.3.c *Is there any evidence/feedback from community groups of increased membership due to festival involvement?*

6.4 Individuals. (Informal connections) Are there any records of the percentage of visitors who are from the locale? *How many are actively involved?*

6.5 Is there any feedback of increased individual connectivity/networking as a result of the festival ie. Friendships formed, groups joined.

6.6 Festival Organisation. (Perception of the festival organisation within the community.) Do you think the festival contributes to a greater level of democratic representation within the locale?

6.7 Does having a festival build leaders within the community?

6.8 What efforts are made to recruit new organisational committee members and what is the take up rate? Why do you think that is so? Is there feedback from within the community regarding organisation?

6.9 What rewards do you get out of organising the festival?

6.10 Is the festival taxing on human resources?

6.11 Festival Volunteers. How many volunteers do you have and is this sufficient for the workload? *What is the return rate?*

6.12 How do you seek to recruit new volunteers?

7. **Identify types of regional and national policies and strategies influencing festivals, particularly with regard to focus of funding or evaluation (and impact on content).**

7.1. Which are the main strategic organisations at regional level which have been influential in shaping this festival.

7.2. In what format ie. funding, organisational assistance, strategic assistance, in-kind, other? *How has this support fluctuated over the existence of the festival?*

7.3. Does the festival provide something in return for the support eg. evaluation, workshops etc. *Was there obligation to provide this or was it volunteered? Was there ever any feedback from the supporting body regarding the evaluation or use of the funding?*

7.4. Where did the focus for support lie? Economic or social impact, regeneration, sustainability?

7.5. Do you consider there was any particular agenda owing to the rural aspect of the festival location?

7.6. To what degree do the expectations of funding organisations/individuals influence the format of the festival? What limitations are placed on the festival due to this – negative and positive impacts of these restrictions. Do you consider this is linked to the area image?

8. Additional Questions

8.1. I'd like to interview other key figures in the community. Can you recommend people to interview and groups I may be able to approach for a

focus group session?
8.2.   What do you consider the value of this festival to the region *(at macro and micro level?)*
8.3.   What do you consider the value of festivals in general to the region?
8.4.   Is there anything else you wish to tell me?
8.5.   Do you have any questions on the research project?

Appendix 6: Interview Schedule: Festival Visitors

Demographic Profile

1) What role, if any, do you play in the festival?
2) Why have you come to the festival?
3) How far have you travelled to visit the festival?
   < 10 miles, > 10 miles, Overseas visitor
4) How old are you? Under 16,   17 – 30, 31 - 50, 50+

Section (A): Connections between the Festival and Place

a. On a Scale of 5 - 1, what image of X does the festival show?
   Positive Image (5)   Negative Image (1)
b. Do you think it's important that the festival is held in X or could it be held anywhere?
c. What have you learnt/do you think you'll learn about X through the festival?
d. Does the festival help to make you feel a part of X?

Section (B): Connections between the Festival and the Heritage

a. What displays/activities have you found at the festival which can help to make connections between X and the heritage of the place?
b. On a scale of 5 – 1, do you think the festival heritage helps to keep local culture alive or stifles it and stops it from developing?
   Keeps culture alive (5)   Stifles innovation (1)
c. (How does it do this?) - In what way does showing heritage either keep culture alive or stifle it?
d. How do you think understanding more about the heritage of X could help you to feel more a part of the place?

Section (C): Connections between the Festival and the People

a. Would you consider the festival as a social event? If so, what kind? A meeting place for old friends? Or to meet new people?
b. Does visiting the festival help you connect to the wider community? How?
c. How could/does the festival provide opportunities to participate in the community outside the actual event itself?
d. On a scale of 5 – 1, do you think the festival is mainly for local people or tourists or mix of both and why do you think this?
   Predominantly local to X (5)   Mainly from outside X (1)
   Why do you think this?

Appendix 7: Interview Schedule: Key Figure in the Community

1. Demographic Profile
1.1.   Do you live/work/both in X? (Live ‹ or › 10 miles from festival?)
1.2.   How long have you lived/worked in X?
1.3.   Do you consider yourself a local (why?).
1.4.   How important is it to you to feel you 'belong' in a community?
        On a scale of 1 – 5.
        1 = Doesn't matter at all (it's just a place) 5 = Very Important (I feel I belong)
1.5.   What role, if any, do you play in the festival? If none, do you visit the festival? If not, why not?
1.6.   How frequently do you participate in local organisations/activities (outside of a professional capacity)? Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Annually, Never
1.7.   How would you describe your level of involvement in these organisations?
        On a scale of 1 – 5.   1 = Passive   5 = Active

2. Image/Perceptions of Place
2.1.   What would you consider to be an important feature of a place to live or work in (generally)?
2.2.   Do you think X has these qualities?
2.3.   How do you perceive the opportunities for social meetings, community engagement within X?

3. Connections to Heritage
3.1.   How would you describe your level of interest in the cultural history (heritage) of X? Good, average, not interested.
3.2.   Do you think the festival displays aspects of X's heritage?
3.3.   If so, how does it achieve this?
3.4.   Is highlighting the heritage a positive thing to do or does it reinforce cultural stereotypes?
3.5.   Does the festival help make connections between the local traditional culture and the contemporary way of life in X?
3.6.   Could this help connections between incomers and long-term residents?
3.7.   Do you think the heritage content could help to promote and keep alive the local culture of X?
3.8.   Does the festival give opportunities to learn new skills related to the heritage?
3.9.   Is there anywhere else in the vicinity where you can learn the heritage of X?

4. Image of the Festival (individual response)
4.1.   Chose 3 words to describe the festival (from closed collection of words: noisy, friendly, crowded, colourful, entertaining, boring, commercial, relaxing, educational, predictable, togetherness, buzzing, disruptive, fun, diverse, exclusive).
4.2.   Consistency or Innovation. Which word do you most associate with the festival?
4.3.   What is your overriding feeling towards the place of the festival in your community?
   4.4.   Do you think the festival is mostly for locals, for visitors, or combination?
   4.5.   What level of support from public statutory organisations (Council, Arts council, RDAs etc) do you perceive the festival gets and in what form?
   4.6.   Would/did the presence of the festival influence your decision to move here/stay here?

5. Perceptions of the Festival within the Community
   5.1.   Regarding the aspects which you considered important features of X, does

the festival contribute to these qualities?

5.2.   If so, which ones, and does it contribute to a sense of belonging?
5.3.   Does the festival influence relationships with neighbouring communities?
5.4.   Does the festival provide an opportunity to discover and/or showcase local talent?
5.5.   Does it contribute to a sense of pride in the community?

6. *Connectivity Question: Participation in the festival.*

Visitor Level

6.1.   How often have you visited the festival? (If no, only answer 6.2 and 6.7)
6.2.   Did you/Will you visit this year?
6.3.   Do you visit the festival with family, friends, alone?
6.4.   Did you deliberately arrange to meet others there?
6.5.   Did you presume automatically that you would meet others there?
6.6.   Where does this meeting take place i.e. Beer tent, entertainment marquee
6.7.   How accessible do you feel the festival is on a scale of 1 – 5.
              1 = Exclusive and not very accessible. 5 = Inclusive/very openly accessible.

Volunteer Level

6.8.   Do you volunteer at the festival? (If no, go to 6.11)
6.9.   If so, in what capacity?
6.10.   Why? What do you gain from volunteering?
6.11.   If not, why not?
6.12.   How easy do you think it is to get involved with the festival? What is the perception of the organisation and the committee locally?

Group Participation Level (Formal connections)

6.13.   What percentage of local groups do you think are represented at the festival?
6.14.   Do you think the number represented fairly reflects X?
6.15.   Does the festival contribute to establishing or strengthening groups within X? i.e. increased numbers, interaction between groups.
6.16.   If yes, how does it do this?
6.17.   Did you learn of groups which you didn't previously know existed because of the festival?
6.18.   Do you think the festival provides greater opportunities for creative/ recreational activities beyond the event?
6.19.   Have you, or people you know, ever joined a group as a result of the festival?

Individual Participation Level (Informal connections)

6.20.   Would you say the festival provides an informal meeting place for networking with friends and neighbours?
6.21.   Is there any evidence it creates new friendships?
6.22.   Does it contribute to a sense of commonality between people in X, of shared ideas and cohesion?
6.23.   Would you say the festival has any negative impact on individuals in the area?
6.24.   Has it any negative impact on you personally, and if so, what?

Appendix 8: Interview Schedule: Focus Groups

Prior to interview, establish age, place of residence, length of residence, any part played in the festival, whether a visitor or not and why. Participants chose 3 words to describe festival.

1) *Image of the Festival*

a. Think of what you consider important features of somewhere to live/work; does the festival help to sustain or develop these qualities here?
b. If so, which ones and in what way does it contribute?
c. Does it contribute to a sense of pride in the community?
d. Consistency or Innovation? Which word would you associate the festival with most? Why?

2) *Connections to Heritage*

a. Do you think the festival has any heritage content?
b. Does the festival help to make connections between contemporary X and the historic/heritage of X? If so, how does it achieve this?
c. Does the festival contribute to promoting and keeping alive the culture of X (a sense of place) or could it reinforce cultural stereotypes?

3) *Connectivity Questions*
Individual Participation in the festival. (Informal Connections)

a. In what way might the festival provide opportunities for interaction and networking informally with the X community (friends and neighbours?)
b. Some might say the festival has a negative impact on individuals in the area. What are your responses to that?

Group Participation Level (Formal connections)

c. What percentage of local groups do you think are represented at the festival?
d. Do you think the number represented fairly reflects X?
e. Does the festival contribute to establishing or strengthening groups within X i.e. increased numbers, interaction between groups? How?
f. Do you think the festival provides greater opportunities for cultural/creative activities (either at the festival or beyond the event)?