Community based research and evaluation within social regeneration:
An exploration of its potential contribution

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Abstract

This thesis explores community based research and evaluation within the social regeneration context of Objective 1, South Yorkshire. This project explores the potential contribution of community based research and evaluation to social regeneration programmes. Community based approaches are assessed in terms of how they provide feedback and their role in capacity building within the Objective 1 Programme. This thesis argues that community based research can contribute to regeneration programmes and is therefore a suitable vehicle for use within such contexts.

Addressing the experiences and perceptions of participants and stakeholders involved in community based research, this thesis adopted a qualitative approach to explore how such approaches are used and the types of approaches that exist in practice. The study highlights several types of community based research and the dynamics operating to influence such approaches. The barriers that exist within regeneration contexts are examined, alongside the benefits of using such approaches at both the level of the individual and the level of the community. Finally, the linkages between community based research and social capital are explored with particular attention paid to networking.

Despite the lack of literature discussing community based research approaches within regeneration contexts, literature from the health, social welfare and evaluation fields is drawn upon to highlight areas for empirical exploration. Key themes derived from the literature are empirically and analytically examined within the thesis to answer the five research questions underpinning the study.

Community based research is argued to achieve development work goals as well as creating visible local impacts resulting from the interaction of the research and development work. However, there are caveats to the range of benefits described. Therefore, the thesis makes clear policy recommendations in relation to applying community based research within regeneration.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Overview

The purpose of this project is to explore the potential contribution of community-based research within social and economic regeneration programmes. It was promoted by the increasing role of social science evidence informing policy in recent years (see Davies 2001) and the growing interest in more participative ways of producing data. This led to a need to examine the specific role of community based research, and to assess the potential for using lessons from one area within another. This thesis is an exploration of community based research and evaluation within the regeneration context of Objective 1, South Yorkshire. Objective 1 is a programme set up by the European Union to provide investment funds to help reduce inequalities in social and economic conditions, within and between member countries. The context for its development has been the continuing pace of globalisation and the growth of weightless economies, the enlargement of the European Union and consolidation of its agenda; and a changing national set of UK policies. Objective 1 South Yorkshire is one of three such programmes in the UK alongside Cornwall and Merseyside. All programmes are targeted at areas where the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head of the population is seventy five per cent or less of the European average. South Yorkshire qualifies for Objective 1 funding because it has a weak economy, which under performs. This is the result of the number and quality of jobs available as well as local businesses. Therefore, Objective 1 was established with the aim of tackling this decline in the economy through regeneration activity. Social and economic regeneration aims to reverse trends such as the combination of unemployment, poor skills, high crime and bad health which serve to exclude people living in specific areas.

South Yorkshire declined economically between 1979 and 1995 due to a massive loss of work especially in the old manufacturing industries such as steel and coal. In 1981 Sheffield had the third highest employment dependence of any urban area in Britain on mining, iron and steel (Taylor et al 1996). Due to the economy deflating and the World's over production of steel, Sheffield's industry literally closed down. In addition, hundreds of pits across the country, many in South Yorkshire were threatened and then closed. The scale and pace of the loss of industry led to high unemployment, migration, environmental decline and had an impact upon the local

community (Francis et al 2002). South Yorkshire's Gross Domestic Product has continuously fallen when measured against UK and European averages. Hence, the need for investment and regeneration from the Objective 1 programme.

It is within this context that this research aims to examine the pitfalls and benefits of applying community based research and evaluation models within social regeneration. Community based research in this context is defined as research carried out by non-academics including volunteers, community members, staff of regeneration organisations and non-academic experts such as consultants within community settings. Using a qualitative approach to gain understanding of participant's perspectives and experiences of regeneration, the pitfalls and benefits of community based approaches are examined through a series of five research questions. Firstly, what are the theoretical, methodological and practical issues in promoting community based research models within social and economic regeneration programmes? Secondly, does the context of a social regeneration programme provide the opportunities, resources and support required to facilitate the development of full community involvement and participation within both research and evaluation? Thirdly, how do the negative aspects of community based approaches impact within social regeneration programmes? What obstacles exist, on what levels and potentially how these can be overcome? Fourthly, what are the benefits of using such an approach? Do the benefits of this approach, as described in the literature such as capacity building and support for social change, apply to individuals involved in social regeneration programmes? How can these benefits be maximized? Finally, what are the links between social capital, community based research and regeneration?

These research questions are explored within the Priority Four remit of Objective 1, South Yorkshire, which focuses upon people, skills and communities. In attempting to regenerate South Yorkshire, the Objective 1 programme created partnerships to commission projects in specific areas defined as priorities. There are six priorities for which funds are available for investment in an attempt to stimulate economic growth. For example, Priority One aims to stimulate new growth and high technology business sectors. Comparatively Priority Five supports business investment through financing strategic and spatial development. This study focused upon the Priority Four remit of Objective 1, South Yorkshire which aims to develop economic opportunities in targeted communities. Priority Four is designed to help communities and the people within them to help create wealth and better places to live. Under this Priority Four remit, community partnerships produced action plans setting out the

needs and aspirations of the community as well as a range of activities to address these needs. The plans were used to access funding from Objective 1, and to deliver projects. A key aspect of developing the local action plan was gathering information and data to identify the needs and aspirations of the community. Objective 1 in using an action planning approach encouraged community based research approaches to develop locally led development work. This study explores the community based research carried out within this process, by gathering the accounts of those involved and viewing them through a qualitative lens.

Thesis structure

Chapter One demonstrates that there is an abundance of literature in health and social welfare about community based research but very little literature in community development work fields. There is limited recognition that research can be useful within community development and some suggestions that it can help to meet community development work ends. However, on the whole the literature focusing upon community based research is derived from other fields and so is assumed to apply to community based research in all settings including social regeneration. This assumption is made because using community based research does not have to be specifically related to complex health needs, social welfare issues or evaluation strategies. The lessons to be drawn from the relevant literature for community development work contexts are articulated and described. This chapter draws upon information from other fields; highlights community based research from this 'other' literature and argues how such approaches are potentially useful within regeneration. Finally, a number of themes are drawn from the existing literature for analytical exploration later in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Themes drawn out here and examined empirically include the definition of community based research, its epistemological foundations, its theoretical underpinnings, the methodology applied within community based approaches and how such research is axiologically utilised. Secondly, there are several key principles identified within this chapter which arguably underpin community based research and two of these are explored later, empowerment and involvement. Further themes, again identified from the literature in this chapter are taken forward into the analysis to focus upon the benefits of such approaches. These are skills development, the development of social relationships, positive local outcomes and increased local knowledge and strengthened local networks. This chapter highlights the problems associated with using community based research in other fields that are identified within the literature. Again several of

these are taken forward into the analysis to explore if these problems are relevant within regeneration contexts. These include power imbalances, lack of trust, issues of legitimacy, representation, time constraints, inequalities in participation, the need for leadership, resources and different needs and interests.

Chapter Two explores the literature focusing upon social capital. The concept of social capital is discussed much more in relation to regeneration settings and is on the whole seen as a positive influence within this context. However, social capital is again only discussed in relation to community based research in a limited manner so this chapter explicitly draws out links between social capital and community based research. For example, community based research is about bringing people together and networking and this is essentially the basis of social capital development as well. This chapter critically analyses the concept of social capital and explores how the concept hypothetically relates to community based research. The chapter argues that community based research can potentially contribute to the development of social capital. In addition, the chapter argues that any existing stocks of social capital may also enhance processes associated with community based research. Again the chapter identifies a number of themes for analytical exploration in Chapters Five, Six and Seven as well as drawing out a framework in which to conceptualise social capital in relation to community based research. Two key indicators of social capital identified within the literature and discussed within this chapter are trust and networks. Firstly, trust will be considered in relation to how it is formed, the factors that have a negative influence upon it and positive factors which facilitate trust and allow space for its creation and enhancement. Secondly, networks are illustrated as important for both successful regeneration and the development of social capital. Therefore attention is paid to networks associated with the processes of community based research. This chapter recognises that social capital is highly context dependent and so attention must be paid to the suitability of context. Experience must also be examined when using community based approaches within regeneration settings because in order to ensure success, key people are required to drive forward the research. Therefore, the role of community leaders must be recognised within this process. Inclusiveness is illustrated as problematic in this chapter, in relation to social capital. Hence, the final theme of inclusiveness is also examined empirically.

Chapter Three concentrates upon methodology, discussing how the research was carried out. This chapter describes the literature search strategy. The chapter then outlines the definition of community based research used within this study and

illustrates a hypothesis about social capital formation through community based research, to be empirically explored later. The chapter talks about the range of methods given consideration to answer the research questions posed in this study and illustrates why they were not chosen. The chapter outlines the research objective and questions, explaining the context in which this study occurred highlighting how Objective 1 South Yorkshire funds regeneration work and aims to tackle economic problems through a series of targeted measures. The chapter then discusses the comparative case study approach used in this study including design, sampling, access, analysis, reflexivity and ethical issues. The variety of researcher roles adopted is also illustrated. Finally the shortcomings of this study are discussed.

Chapter Four discusses the four types of community based research being explored as part of this study. The chapter explains how the research types were defined. The chapter highlights the differences between the types of research, their similarities and how these approaches relate to community development. The chapter discusses how the four types were derived arguing that despite differences between the types of research they exist along a continuum because all of the research was carried out for the same purposes within distinct geographical boundaries in each case. This continuum is based upon the level of control and participation within the empirical work within each approach. The chapter both explains and justifies how for the analytical purposes of this study the models of research are generally treated the same throughout chapters five, six and seven because the models are often used to provide common data. However, there are some distinctions made between them in the final concluding chapter, Chapter Eight when the policy implications of the different types of community based research are highlighted.

Chapter Five begins the analytical exploration of the themes outlined in Chapter One. This chapter discusses the findings of this study, which in general support the existing literature despite its non-social regeneration base. This chapter focuses upon definitions of community based research, the theoretical and epistemological foundations upon which it is based and the methodology encompassed within community based approaches. The chapter discusses how such research is axiologically utilised. The chapter then moves on to discuss empowerment and involvement, two principles said to underpin community based research. Finally, the benefits of community based approaches are discussed.

Chapter Six continues the discussion from Chapter Five by highlighting further areas in which the findings of this thesis support the existing literature drawn from health, welfare and evaluation. Again drawing on themes illustrated within chapter one but also exploring themes outlined in chapter two, the analytical exploration continues. This chapter pays attention to the range of problems associated with community based research. Then the chapter moves on to discuss the impact that community based research has upon social capital, exploring the themes of trust, suitability of context, the role of community leaders and inclusiveness.

Chapter Seven discusses the findings of this study in terms of emerging themes, which are not evident in the literature highlighted in Chapters One and Two. These themes are reflecting the original contribution to knowledge made within this thesis. These findings do not contradict the existing literature, rather they add to it. The new findings discussed within this chapter focus upon the themes of the nature of consultation and community based research, the social regeneration context, Objective 1, social capital and attitudes and values.

The final chapter, Chapter Eight summarises the main points of the thesis providing an overview of the research findings. The chapter addresses the research questions highlighted earlier by demonstrating the empirical evidence gathered in relation to each question. This chapter discusses the policy implications of the research findings in relation to a number of areas such as regeneration, social capital formation and involvement, making clear recommendations for commissioners of community based research. The chapter briefly discusses the limitations of this study, and then concludes by suggesting areas in which further research can be carried out.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO AND REVIEW OF THE
LITERATURE

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH AND
EVALUATION MODELS: DISCUSSING THEIR
APPLICABILITY TO SOCIAL REGENERATION
PROGRAMMES

Chapter One – Introduction to and review of the community based research literature

Community based research and evaluation models: Discussing their applicability to social regeneration programmes

Introduction

This chapter discusses the growing interest in more participatory ways of producing research within the social sciences and how these approaches theoretically relate to social regeneration. The current literature within public health, social work, and evaluation fields is highlighted to identify the potential benefits and pitfalls of such approaches, and the overall suitability of community based models of research and evaluation to social regeneration contexts. This literature within this chapter is primarily drawn from these fields because community based research approaches are discussed in depth within these areas. This chapter assumes that this literature is applicable to regeneration settings despite such contexts not being about complex health needs, social welfare or evaluation strategies. However, community based research approaches are used across a range of different fields for a number of purposes and therefore social regeneration is simply another applicable arena. The literature from these other fields was searched using a specific strategy, which is outlined in depth in Chapter Three. Following on from detailed searching, this chapter develops an argument to demonstrate the ways in which the health, social work and evaluation literature can be related to community development. In addition, the chapter draws out key themes evident within the literature in order to explore these further through fieldwork and analysis.

Context

Within the social sciences in recent years there has been a growing interest in more participatory ways of producing research, with participation by non-researchers in the different aspects of both research and design. Participation has been at varying levels from dissemination right through to design and control. Furthermore, participatory appraisal techniques are often used in Third World contexts to contribute positively to community development and empowerment. Catley (2000) argues that participatory appraisal encompasses a range of data collection techniques as well as

learning and facilitation, which enable local people to play an active role in defining, analysing and solving their problems. Participation within UK research is currently influenced by the Blair Government's promotion of bottom-up approaches, which encourage a greater level of community involvement (Waddington 2003). During the last decade the growing emphasis of public and private funders on outcome based community service initiatives has spurred interest in collaborative and participatory forms of research and evaluation (Cousins and Earl 1992, Fetterman 1996). Furthermore, some funders have called for research that is collaborative and community based rather than community placed because many contemporary social problems are complex and arguably ill-suited to traditional outside expert approaches to research. (Minkler and Wallerstein 2003). Community based research and evaluation is discussed within this context.

Community based evaluation is identified as a philosophy of inquiry encouraging active participation in research from all those involved (Cockerill et al 2000). Discussion within the evaluation field over the past two decades has focused upon the benefits and the problems of including programme participants and other key stakeholders in the design and administration of evaluations (Ayers 1987, Folkman and Rai 1997). Despite the challenges of such approaches researchers have discussed the importance of inclusion for improving evaluations, increasing the use of results and empowering participants (Papineau and Kiely 1996). Consequently, several participatory evaluation approaches are discussed within the literature including inclusive evaluation (Mertens 1999), participatory, collaborative, stakeholder and empowerment evaluation (Patton 1997).

Similar discussions are evident within the social welfare arena. Hess and Mullen (1995) discuss how multiple collaborative approaches to enhancing knowledge are emerging, arguing that they facilitate the development of practice knowledge. Debates within public health in relation to participatory approaches to research are ongoing. Israel et al (1998) discuss the key principles of community based research; locate the approach in relation to existing scientific paradigms; discuss rationales for its usage and explore the challenges and facilitating factors and their implications for conducting effective community based research aimed at improving public health. Baker et al (1999) also discuss the growing interest in working with communities to create change, highlighting the types of research characterising this process. Clearly the development of interactive research practices, involving both professional

researchers and the community, as partners within research is evident within public health (see Baker et al 1999).

Despite this increasing interest across a number of fields, a largely unexplored area remains. Are community based research approaches applicable within social and community regeneration programmes? Certainly, the political promotion of increased involvement is potentially paving the way for local people to become involved in regeneration as well as research. Evaluation has also become increasingly important in such contexts. Bachtler and Mitchie (1997) discuss the upgrading of importance accorded to the evaluation of European structural and cohesion policies with specific social regeneration aims, arguing that evaluation contributes to a significant increase in awareness and understanding of the value, purpose and conduct of research amongst a range of actors. Perhaps more importantly, they argue that the role of evaluation within European Union regional policy continues to grow. Furthermore, Diez (2001) argues that participatory evaluation seems to be more appropriate to the specific characteristics of some of the new regional policies and more suitable for sorting out the problems posed by their evaluation. Indeed, the European Union is acting as a driving force behind research and empirical analysis around new evaluation methods and as a disseminator of new evaluation techniques (Diez 2001). On the basis of this increased interest within evaluation and its potentially widening role, focus needs to be directed to participatory research to determine if it has a role to play within social regeneration. In fact, some research approaches, as tools of community development work are not new. For example, community profiling, needs assessments, social audits and community consultations have all played a role in initiatives such as City Challenge and Neighbourhood Renewal Initiatives (Hawtin et al 1994). These approaches are not well documented within the regeneration literature leaving the question of whether community based research and evaluation can contribute within such settings unanswered.

Overview of community based research

What is community based research?

Community based research has a long history and diverse origin reflected in its varied labels such as action research, participatory research, popular education and

empowerment research (Strand et al 2003). Community based research differs from traditional research by focusing less upon scientific and academic interests (Schlove 1997) and emphasising the participation and influence of non-academic researchers in the process of creating knowledge (Israel et al 1998). Community based research is rooted in the community, serves a community's interests and frequently encourages community members to participate at all levels (Sclove 1997). In short, community based research is research conducted within a community as a social and cultural entity, with the active engagement and influence of community members in either some or all aspects of the research process (Israel et al 1998). There is however, no specific 'type', or model for a community based research approach but all models generally involve the collaboration of community members, organisational representatives and researchers. This approach is an orientation to research with a heavy accent on trust, power, dialogue, community capacity building and collaborative inquiry working in combination and sometimes attempting to facilitate social change (Minkler and Wallerstein 2003). Within the literature community based research is described as a collaborative, participatory, empowering and transformative process (Hills and Mullett 2000). The literature offers several definitions of community based research, which overlap in terms of similarity. For example,

Community based research can be defined as research rooted in the community, serving a community's interests and frequently encouraging citizen participation at all levels (Sclove 1997: 542). Schlove's (1997) conceptualisation focuses upon participation whereas other definitions highlight collaboration.

Community based approaches value the contribution that community groups make in the development of knowledge about the community. Thus, "community based research is a collaboration between community groups and researchers to create new knowledge to bring about change" (Hills and Mullett 2000: 1).

Community based research has also been described as "...a collaborative approach to research that involves all partners in the research process and recognises the unique strengths that each brings" (Minkler and Wallerstein 2003:4).

The main difference between doing community based research and traditional approaches is in relation to the principle of involvement. Whereas traditional research approaches require both consent and involvement, the nature of this is

clearer: participants give time for interviews, questionnaires or focus groups and their involvement in the research so ends. However, community based approaches focus more upon the levels of participation desired by community members, arguably accommodating their wishes. Given this, the level of participation and collaboration by non-professionals will be examined within the regeneration context of Objective 1, South Yorkshire with attention being paid to the dynamics of such collaboration.

What are its principles?

The key principles of community based research remain both characteristic to the approach and unchanging according to its advocates. Firstly and epistemologically, community based research is argued to be consistent with constructivist and critical theory paradigms and their emphasis on the socially created nature of scientific knowledge (Israel et al 1998). Within a constructivist paradigm multiple, socially constructed realities exist and are influenced by social, historical and cultural contexts. From a critical theory standpoint reality is again influenced by a number of factors including social, political and economic contexts. Thus, community based research acknowledges the value of multiple ways of knowing and more significantly, it recognises the value of knowledge contributed by community members (Hills and Mullett 2000). Furthermore, in both approaches the researcher and the participant are interactively linked (Israel et al 1998). Thus, a clear principle of community based research is its critique of positivist approaches to data collection, which emphasise objectivity within research and tend to view research participants as objects to be studied rather than as actual participants within the research process. In contrast, community based research arguably rests on an extended epistemology which endorses the argument that the knower participates in the known and that evidence can be generated in many ways (Hills and Mullett 2000). Thus, community based research is ultimately community driven (Marullo et al 2003). However, despite this focus there is a caveat because other issues influence research such as funding. [1] However, despite these issues community based research in theoretically encouraging bottom-up participation, is applicable to regeneration contexts. [2]

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[1] Would community based research have taken place in several South Yorkshire communities without Objective 1 input and the availability of regeneration funding upon completion of such research?

[2] Traditional research approaches also recognise that there are multiple ways of knowing and encourage active participation within research from those studied, so this standpoint is not exclusive to community based research approaches and traditional approaches can still be used in regeneration contexts.

Secondly, in ontological terms, community based research arguably adopts a position influenced by postmodernist perspectives in relation to the exploration of knowledge. Stringer (1996) discusses knowledge within a community based research approach being about politics and understanding. Such research adopts a more critical approach with an interpretive focus. Community based research can be a search for meaning and an attempt to neutralize power differentials, to enable participants' views to be heard (Stringer 1996). Community based research is contextually located. So although it is possible to draw upon lessons of good practice from other studies, the distinctive nature of each project and community has to be recognised (Marullo et al 2003). Community based research concentrates on individual understandings and meanings, as they are experienced. Again this can be useful in regeneration contexts because the experience of deprivation and community problems can lead to solutions unrecognised in policy terms. However, if the inquirer and the participant are connected in such a way that the findings are inseparable from their relationship (Guba and Lincoln 1989), this connection does not necessarily have to work for the benefit of the participant. Fundamentally the outcome will depend upon the role the inquirer wishes to adopt and the way in which they foster research relationships.

Thirdly, on a theoretical level and in contrast to orthodox science, community based research views theory as unknown. Theory is created by traveling through the iterations of action and reflection, which leads to praxis and generates evidence for future practice (Hills and Mullett 2000). Thus, community based research adopts the same stance as traditional qualitative methods through induction rather than deduction.

Indeed, at the axiological level, that is in relation to the theory of value, community based research is said to be interested in more than just the usual research outcome. What's intrinsically worthwhile in doing community based research are the human benefits it creates. Involvement in research, decision making and the social context enable participants to flourish. Hills and Mullett (2000) describe human flourishing as resulting from participation in community based research. In regeneration language, the practical knowledge of research is not just personally fulfilling but is viewed as capacity building. Similarly, community based research views capacity building as worthwhile both at the individual and community level (Hills and Mullett 2000). Greve (1975) argues that a problem with traditional research is that the givers of interview time and yielders of information almost certainly never see the final report or

comment upon the draft. However, this is increasingly less likely due to ethical developments in the social science field. Many participants receive feedback, view their interview transcripts and are asked for comments as part of the research process and the case for involving people is just as tenable in relation to community research as it is to community development. It is arguable that in order for a community to develop its capabilities and operate more effectively, the research approach adopted should have an axiological impact and contribute more value at the level of the community. Yet just because research occurs in the community, it can not be assumed that it adopts a community based approach. Regeneration initiatives can operate in an exclusive manner and therefore any research they carry out can work in the same way.

So does community based research adopt specific methodological principles? Are these useful within regeneration contexts? In terms of methodology, the methods adopted as part of any community based approach are said to emerge from the chosen principles of the project and the research questions. Community based research is not and arguably cannot be method driven. To provide evidence for practice that involves people, the people themselves should be involved in deciding what the appropriate methods are for collecting data and how the data should be analysed. Whether or not this is the always the case in practice remains uncertain. There may be instances in which community based research is carried out for specific funding, projects and with exact outcomes in mind and as such the principles of the project may not influence the methodology as described in the literature. Funding heavily influences social regeneration and this is likely to have an impact upon any research method adopted. Therefore, despite allowing community members to participate and determine their own approach, such participation requires critical scrutiny. The availability of funding and the issue of pre-determined regeneration targets organised in a top-down manor can serve to reduce participation and eclipse the needs of participants. Furthermore, community based research is said to accommodate the full participation of those involved (Hills and Mullett 2000), yet participation within the literature is described as a continuum, some approaches allow involvement in the whole research process whereas others dictate a more limited level of participation. So 'full' involvement clearly varies.

Community based research is also underscored by the principle of partnership working, aiming to integrate knowledge and to produce benefits to all partners involved in the research process. In an ideal model, there is shared articulation of

questions, data collection and analysis and use of results. Partners should contribute from the position of their strengths and expertise (Marullo et al 2003). Community partners should be involved at the earliest stages of the project, to design the research objectives and organise the project. Community partners should also have influence in terms of project direction and be involved in the analysis and interpretation of the data as well as having input into how the results are distributed. The use of partnerships is currently politically encouraged therefore, community based research as a partnership activity is likely to be accepted as a regeneration tool. However, partnerships in practice are not without problems thus the principle of partnership working requires critical scrutiny. For example, the question of who sets the initial research agenda within any partnership needs examination. Although negotiation does occur, this may only be limited. [3]

Finally, community based research rests upon the principle of empowerment; it is said to build upon strengths and resources within communities and to promote a co-learning and empowering process. Thus, participants in the process arguably gain knowledge, skills, capacity and power (Israel et al 1998). However, achieving empowerment is contextually dependent. Barriers exist within different contexts serving to exclude participation and therefore empowerment. For example, language differences exist and minorities within minorities can be overlooked. Researching non-homogenous groups with a lack of understanding of such groups is likely to create problems. [4]

These aspects of community based research are the most commonly discussed and are relevant to regeneration contexts but should be viewed with a critical eye because community differences and dynamics are likely to affect the practice of community based research. There are also a range of other principles emphasised within the literature. Hills and Mullett (2000) outline six principles of community based research including systematic planning which addresses the research question and creates a logical relationship between the research question, methodology and methods. Community based research should also be relevant to the community, so the issues should be community related and involvement form stakeholders is

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[3] For example, Objective 1 South Yorkshire set the research agenda within the community action plan process and the procedures for reporting the research findings. It was within this framework that community partnerships were then allowed liberty in choosing their research approach.
[4] Crozier (2003) argues that in a world structured by race as well as class and gender, research of black people by white researchers creates an added dimension, especially where research intrudes into their everyday life.

important. Any research should be problem solving, by researching the issue it should help the community and result in societal change. Finally, sustainability should underpin such research in that the community completes the process and is left with a product and a capacity building legacy. However, whether these principles are fully adopted in all contexts remains open to debate. Israel et al (1998) also discuss several principles of community based research within the health field including the recognition of the community as a unit of identity, building strengths within the community, facilitating partnerships, integrating beneficial knowledge for those involved, empowerment and the dissemination of knowledge to all partners. Clearly, these principles can be applied to community based research models in any field, and more particularly within social regeneration. However, these principles are not exhaustive and obscure the fact that some may be more important depending upon the context of the research, the partnership collaboration and the organisations involved. Essentially, the application of any model of community based research in any field will depend upon many factors such as the level and nature of participation, the research context, the aims of partners and the resources available for the project.

What are its benefits?

Several beneficial results relating to involvement within community based research are illustrated within the literature. The development of skills, confidence and employability amongst community members involved in the process (Green et al 2000) can result from participation in community based research. The individual benefits gained from participating in evaluation activities include the acquisition of new skills and specialised knowledge (Whitmore 1991). Stakeholders can gain knowledge, training, experience and insights into the technical aspects of evaluation, whilst simultaneously developing an appreciation for the usefulness and meaningfulness of the data generated (Fetterman 1996). Participation can also develop new social relationships, trust and social efficacy (Schloves et al 1998). Individuals can clearly learn from each other by sharing their personal experiences as well as going out into the community to gather information (Papineau and Kiely 1996). Many individual benefits are discussed in the literature including the achievement of empowerment and personal development for those participating in the process. Involvement can contribute to personal development through the learning of specific skills, such as computer skills, planning skills and process skills (Papineau and Kiely 1996). Involvement in research can also create leaders at different levels, who represent a range of skills and functions (Greve 1975). Therefore, community based

research can create more sustainable improvements within the community by enhancing the position, skills and knowledge of people located within the research process. The evaluation literature suggests that participation can lead to a feeling of increased control therefore, the process of evaluation can be seen as contributing directly to the process of empowerment (Whitmore 1991).

Community based research can focus upon a more local agenda through the raising of specific local issues and concerns and often involves local groups reacting to problems at their level (Schloves et al 1998) allowing research to be steered in the direction of what local people really want. Consequently, such an approach can increase knowledge within local settings and lead to the freer flow of significant information. The process of involving community members in disseminating the research findings arguably leads to an increased acceptance and use of the results (Ayers 1987).

A final benefit associated with community based approaches is the facilitation of change. Community based research is positively linked to changes in services. Programmes and services including those for marginalised groups frequently fail to recognise the reality of daily life for users because they are designed by professionals according to their own routines, values and perceptions, or according to the organisational contexts in which they are located (Stringer 1996). Therefore, community based evaluation of existing services is arguably more likely to produce changes that people both want to see and require. Community based research is said to produce other wider changes because it leads to increased networking practices. Community based research involves the building up of useful contacts and the strengthening of social networks (Greve 1975). The creation of networks allows those who know what will work such as community members to communicate this to wider audiences such as funding agencies and development workers.

In summary, the benefits of community based research include increases in individual skills and personal development, increased local knowledge and social change emerging from the use of the research findings. Thus, community based research offers many benefits to individuals and groups employing the methodology. These

benefits can be hypothetically ascribed to social regeneration contexts if the approach were to be adopted within them. [5]

What are its problems?

However, all research is problematic and the literature confirms this by highlighting several negative aspects associated with community based research. Firstly, the problem of power imbalances is frequently discussed. Professional researchers can be slow to recognise their obligations to the people who supply them with information (Greve 1975). Problems can occur when professionals are expected to adopt a less controlling and more facilitating approach. Researchers vary in their orientation towards people as active subjects in the research process and towards critical scrutiny of both themselves and their objectives. Therefore consideration must be given not only to power but also to control (Cockerill et al 1998). Ideally power differentials should be neutralized so that the interests of the powerful do not take precedence over those of other participants (Stringer 1996). This bottom-up approach to power is arguably the best way to facilitate community based research (Israel et al 1998). However, how realistically this can be implemented in practice remains questionable. The difficulties in conducting participatory evaluations in overcoming the power differences, which often disempower participants (Nichols 2002), are highlighted in the literature. For example, conflicts occur when working with heterogeneous groups. Traditional research is similarly argued to disempower participants in the majority of cases by limiting levels of involvement. Finally power differences and the challenges of dealing with heterogeneous groups involved in the process add time and strain to the process (Mathie and Green 1997).

Partnerships are also problematic in relation to power imbalances. Partnership is a discourse often adopted within policy makers' discussions but the problems of power imbalances in the practice of partnerships are widely overlooked (Taylor 2000). The literature recognises how conflicts can occur as a result of differences in individual perspectives, priorities, assumptions, values, beliefs and language (Israel et al 1998).

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[5] Firstly, given that the goals of community development are similar to the benefits said to emerge when using community based research, it is arguable that such research is useful within regeneration contexts. Secondly, community based approaches are used across a range of contexts including health, social welfare within evaluation fields. Given that a range of generic benefits are discussed in the literature across these areas, the evidence suggests that community based research if used within regeneration is likely to result in these benefits. Furthermore, these benefits can be maximized through the use of support, training and the dissemination of models of good practice.

Undoubtedly, this can cause problems in practice. Furthermore, such approaches may maintain rather than challenge hierarchical relationships. In effect research can become part of the problem rather than the solution because holding the capability of defining need and focus means being powerful (Lloyd et al 1996). Both partnership and empowerment do not just simply happen, they require facilitating and resourcing. The question remains as to whether partnership research creates the illusion of change, co-opted to maintain the status quo or whether it really does make an empowering difference (Lloyd et al 1996).

Secondly, establishing trust can be problematic. Given that research does not always achieve its aims, it is unsurprising that a lack of trust is illustrated as a problem. This frequently discussed challenge relates to the relationships between researchers and non-professionals in that there may be a lack of trust and a perceived lack of respect between them (Israel et al 1998). Furthermore, areas in which high levels of in-group trust exist prior to research may be less likely to trust outsiders (Fukuyama 2001) such as professional researchers and agencies involved in facilitating research. If this is the case then overcoming distrust and building trust is complicated. The literature assumes that academics and professionals unquestioningly accept community based research. However, professional and academic involvement does not always happen, consequently neither does acceptance.

Thirdly, the issue of legitimacy is raised within the literature. Community based research is very similar to action research which, despite increased support in the professional community, has yet to be accepted by many academics as a legitimate form of inquiry (Stringer 1996). Questions of legitimacy can arise when this approach is adopted because some commentators do not regard community based research as genuine. The predominance of the scientific method in some areas may make it difficult to convince colleagues, funders and potential partners of the value of this type of research (Israel et al 1998). Indeed, despite community based evaluation being widely accepted a concern still persists that the scientific integrity, reliability and validity of these studies is compromised (Telfair and Mulvihill 2000). Although some commentators remain unconvinced about the validity of community based approaches, advocates answer that scientific and objective approaches to research are also problematic (Mertens 1999) and open to criticism. Supporters of community

based research argue that traditional scientific and objective research tends to adopt an external gaze which limits that participation and influence of the researched. Indeed, although traditional research can be focused upon less advantageous groups in society such as those in poverty, it is not always carried out on behalf of the research subjects and is therefore criticised on these grounds as well.

A further area in which potential problems may arise is that of representation. Involvement, especially involving the most vulnerable is a challenge. Key questions, which require answers, include who actually represents the community and more crucially how to define the community (Israel et al 1998)? Community is another discourse employed within policy makers' jargon, often without the recognition that communities are diverse rather than homogenous entities (Taylor 2000). Although community development work can build familiarity and trust and lay the foundation for other projects to improve the quality of life, problems can arise in relation to staff domination and domination by particular residents (Ferguson et al 1999). This problem is also applicable to research projects within social regeneration settings. Folkman and Rai (1997) in reflecting upon facilitating a participatory community self evaluation describe their overall experience as maneuvering between different world views and coping with the pressures, anxieties and frustrations which followed. Issues of representation are now at least more widely recognised within social regeneration settings even if they remain unresolved.

Finally community based research is argued to be generally more time consuming than traditional research. This is a consequence of establishing trust and good working relationships amongst all of those involved in the process and in particular, participants. Problems may result from the perceptions of some partners about the speed at which results should be delivered (Israel et al 1998). For example, funding agencies often impose deadlines for the completion of research and the submission of final reports, which influences the way in which research is conducted. Most research approaches are time consuming and when research operates in practice, time can play a crucial role in what is realistically achieved. A lack of time can lead to smaller samples and methodological shortcuts. Given that community based research is likely to take more time this issue is particularly pertinent in a regeneration setting in which time limited funding heavily influences practice and inclusion is already a problematic area.

Within the literature, commentators highlight a range of barriers to developing and implementing community based research across a range of settings. Hence, these obstacles will play a role in social regeneration contexts and as a result must be recognised. Despite these barriers, community based research can work because the literature displays examples across several fields.

Examples of community based research

Schlove (1997) illustrates an example of community based research in the town of Woburn in Massachusetts, where cases of childhood leukemia were abnormally high. A parent began gathering information about the disease and noticed a geographical distribution in the spread of the disease. This led to concerns that the disease was related to the local water supply. After being rebuffed by state officials, several affected families began their own research. Eventually with the help of scientists at the Harvard School of Public Health and a specialist organisation a link was established between the cluster of leukemia cases and industrial carcinogens found in the local water supply. This led to a civil suit against the organisations responsible and an out of court settlement for the affected families. In this example community based research developed understanding and contributed to knowledge that made a concrete and constructive difference within the specific community setting in which it was employed. Schlove (1997) argues that in this case community based research was successful because it resulted in financial gain and more importantly the achievement of social justice.

Green et al (2000) also describe community based research adopted as part of a social capital survey carried out in South Yorkshire. Local residents were recruited and trained by Northern College who then assisted in designing a survey and collecting the survey data. The residents, augmented by a team of eight experienced interviewers from Sheffield Hallam University, successfully carried out over four thousand interviews. The local people also played a part in the dissemination of the results. Green et al (2000) argue that this community based research project was successful because it achieved a good response rate; high quality work and local residents gained new skills, work experience and financial reward. Given that regeneration aims to develop skills and increase employment levels, an example of such research within the South Yorkshire context suggests that community based research can contribute in this area. However, the actual research results of the

Green et al study (2000) require critical examination to assess if the author's claims are valid.

Polanyi and Cockburn (2003) also illustrate a case study of community based research with injured workers in Ontario, in which a partnership was created between the workers and academics. The authors argue that such research can stimulate critical thinking, learning, capacity building and action but problems exist in practice. For example, creating equal partnerships and negotiating power are constant challenges.

Given that other countries including America and the Netherlands have a far more developed approach towards community based research, the evidence suggests that such approaches operate in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes. The Dutch Universities have a network of research centres conducting community based research. [6] Such an approach has had several positive impacts. For example, it has enabled environmentalists to analyse industrial pollutants as well as workers to evaluate the safety and employment consequences of new production techniques (Schlove 1997). Hence, social regeneration is theoretically another area in which these approaches could be used.

Despite the case studies demonstrating some success in practice, commitment to community based research principles and the demands of the process will raise challenges (Polanyi and Cockburn 2003). One of the issues in gaining understanding of this approach is the measurement of success. Is success described in terms of the completion of the research project, in terms of people gaining skills or in terms of the wider benefits ascribed to a whole community? These varying aspects of success are emphasised within the literature and demonstrate that success itself is open to interpretation. If success is perceived and constructed in various ways by different people, can community based research as an approach be assessed?

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[6] Each of the Netherlands 13 universities has created a network of science shops which coordinate, conduct and summarise research on questions posed by community groups, public interest organisations and local government agencies. Students supervised by academics conduct the research to gain qualifications and publications (Schlove 1997).

How can such research be evaluated?

Despite the examples described in the literature by several authors supporting the approach, do positive outcomes always emerge from doing community based research? The literature describes the problems associated with using community based research but fails to demonstrate examples of bad practice in which such approaches have not achieved their aims. Such examples would provide insight into ways in which to avoid negative consequences of community based research. The question also remains as to who is looking out for the interests of the supposed beneficiaries. There is a gap in the literature here with emphasis place upon planning and process (Smith 1999) rather than success.

Holman (1987) offers some insight by arguing that the effectiveness of such research refers to the extent to which non-researchers have become involved in the research process. So effectiveness is about those involved in the research defining the issues to be examined, deciding how the topic should be researched, participating in collecting the research material and interpreting the findings. Effectiveness in this sense relates to whether non-researchers involved in such projects actually own the research. Given that community based research encourages involvement, partnerships, skills development and empowerment, its successful evaluation should be based upon how participants describe their experiences of the process as well as any ensuing positive outcomes.

There may however be other benchmarks against which to examine community based research. Firstly, if the research enables both the researchers and respondents to become more fully aware of the issues being investigated it is arguably effective. Secondly, if the individuals involved in the research use the findings for their own purposes, it is again more effective according to Holman (1987). However, using research in such a way raises ethical questions such as whose purpose is the research being used for and is this to the benefit of the entire community? Despite this ethical caveat, if community based research raises local awareness and has a local use for participants then it is adding value beyond what traditional research offers and it is fulfilling the axiological principle upon which it is based.

Application to social regeneration contexts

Given this overview of community based research and the examination of the theoretical benefits and pitfalls relating to the approach in other fields, the question remains as to what the more specific and practical use of the approach might be within social regeneration contexts. Weinberg (2003) argues that community based research has potential for generating measurable development work goals within rural communities. So can the approach contribute to community development in other contexts? Hypothetically there are several areas where community based research can contribute within regeneration, as there is scope to use such approaches in a number of ways.

Change of focus in terms of evaluation objectives

Firstly, community based research can be used to change the focus of research objectives. Different types of data emerge from different styles of data collection and whatever type of research is conducted, funder's expectations have to be met. Consequently, many social regeneration evaluations focus upon meeting targets and financial accountability. The data coming from such appraisals is generally designed to ensure value for money and rigorous project management (Harrison 2000). The evaluation data gathered tends to be numerical and related to quantifiable outputs. In simply examining if targets have been met traditional evaluation approaches fail to ascertain if such outputs were what the community really wanted or needed. They also overlook quality within the results achieved by the projects. For example, several hundred jobs can be created within a community but it does not necessarily follow that community members have gained more work. Blalock (1999) argues that the nearly exclusive emphasis on outputs and results, frequently in the absence of commitment to collect information about how and why results occur, may be leading to flawed social policy and misguided judgments.

This focus upon quantifiable outputs may also overlook the 'softer' aspects of success such as the benefits of participation, increased capacity and improvements in quality of life. Barr and Hashagen (2000) argue that the lack of an agreed agenda within community development initiatives between what gets achieved and what funders want leads to a lack of focus upon qualitative outcomes. This also may be

true of traditional research taking place within this context and so qualitative measurement could be used in a traditional manner to collect information about more subtle changes (Patton 1980) occurring in regeneration. However, using such an approach would not achieve the same results as using community based research in terms of skill development, ownership and increased capacity at the individual level. Whether traditional or community based approaches are adopted it is arguable that it is not sufficient to define programme effectiveness and quality by counting the number of people serviced or the numbers attending because these measures are limited constructions of programme effectiveness. Social programmes can be made accountable for the difference they make in the lives of their participants, not just for providing a service (Greene 1999). These meanings for participants and the quality of their experiences are arguably less effectively measured in quantitative terms (Patton 1980). Qualitative approaches allow researchers to gain more depth as well as discursive aspects and meaning. In addition, qualitative approaches create space in which to accommodate articulation and understanding from participants. It is arguable that in order to answer questions relating to this type of success, detailed in-depth descriptions representing people in their own terms are required and quantitative approaches measure these differently. Indeed, it has become increasingly apparent that added value is a key issue for the voluntary sector with an associated need to demonstrate it. Some regeneration initiatives do not achieve the 'hard' outputs set out on paper yet they most certainly will have made some sort of progress. Wainwright (2003) calls this the 'distance traveled' and argues that such progress can be seen as stepping stones en route to the hard outcomes. Such stepping stones are achievements and therefore are measurable alongside quantitative outputs, with community based research as a tool able to conduct such a task.

Although traditional approaches can shift the direction of evaluations, community based research could be used to provide qualitative detail, to shift the focus from outputs to outcomes, and in particular to involve local people at the heart of the research process. Collis et al (2003) discuss the diversity of impacts achieved within the voluntary sector and how organisations highlight this using language such as quality of life, improved health and well-being, enhanced cultural life, community involvement and community cohesion. Such use of language suggests that these organisations have a broader agenda and are not solely driven by outputs. Hence a community based approach could incorporate such descriptions as well as other alternative conceptualisations of success into findings whilst increasing local

involvement and including the voices of the programme recipients. This might go some way towards combating many of the problems associated with the performance measures often used within social regeneration. Although gaining local data remains problematic in both community based and traditional approaches, arguably evaluations within the voluntary sector should be carried out using the same principles that govern community development work itself (Wainwright 2003). So communities should be involved at every stage of the process rather than professional researchers working on their behalf.

Despite many social regeneration programmes completing evaluations these often tend to be carried out after a project's life span has ceased. However, evaluation is arguably not an event, it is continuous and should be integral to practice because it provides reference points and therefore allows critical judgments to be made about the future (Barr and Hashagen 2000). Community based research can be used to evaluate programmes on a more continuous basis and to steer social regeneration in the directions defined by target communities. Indeed, the increasing body of literature within the evaluation field arguing for the involvement of community members in the evaluation process recognises that those living within deprived community settings are often excluded from knowledge generation (Mertens 1999). The techniques discussed in relation to the many styles of evaluation are applicable to social regeneration contexts. For example, stakeholder evaluation (Lawrence and Cook 1982), empowerment evaluation (Schroes et al 2000), participatory evaluation (Papineau and Kiely 1996) and more qualitative evaluation approaches (Patton 1980). Alternative approaches can gain the involvement of local people in evaluating projects relevant to changes occurring within their local area.

Local data and local auditing: Shaping actual local need

Secondly, community based approaches can enable regeneration programmes to gain key information on crucial local issues pertinent to specific community settings. Obviously traditional research can be used to access local people's views but a community based approach arguably achieves the same whilst adding more value in community development terms. Indeed local data is often already available however this generally does not illustrate what community members want to see, which improvements they rate as the most important and what they think about current and planned interventions. Although existing data can be used to support funding applications, there remains little point in gaining funding to physically renovate a

building when community members would prefer to have a local summer play scheme. Indeed, community participation and development measures are clearly not reflected in many statistics and could, for example include tracking people's sense of identity, their confidence in the well-being of the community as well as their sense of ownership (Robinson et al 1998). Community members are key stakeholders and their views are important and perhaps more easily accessed through community based consultation. Waddington (2003) argues that successful regeneration is predicated upon community-oriented policies, which involve, encourage and empower. Community based research as an approach can enable involvement and empower participants with documented local research data to drive forward development.

The Government's own Task Force advised that "Time and money must be devoted to community capacity building, which can take up to two years, so that local people can identify their own aspirations and priorities" (1998:34). However, both community workers and researchers tend to view what counts as knowledge differently (Corrigan 1989) demonstrating how social relations within the research process play an important role in the creation of research evidence (Truman and Raine 2001). Community based research can act as a mechanism for allowing the voices of the community to emerge and as a means of shifting the balance of power (Barnes and Mercer 1997). There is evidence to support such arguments. Collis et al (2003) describe the advantages of such an approach. The local researchers employed in their project added both breadth and depth to research findings. They were more capable of picking up on interviewee's fears and concerns and their different backgrounds allowed them to draw contrasting conclusions to professional researchers working on the project.

Indeed, local people hold local information which is useful in designing research, gathering data, targeting key groups and including all sections of the community (Richie 1996). Coulton and Hollister (1998) argue that neighbourhood information is an essential element of community building; a community can not truly create a responsive or responsible agenda for change without knowledge. Groups within different communities have the ability to diagnose their own problems based upon their complex understandings of the way in which the community operates. Consequently, communities can set their own agendas to move regeneration forward but to do this they need space and the possibility of acting outside wider partnerships (North and Bruegel 2001). Local people know the problems; they understand what

motivates people and therefore know what solutions are likely to work (Ward & Lewis 2002). The possibility remains that community based research is a potential vehicle for local communities to set their own agenda and in setting their own agendas, local communities may ensure greater regeneration success. Thus, community based research can act as a means to shaping projects to meet the actual needs of people in the community, rather than imposing solutions determined by outsiders (Simpson et al 2003). However, community based research can only act as a means to shape projects if funding bodies allow regeneration initiatives space in which to develop their own agenda. Recognition is given to the potential contributions of community based research but the authors fail to account for the limitations experienced by funding agencies as organisations. Funding is often only available for specific predetermined changes decided at a high level. Hence, the space for local agenda often does not exist and no amount of community based research is likely to change this in practice.

A further area in which community based research can potentially contribute is in relation to local service provision. The services provided by social regeneration programmes are for the local community and crucial to their success is their relevance to users. Lawrence and Cook (1983) argue that if evaluations are to be used rather than ignored, they should focus upon answering questions of immediate concern to stakeholders, and providing information that the stakeholders want. Community based evaluation can assess existing services, determine modifications and review the potential use of new services. Thus, community based research can stimulate new ways of looking at on-going projects and services, and can help community groups to respond to local pressures by adjusting their priorities (Cooper 1986). Moreover, social regeneration initiatives need information that is timely but which only uses modest resources to gather (Coulton and Hollister 1998). Given this discussion, it may be the case that community based research can contribute in this area but there may be caveats.

Community based evaluation can also be used to audit existing strengths in a given area. Skinner and Wilson (2002) discuss using research to assess community strengths by looking at groups and services within a given area, examining organisations, the support they receive, the support they require and how they can be enhanced. Community members can conduct this research to facilitate better organisation of service provision within given areas by avoiding duplication. Such an approach allows for local diversity to be reflected within the research findings.

To meet targets

Community based research can contribute to social regeneration programmes through the achievement of targets. Targets are a recent addition to regeneration programmes especially elements such as volunteer numbers and the third sector. Increasingly regeneration programmes have pre-determined targets such as training community members, recruiting volunteers and capacity building. Using community based research can contribute to these targets in several ways, through facilitating training and through local people carrying out research. Local people are resources (Ritchie 1996); therefore their involvement increases the resources available to meet targets. Thus, community based research can add to volunteer numbers, job creation and skills improvement whilst simultaneously gaining useful and relevant local information. Community development is said to operate on a core set of values, which include community led collective action, participative democracy, empowerment, problem focused learning and collaboration (Barr and Hashagen 2000). Such principles also apply to community based research, which can be used to achieve development goals and ends. This lends support to the value of community based research within such contexts.

The action research literature recognises that research involving professionals transmitting the philosophy and skills of social research to individuals and groups within the community can raise levels of social, economic and political competence amongst them. Therefore, the case for involving local people in identifying issues, formulating measures, conducting activities, handling resources and monitoring and evaluating processes is just as appropriate in relation to community research as it is in respect of community development (Greve 1975). Indeed, it is arguable that no clear line exists between the activities of community development and social research used in this way because they both draw upon a similar pool of knowledge and skills. Local people doing research are engaging in a form of community learning and skills development (Greve 1975). Thus, the 'spin-offs' of involvement in research are the development of confidence, knowledge and skills valuable to both individuals and the wider community (Richie 1996). Such skills potentially remain within the local area for future use. In this sense community based approaches can establish a group of researchers available for future consultation and research projects (Ritchie 1996), enhancing local network structures and capacity building. Waddington (2003) describes how the sustained application of community development initiatives and the politicking of key actors served to empower local residents and raise social capital

in the location he examined. Community based research can play a role in this process of capacity building and empowerment within regeneration settings.

In addition to meeting the localised targets of specific regeneration initiatives, community based evaluation can have a wider impact. Participatory evaluation is a dynamic and flexible process open to the participation of economic and social actors and emphasising mutual learning and plural values (Guba and Lincoln 1989, Patton 1997). The literature illustrates how participatory evaluation as an approach in certain contexts makes it possible to convert evaluation into an exercise contributing to achieving the goals of regional policy (Diez 2001).

A further target for many community development initiatives is the creation of and participation within networks. Community based research can contribute to networking as it helps to extend contacts within localities and develops involvement from others (Cooper 1989) for example, volunteers, local respondents, partnership agencies and funders. Research can provide people with a clearer understanding of power, local structures and local decision making processes (Cooper 1989). Networks arguably operate as structures of opportunity, facilitating access to different kinds of resources or alternatively circumventing such passage. This may be especially important in cases where deprivation is geographically concentrated (Phillipson et al 2004). Community based approaches can operate to open up networks and to develop linkages, allowing participants to unlock and access positive opportunities.

Finally, research can also become part of the process of creating targets as well as meeting them. Hawtin et al (1994) argue that it serves no useful purpose to simply produce information for its own sake. However, an action planning approach to research identifies issues and priorities whilst measuring targets by establishing if points on an action plan have been met. This approach is useful in demonstrating the value of regeneration to local people who may be both skeptical and cynical.

Contribution to sustainability

Community based research as an approach can contribute to social regeneration in terms of making a sustainable impact. Such approaches have a more lasting and sustainable impact when compared to traditional methods. Hills and Mullett (2000) argue that when orthodox research ends then so does the project however, this is not

the case with community based approaches. Community based approaches are said make a lasting contribution because of the enhanced capacity they create in terms of the community being able to engage in research and evaluation. For example, community members can conduct further research to support applications for other research grants. However there is a caveat, the question remains unanswered about whether the opportunity to use such research will emerge and whether local people will be able to access resources such as money for future research. In addition, the level of sustainability achieved after community based research is likely to differ depending upon both context and politics.

Many social regeneration programmes have a limited life span and only implement short term projects leaving the sustainable impacts they make open to debate. Despite the debate about the level of sustainability created, by employing community based research and providing local people with skills, sustainability is arguably more achievable because local people are left with knowledge and skills to use in the future. For example, generic research skills, enhanced organisational capacity, administrative skills and analytical tools.

Social science contributions

Finally, applying community based research in practice within social regeneration can be useful in academic terms. Given the lack of documentation about community based research within social regeneration use within such contexts can create lessons from practice. Ultimately, such information can contribute to social policy. Some social regeneration programmes are allocated funding for research including monitoring and evaluation; therefore they are able to adopt a piloting approach to using community based methods. Community based research can make a significant contribution to debates about evidence-based practice because its focuses upon practical issues, problem solving and change. Evidence for practice is created which is immediately useful and relevant to communities. By engaging all stakeholders in the research process community based models do not leave to chance the usefulness of any outcomes (Hills and Mullett 2000). Indeed, the evaluation process can become a powerful tool for the promotion of collaboration and the commitment of the community in relation to future development if such opportunities are created; evaluation should provide information which leads to better knowledge of the problems for which solutions are needed (Diez 2001). One way in which this can be

achieved is to encourage the participation of those experiencing the problems for example, residents in areas undergoing regeneration.

Problems within social regeneration contexts

On a theoretical level and on a more practical methodological level, community based research seems to offer social regeneration a positive contribution. However, as previously highlighted it must be recognised that such approaches are unlikely to be used without problems. Some problems may emerge which are specifically related to regeneration.

On a practical level, social regeneration organisations have multiple and competing demands on both their time and resources. Institutional demands can make it difficult for people in organisations to devote time and energy to community based research (Israel et al 1998). Following on from a pilot study to assess the potential contribution of residents' consultancy approaches, Taylor et al (2002) conclude that for local people to successfully do research they need a number of skills. These include institutional knowledge, participatory skills, technical skills, negotiation skills, conflict and dispute resolution skills, literacy and numeracy skills and financial management skills. Fundamentally then local people require a high level of training and support from the facilitating organisation. The question remains as to whether this would be available within social regeneration settings. Furthermore, many organisations can not accept community input because of their structures and processes; these may need challenging to secure genuine involvement (Ritchie 1996). So although research can and has helped to build capacity for political activism, this has not been in ways that have changed the fundamental position of any neighbourhood (Ferguson et al 1999).

A further practical problem may relate to funding. Funding is always an issue within regeneration, with initiatives often having time limited resources. Consequently, there can be an associated impact upon the viability of any potential projects involving community based research. Even if community members are willing to volunteer for research projects, it is likely that they will require training and support from others, involving time and money that may not be available. Thus, community based research faces barriers in obtaining funding and indeed in meeting the expectations of funding institutions (Israel et al 1998). Even if funding is gained for community based research, other problems may ensue. The funder's agenda has to be seen as

exerting a primary influence within all research projects (Lloyd et al 1996) and this may differ from the agenda agreed within the community. There may also be pressure facing professionals in relation to the construction of knowledge for funders in specifically accepted ways (Corrigan 1989). This can impact upon the findings of any community based research study if research results have to be presented in accordance with funders' expectations.

Indeed, funding may impact in a wider sense. As social regeneration projects are targeted initiatives, targets must be achieved to secure future funding. This has implications for the role of community based research if it does not fit with existing targets. Consequently, achieving targets may act as a further practical barrier to the actual realisation of community based research. On a more theoretical level, there may also be a lack of knowledge about what both research and evaluation are for (Grimshaw and Stewart 1999) thus, some local projects may only pay tokenistic acceptance to research and evaluation leaving little or no space for a community based approach. Local evaluation may not fit with national policy goals and targets. Biott and Cook (2000) discuss the limited resources for local evaluation and the pressure for evidence of rapid impact against prescribed indicators. Thus, the role of the local evaluator may remain limited within a larger context. Moreover, problems of bureaucracy may impact upon the research agenda in relation to pre-determined targets. Skinner (1996) talks about the high levels of control exercised by those in administrative and managerial positions and argues that impossible objectives and non-sensical practices may be prescribed. This often leads to outcomes in which practitioners have little investment. If this is the case then non-professional practitioners are likely to have even less. The control and direction of research in this context is obviously problematic.

A further problem in social regeneration contexts may relate to diversity because communities are not homogeneous entities and this can result in problems in terms of representation. This leads to theoretical questions such as who really reflects the community's views? Do groups within the community have competing agendas? What about language differences and cultural diversity (Israel et al 1998)? The question of who sets the agenda in community based research is always a problem and there is no easy solution (Richie 1996). Consequently, community projects and settings pose difficult and unique challenges in designing and implementing sound evaluations because differences in emphasis and direction may create a lack of conceptual and practical fit between service providers and evaluators (Telfair and

Mulvihill 2000). Furthermore, even if multiple stakeholders' views are included in setting research objectives, it still may be difficult to represent all voices equally. There may be dilemmas regarding how to decide which stakeholder's views take precedence over others (Schroes et al 2000). Such issues of representation can lead to negative consequences because where processes for inclusive participation are inadequate and where community consultation is deficient, a real sense of alienation can develop in a community. Such alienation can create rifts that go beyond the boundaries of any particular project and affect the self image and future viability of the community (Simpson et al 2003). Research by Bennett et al (2000) on community regeneration indicates that the views and preferences of community representatives tended to be marginalised within local regeneration partnerships. This may well affect community based research. The issues of power within communities must not be overlooked in relation to who in the community actually gets involved and who controls the process of community based research.

Community itself requires examination in relation to applying community based research in practice. The past decade has seen a revival of ideas about community in public policy and academic debate. For policy makers the values of moral cohesion, responsibility, reciprocity, consensus and trust are all held implicitly within community (Taylor 2003). Within current social policy discourse, community is viewed as positive and unproblematic. Robson (2000) argues that community is considered a positive, symbiotic state and that the concept is used to evoke ideas of co-operation, lack of conflict and democratic decision making. Community is seen as a weapon against fragmentation, uncertainty and the problems of modern life (Taylor 2003). However, communities can fracture along religious, racial or ideological lines and have been sites of exclusion as well as inclusion (Crow and Allen 1994). There are particular problems in communities experiencing exclusion, dislocation and economic uncertainty. For example, trust within such areas can still be high but only when dealing with insiders (Fukuyama 2001). In addition, particular residents may dominate and control regeneration practices at the expense of other residents' interests. Therefore in applying community based research in order to achieve more effective social regeneration in geographically problematic areas, the more negative aspects of community may supercede the positive benefits associated with such approaches. Thus, 'community' based research may not be about homogenous community ideals and could be used to effectively support one section of a community, marginalising and excluding others and ultimately fracturing communities. Perhaps more fundamentally, despite community being one of the oldest concepts in

the sociological book, it remains one of the most challenging and contentious (Yar 2004). Community can be defined and understood in various ways therefore, the same is also true of community based research. Given this discussion both community and community based research can not be examined without reference to current sociological and political discourse. Therefore, the analytical framework through which community based research is explored within this study takes into consideration the negative aspects of community and explores if they are reinforced through such research approaches. The analytical framework is outlined and discussed in the next chapter.

Of course social regeneration programmes do not exist in a vacuum, they are part of a wider political climate. The evaluation literature argues that an understanding of the political context and the views of the larger society are necessary to give clues about acceptance and support in relation to specific programmes (Nichols 2002), including social regeneration. Therefore, an assessment must be made of the political climate surrounding the need to be addressed by a particular programme, as well as the likely political support. If the political environment does not favour specific interventions then even positive research and evaluation findings may be deemed as being of little value, irrespective of the innovative methods used to collect them (Nichols 2002). Underlying much research and development work is the assumption that the government will commit to supporting regeneration and development work (Francis et al 2002) but resources can often be directed in other areas.

Even if there is support for such approaches, both funding and time are available and the political environment is tolerant, participation remains vital. Participation can be a problem within any research project and in any regeneration setting. Most community based approaches assume that active participation will be achieved from community members and other stakeholders. However, this may not always be the case. Participants may not wish to give time, energy and space to research for a number of reasons. Holding negative perceptions of research and its likely outcomes can affect participation. Schroes et al (2000) discuss how several of the key assumptions of the empowerment evaluation approach were not fully supported in their case study of Comprehensive Community Initiatives, including active participation and support for the evaluation process. Although much has been written about the advantages and disadvantages of empowerment evaluation from the evaluator's perspective, little evidence has been gathered assessing how the approach is viewed through the eyes of the evaluation consumers (Schroes et al 2000). This is arguably the case in many

community based research approaches. The literature on community based approaches highlights the principle of participation as key in successful research. Although guidelines suggest gaining involvement and ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are involved, there is little recognition that involvement is not automatic. Who decides that all relevant stakeholders are participating? What about the hidden agendas of all engaged within the research including community members? Power and control do not just operate at the level of organisations, individuals can also exclude others to achieve their own ends. Therefore, there are challenges in gaining involvement, which include finding the stakeholders and then convincing them of the benefits of participation (Lincoln 1998). Even if involvement and participation take place, this may not result in benefits for all community members, as participation is not necessarily a process with positive outcomes.

The literature offers some advice on factors that may contribute to successful participation. Ayers (1987) following on from a case study and subsequent discussions with participants, suggests the implementation of administrative support, clear goals and a time limited process. A sufficient number of stable members are also necessary to complete tasks. However, even if participants are successfully recruited, this may not mean successful community based research as theorised within the literature. Issues of participation, knowledge creation, power and praxis are not abstract phenomena but authentic tensions actually enacted within community settings (Wallerstein and Duran 2003). Participation and partnership, have a capacity for tyrannical decision making and reproducing inequalities (Jones 2003). Yet participation remains a key tool in the success of community based research approaches. As a result problematic participation may mean ineffective community based research.

Following on from active participation, such models also require the active dissemination of research findings. However, the issue of dissemination and the use of knowledge within such contexts is not straightforward. If there is no link between producing evidence and ensuring the effective communication of the findings, the sustainable impacts of any community research project are questionable. Both research and action are necessary for success (Cooper 1989) implying that the production of research findings should not be considered as the end of the process. For research to have an impact, findings need to be circulated so that the information enters the public domain (Hawtin et al 1994). Current work in neighbourhood revitalization often occurs with little critical attention to the ways in which knowledge

is used in these experiences. Arguably knowledge can operate to structure and limit what can be done within regeneration. Consequently, local knowledge despite being perceived as privileged and insightful because it is generated from experience is still seen as less significant than 'expert' knowledge, which is necessary to ensure change (Fraser and Lepofsky 2004). Clearly, this has implications for community based approaches and begs the question of whether such research will simply be perceived as inferior local knowledge by experts or whether the process will provide empirical evidence that can be used by local people to achieve change. The policing and control of knowledge within social regeneration settings is a process fraught with difficulties with dissemination linked to ownership and control. A problem that may emerge in any community based research setting is that of ownership: who will own the research, who will use the product and how will the product be used? A negative consequence arising from community based research is the potential disempowerment of both participants and members of the wider community through unrealistic raising of hopes. So although active dissemination should take place, this must be carefully managed.

In addition, several methodological barriers exist when applying community based research within social regeneration settings. Firstly there is the complexity of measurement that may arise. Community change initiatives are complex and obviously aim to achieve developments in social, economic and political areas to improve the quality of life for residents within specific communities. As a result of this complexity a key question in relation to the evaluation of social regeneration programmes is what should be measured, how and when (Gambone 1998)? No research design with finite time, money and human resources can examine all of the possible relationships between activities, outcomes and contexts in a community (Gambone 1998). Regeneration covers a wide range of activities and the fact that no single tool can be used to measure the full spectrum of impact means that organisations simply have to be quite specific about what they want to measure (Wainwright 2003). Secondly, there may be a lack of research skills. People need research skills in order to undertake research projects. People can be taught some skills however, other issues may arise during the course of the research process if adequate support is unavailable. Thirdly, there is a lack of both literature and empirical evidence about community based approaches being applied within social regeneration contexts and therefore a corresponding lack of existing models of successful research and good practice. Theoretically this can hinder the

development of community based research as an approach because of the lack of evidence for new users to interpret and follow.

The regeneration literature generally highlights that the success of local initiatives is contingent on a number of factors. These include the amount of energy devoted, both past and present to regeneration (Mayo and Taylor 2001) and the development of joined up working practices allowing community representatives to hold more sway (Forest and Kearns 1999). All of these factors need consideration when applying community based research within regeneration.

Summary

Community based research is now more frequently discussed within the literature especially in fields such as health, social welfare and evaluation. Such approaches however can not and should not be applied to every population, or to every evaluation question. This is true of any field in which the approaches may be applied, including social regeneration. Community groups therefore have to decide if research is likely to be the most effective means to their success. Research can be a means to an end (Cooper 1989) in that the emphasis may be less on the product and more on the process. Research can motivate people, bring them together, generate involvement, build confidence, raise awareness and identify both problems and opportunities (Hawtin et al 1994). However, there are no recipes for success, just techniques and tools and even the best tools do not ensure a worthy product (Berk & Rossi 1990). Community based research is not a magic solution within local settings because in adopting it as an approach, problems are likely to occur. These include power imbalances (Stringer 1996), lack of trust, issues of legitimacy (Israel et al 1998), representation (Taylor 2000) and time constraints (Israel et al 1998). Furthermore, such approaches are demanding for all those involved during all phases of the project (Schroes et al 2000). As Barr (2002) argues attention must be paid to inequalities in participation, the need for leadership, resources and different needs and interests. Barriers not only concern practical limitations but also the perceptions of individuals engaged in such research about what is possible for them to achieve in terms of influence (Truman and Raine 2003). The question remains as to what barriers exist within social regeneration settings and the impact these have upon community based research. This study will explore and examine these barriers through critically understanding community and its interpretations.

If the barriers to community based research are overcome, a range of benefits results. These include skills development (Green et al 2000), the development of social relationships (Schloves et al 1998), positive local outcomes, increased local knowledge (Ayers 1987) as well as strengthened local networks and empowerment at the individual level (Greve 1975). Furthermore, community based research can also provide accurate and reliable information for decision making (Ritchie 1996). Community based approaches can bring together people of diverse skills and knowledge, contribute locally grounded and empirically sound information and increase the likelihood that the results will be used by the community involved in the research (Cockerill et al 1998). Discussion is likely to continue within the literature as models of community based research are applied more in practice and developed further. Again the benefits of using such approaches within social regeneration are largely unexplored area within the literature and consequently will be investigated within this study.

The literature tends to overlook the links between community based research and social regeneration. As this chapter illustrates, community based research has much to offer social regeneration programmes in terms of being both a useful research and evaluation tool and a mechanism from which to build skills amongst local community members and groups. Indeed, community based research, despite its problems has been argued to help integrate knowledge into strategies to provide both community and social change within marginalised sections of the population (Israel et al 1998). Holman (1987) argues that research is associated with power because it can be the key to information which others do not possess and because the publication of such information can influence decisions about both resources and services. Research is a small but powerful tool especially if such research ensures that non-researchers are able to obtain and use information for their own purposes, to gain greater understanding of their circumstances and to achieve more influence over their lives (Holman 1987). However, not all participation will result in benefits for the entire community. Research in some cases helps individuals to express their needs and demands as well as to campaign for their own purposes but the likelihood that such needs are universal is slim. Therefore, research as a tool even in the hands of community members adopting grass-roots approaches will not automatically be used for the benefit of everyone. Clearly this is pertinent to social regeneration settings and as such warrants further empirical investigation to examine how community based research is used within this context.

This study of community based research within social regeneration explores such research within the context of Objective 1, South Yorkshire. The research is driven by five overall questions, highlighted in Chapter Three. The research questions are explored in an examination of themes evident drawn from the literature. Are the themes described in the wider literature evident within the Objective 1 context? Do the themes remain relevant when community based research is used within regeneration?

The first research question focuses upon the theoretical, methodological and practical issues in promoting community based research within regeneration. This chapter has raised several theoretical, methodological and practical issues which may apply within regeneration contexts. The empirical research will confirm if these are issues within the Objective 1 context.

The second research question to be addressed is the issue of how such approaches are used within social regeneration and what use they are. Themes to be examined in relation to this question are definitions of community based research, epistemological foundations, theoretical underpinnings, methodology and how such research is axiologically utilised. Does community based research within regeneration have clear epistemological and theoretical underpinnings in common with those described from other fields? Does the approach add axiological benefit? Secondly, there are several key principles identified within this chapter which arguably underpin community based research and two of these themes will be explored in this study, both empowerment and involvement.

The third research question to be investigated relates to the benefits associated with engaging in such research, they are identified in the literature. Thus, a number of themes from the literature are taken forward into the analysis to focus upon the benefits of such approaches. These are skills development, the development of social relationships, positive local outcomes and increased local knowledge and strengthened local networks. Are these benefits evident when community based research is used within regeneration?

The fourth question to be addressed is an examination of the problems identified within the literature. Again several themes are drawn from this chapter and used in the analysis to explore if these problems are relevant to regeneration contexts. These include power imbalances, lack of trust, issues of legitimacy, representation, time

constraints, inequalities in participation, the need for leadership, resources and different needs and interests. Finally individual perceptions about what is possible in terms of community based research will also be examined.

Now in an attempt to answer at least in part the final research question about social capital, the next chapter turns to the question of the relationship between social capital and community based research. Again key themes are identified within this next literature chapter, with several headings identified for analytical purposes. All of the themes highlighted in this and the next chapter will be explored empirically in Chapters Five and Six.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION TO AND REVIEW OF THE SOCIAL CAPITAL LITERATURE

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH: ITS POTENTIAL ROLE IN BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL WITHIN REGENERATION CONTEXTS

Chapter Two – Introduction to and review of the social capital literature

Community based research: Its potential role in building social capital within regeneration contexts

Introduction

In recent policy initiatives community involvement, community participation and increasingly social capital have been the subject of discussion and debate with reference to social regeneration. Unlike community based research, which is not discussed with reference to social regeneration settings, social capital is recognised in the literature as having contributions to make within this field. However, the links between social capital development and community based research within regeneration are again overlooked, essentially because of the lack of literature on community based research within regeneration. Community based research, as highlighted in Chapter One is about partnership working and bringing diverse groups of people together with a common purpose. These two aspects of the approach are also important in building social capital. This chapter explores the role of social capital within regeneration, discussing the potential links between social capital and community based research. The process of engaging in community based research can arguably enhance local associational relationships, networks and organisations as well as increasing trust amongst those participating in the process. Thus, community based models of research and evaluation, if applied correctly in practice within an appropriate context, can be fundamental to both successful local regeneration and the creation of social capital. Again this chapter draws out key themes for empirical exploration.

Context

The emergence of the concept of social capital within the sociological literature and within policy debates is relatively recent. However, the academic and policy-making communities have been energised by the concept because of its implications for development policy and its potential political contribution. Social capital, now widely acknowledged, demonstrates how the presence of dense networks within society and accompanying norms of generalised trust and reciprocity allow people to overcome

collective action problems more efficiently (Hooge and Stolle 2003). As a result, the concept has been embraced as a solution for a plethora of social problems (Boix and Posner 1998). Everingham (2003) highlights how the concept has been taken on board across a multitude of disciplines including social welfare, politics and sociology of development. The concept has become the basis of research, discussion and conferences to explore a range of social issues, providing a conceptual framework for analysis. Moreover, the concept is well known and used at an international level reflecting the many potential global implications of its use. The concept has become relevant to policy making at a number of different levels. For example, in the context of the 'Third World' social capital has directly entered into the policy discourse of the World Bank, with the Bank describing it as the missing link in development (Harriss & de Renzio 1997). Focusing upon social capital as an endowment of society and arguing that the ways in which actors organise themselves is important in explaining economic growth and development has led to the World Bank's view (World Bank 1997a). Furthermore, at the European level there has been an initiative to develop 'local social capital' because of the recognition of its role within regional development. More pertinently to the context of this research project; the role of European structural funds in increasing social capital has been highlighted. Hibbitt et al (2001) argue that the EU-sponsored 'Pathways' programme for Merseyside strengthened different types of social capital within neighbourhoods and built relations of trust between community members. Hence, the changing nature of funding regimes is important in social capital formation with funders now allowing communities to influence decision making and the allocation of funds (Hibbitt et al 2001). Such a change in focus arguably allows for social capital to play more of a role within both UK social policy and regeneration contexts.

Within the UK social capital as a concept was brought into the policy arena by the Commission for Social Justice. Drawing heavily on the work of Putnam, the Commission defined the concept in terms of community strength, civic wealth and linked it to the geography of the neighbourhood (Commission for Social Justice 1998). These ideas persisted and were included in the work of the Social Exclusion Unit in 1998, which detailed the government's strategy for neighbourhood renewal. Social capital is highly visible within the UK policy arena and arguably has much to offer social and urban regeneration. Indeed, if positive social outcomes emerge from social capital as a resource and if social capital production can be enhanced then social policy could harness it in order to effect change (Gamarnikow and Green 1999). However, some commentators argue that despite this widespread attention, there is

still arguably a limited theoretical understanding of the concept, which remains in its infancy (Boix and Posner 1998). Firstly, let's turn to the question of what is meant by the concept.

Definitions

So, what is social capital? Although social capital is a relatively recent concept, it is well developed in theoretical terms with its roots being visible in the work of Tonnies', Durkheim and Weber (Woolcock 1998). Social capital for Durkheimians is a form of normative contract making. The concept makes it possible for individuals to commit to action, shape goals and attain them. Comparatively, understanding social capital in Weberian terms means construing the concept as a combination of ties and norms that bind together individuals within and across institutions. Furthermore, much of the social capital literature harbours an implicit concern for the loss of Tonnies 'gemeinschaft' with the solution to modern life being the re-establishment of local civic organisations (Woolcock 1998). These different conceptualisations suggest that social capital may exist in a number of forms.

The basic idea behind the concept is that interaction allows people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other and to knit the social fabric. A sense of belonging is arguably created through these processes and the concrete experience of social networks. Trust and tolerance are said to bring great benefits to people. All definitions of the concept suggest that it has positive consequences for members of groups, achieved through shared norms, networks and trust. There are however a number of varied definitions of the concept emerging from different theorists, leading to justifiable confusion about what social capital actually is.

Social capital as a conceptual entity has a number of different authors providing varying definitions within different theoretical frameworks. So the concept is grounded in different theoretical traditions. This is an indication of the infancy of the concept and has measurement implications (Walker and Wigfield 2003). Fukuyama (1999) argues that many definitions relate to the manifestation of social capital rather than the concept itself. However despite Fukuyama's defence, unravelling the issues associated with the concept requires a more dynamic rather than static view of social capital, a detailed examination of its intellectual history and lessons from empirical research (Woolcock 1998). The various definitions have key elements in common, one of which is the economic origins of the concept. These are obvious from the

word 'capital' and may particularly explain the popularity of social capital within policy circles. All approaches also tend to view social capital as belonging to a collectivity; social capital is the property of a social entity rather than individuals.

Four authors commonly referred to in the literature who operationalise the concept are Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam and Fukuyama. These authors use different theoretical traditions to develop their description of the concept of social capital. Drawing upon the work of these theorists and highlighting themes from the work of Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam and Fukuyama allows the ambiguity of the concept to be clarified for the purposes of my study. Adapting relevant aspects of these various definitions overcomes the issue of definitional diversity through the development of a single analytical framework through which to examine community based research. So beginning with Bourdieu, how is this conceptualisation of social capital relevant to community based research?

Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu during the 1960's and 1970's produced a series of studies seeking to establish culture as dynamic and creative but also as a structured phenomenon. The concept of social capital emerged from Bourdieu's interest in social space and was gradually refined. Bourdieu's understanding developed the concept as a critical tool to help explain poverty in class terms (Everingham 2003) and this places the focus at the level of the individual. Bourdieu described social capital as a potential resource linked to networks and relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition, giving members collectively owned capital (Schuller et al 2000). More recently, Bourdieu (1999) identified the superimposition of social and physical space and the associated disadvantages that are bestowed upon less powerful social groups by their residence in poor areas in which collective decline has resulted from industrial decline. The concept here is used to explain the privileged access that some individuals have to both powerful groups and their resources.

Bourdieu's concept is rooted in Marxist tradition, emphasising the structural constraints on individuals and the unequal access that people have to resources based on class, gender and race (Everingham 2003). For Bourdieu, access to resources and issues of power within society were the key to social capital (Harper 2001). Social capital effectively viewed as connections and social obligations in Bourdieu's (1986) understanding can be converted under certain conditions into

economic capital. This notion has greatly appealed to policy makers as it appears a quick-fix solution but this fails to focus upon the complexity of the 'conditions' under which such a process actually happens (Leonard 2004). There is however growing consensus that area effects do exist. Reviews of American research (see Brooks-Gun et al 1993, Ellen and Turner 1997 and Jencks and Mayer 1990) all conclude that there are causal connections between poor neighbourhoods and other social problems. Galster and Zobel (1998) argue that these result from more than the consequences of household and individual characteristics and if this is the case then social capital is crucial within regeneration. As Atkinson and Kintrea (2004) argue, if individuals in deprived areas are held back because of where they live rather than by their individual characteristics, this is important in formulating urban policy.

Bourdieu's use of the concept in a metaphorical rather than an analytically disciplined manner (Schuller et al 2000) has attracted criticism. Despite criticisms, Bourdieu's concern with area effects means his conceptualisation of social capital is important within regeneration. What is important from this perspective is the way in which networks operate to enhance or constrain success. Hence, networks will be explored in relation to community based research. However Bourdieu's focus at the level of the individual is less useful because regeneration tends to focus on a macro level such as structural inequalities. Now let's turn to another view.

Coleman

Coleman's (1998) approach is to define social capital by its function, viewing it as a resource to be drawn upon (Leonard 2004). He argues that social relations constitute useful capital resources for actors through processes such as obligations, expectations, trust, information channels and setting norms (Coleman 1998). According to Coleman (1990) social capital takes three forms. Firstly, the obligations and expectations which depend upon the trustworthiness of the social environment. Secondly, the capacity of information to flow through the social structure in order to provide a basis for action. Finally, it is the presence of norms accompanied by effective sanctions. Coleman (1998) argues that social capital differs from other forms of capital in that it does not necessarily bring benefits just to the individual rather it brings benefits to all of those who are part of the social structure. Individuals are drawn into social structures through obligations and effective sanctioning ensures that co-operation occurs. Furthermore, social capital in both family and community,

plays a role in creating human capital such as skills and abilities within the next generation (Leonard 2004).

Despite this recognition of the wider benefits of the concept, Coleman's theorising primarily focuses upon individuals and the family. Coleman also argues that social capital creation is a largely unintentional process (Schuller et al 2000) and that although it is productive, it can be depleted if it is not renewed. Hence, if social capital production is unintentional, how can it be encouraged via social policy or harnessed for regeneration purposes? Furthermore, Coleman's concept, if applied in practice would lead researchers to focus upon social capital as a positive good within society that is necessary for both social integration and social control (Everingham 2003). Critics say that this approach overstates the importance of closure and dense ties within the social structure and treats social capital in an unproblematic manner (Schuller et al 2000). However, Coleman (1998) does discuss the detrimental effect that social capital can have by discussing different forms, which can not necessarily be aggregated. The enabling of some forms of social capital may simultaneously inhibit the formation of other types.

Coleman's view of social capital again can contribute to understanding regeneration particularly as his gaze turns to the community benefits of the concept. If social capital benefits the community as a whole and can be developed through effective regeneration, it could serve as a useful tool in development work. This is especially true if social capital creates human capital because the enhancement of different forms of skill within deprived areas is the goal of much regeneration work. However, the uncritical stance taken by Coleman suggests caution. Even if human capital can be increased, this does not necessarily ensure better economic prospects because structural factors can serve to impede economic development.

Putnam

Putnam's work on social capital popularised the concept enabling it to find its way into mainstream political discourse (Schuller et al 2000). According to Putnam (2000) social capital refers to the connections among individuals, social networks and other forms of reciprocity and trust which arise from them. Networks, norms and trust dominate his definition of the concept whilst activity is situated at the heart of civic life and therefore, is also a crucial aspect of his conceptualisation (Schuller et al 2000). Putnam (1993) suggests that the more people work together, the more that social

capital is produced. Putnam (1993) argues that social capital; cooperation, trust, reciprocity and collective well-being define the civic community, which has deep historical roots. Thus, social capital according to Putnam (1993, 2000) is the key to economic growth and the key to making democracy work within the context of civic society. Putnam suggests that economic growth flows from social progress and that stocks of capital can be accumulated at the institutional level and passed on. Putnam's perspective concurs with the political science view of the concept as crucial in civic engagement and trust at the level of the community and how these foster the development of civic trust in political institutions (Leonard 2004).

Putnam transforms social capital from a 'simple' social process, which benefits individuals and groups, to an entity that can be consolidated for society's benefit as a whole because of the links between reciprocation, democracy and economic growth (Everingham 2003). However, this definition can slide into a circular argument where the mechanisms of social capital become confused with the outcomes so that researchers employing this framework end up finding whatever it is that they set out to find (Stone 2001). Furthermore, Putnam's work imbues community with highly positive connotations portraying an image of helpful, friendly interactions between individuals based upon personal knowledge and face to face contact. This ignores the downside of community life (Leonard 2004). As Chapter One illustrates community by definition means an inclusive entity and as such excludes others. Indeed, tight knit, homogenous communities with strong membership bonds exclude a large number of other people.

Despite these criticisms, Putnam's view of social capital is relevant to economic regeneration with his formulation evident in the development literature, driving economic growth and potentially alleviating poverty (Everingham 2003). However, this will only occur when engagement takes place in secondary associations, according to Putnam (1993). Therefore, to explore if social capital is useful within regeneration and specifically arises from doing community based research, levels of engagement within both research and development work require empirical investigation. If engagement does not occur then social capital will not be created. Although Putnam's (1993) interpretation is good politically, it may not offer insights at the micro-level as to why difficulties with engagement in area based regeneration take place.

Fukuyama

Fukuyama primarily presents social capital as trust by defining the concept as 'a set of informal values or norms shared amongst members of a group that permits co-operation between them' (1999:16). Most social capital definitions pay attention to trust and give equal weight to trust and networks but some prioritise one over the other (Berman and Phillips 2003). For Fukuyama (1999) the most important value is trust. It is trust that leads to co-operation and therefore makes both groups and networks operate smoothly. Central to this conceptualisation is the radius of trust, where it is argued that the further trust expands outside of the family then the more likely it is to be based upon moral resources and ethical behaviours (Fukuyama 2001). Where groups have a narrow radius of trust, their in-group solidarity reduces their ability to co-operate with outsiders. It is arguably difficult for people to trust those outside of narrow circles especially in the absence of weak ties. This argument about in-group trust reflects parallels to Putnam's emphasis on close, tight-knit networks not always being beneficial.

Fukuyama (1999) contributes to social policy discussions in arguing that states do not have many obvious levers by which to create social capital. He asserts that states can have a negative impact upon social capital development if they undertake certain activities that are better left to the private sector or to civil society because of the creation of state dependency. Therefore grass-roots regeneration has more to contribute to social capital development than top-down governmental approaches according to this interpretation. However, the question remains as to what kinds of trust need to be fostered to develop successful regeneration. Fukuyama's (1999) concern with trust leads to discussions upon religion. He argues that despite religiously inspired cultural change being ongoing and growing religiosity in many parts of the world, religion is not always good for social capital. Sectarianism can breed intolerance, hatred and violence because of in-group solidarity and ultimately a tight radius of trust. However, Fukuyama's (1999) approach has again been criticised because of his monoculturalist standpoint in which he asserts that societies need to share the same language, norms and moral values in order to avoid disintegration. Other commentators for example Kymlicka (1995) attempt to offer a more multiculturalist perspective. Despite criticism, Fukuyama's interpretation can shed light on regeneration practice. Communities in which high levels of poverty exist can be insular and have increased levels of in-group trust, which serves to exclude others.

Therefore development work needs to create a wider radius of trust and perhaps this is more achievable through grass-roots approaches such as community based research.

Discussing definitions

These definitions of social capital all highlight elements such as trust and associational linkages, although they give different weight to their importance. The different definitions also emerge from a variety of sociological traditions. Bourdieu draws upon Marxism, Coleman is concerned with function, Putnam politically locates his interpretation and Fukuyama's discussion is inherently conservative. Despite these different traditions all of these interpretations suggest that the concept is useful within regeneration. Drawing through functionalism and political science with a community and economic focus allows the relevance of social capital within regeneration to be broadly explained. For example, both Coleman and Putnam discuss the macro benefits of social capital. Coleman's functionalist underpinnings lead to a focus on the community level benefits of the concept. If social capital can provide community level benefits then it is useful as a regeneration driver, effectively meeting the social aspect of development work. Putnam's focus is more economic, with the benefits of the concept described in development terms as driving growth and alleviating poverty. This is also pertinent to regeneration as development work often has an economic focus. Drawing on both interpretations suggests that on a broad level social capital is useful within regeneration settings.

Community based research and social capital: Overview

Despite definitional issues, social capital is viewed as important for regeneration with several commentators examining the role of the concept within this context. For example, the work of MacGillivray and Walker (2000) discusses the relationship of social capital to sustainability because networks can be used to pull individuals and communities out of poverty. Hibbitt et al (2001) conclude that social capital is important in conceptualising area based regeneration initiatives through judging linkages and networks which serve to create effective regeneration. It has been assumed in the regeneration literature that communities must be transformed and have their capacity built rather than the need for changes to take place in how

external partners work and relate to them. Social capital viewed as networks is a useful heuristic device to investigate more effective ways of delivering regeneration including changing the working practices of external partners.

Social capital is arguably relevant to the voluntary sector in more ways than one. Voluntary organisations contribute to social capital because they are primarily social networks where collective action takes place but they also benefit from existing social capital and use social capital as a resource. For example, social capital as a concept can help voluntary organisations improve their understanding of their area in terms of networks and structures. Social capital also can be used in evaluating activities through the lens of the concept to analyse processes and practices rather than just outcomes (Jochum 2003). Indeed, Cattell (2004) argues that the conditions required to promote social capital such as the built environment and opportunities for participation can include those which regeneration agencies address. So how might policy debates be translated into practical reality at a grassroots level?

Wider regeneration linkages

In a broad sense social capital can be linked to regeneration settings in a number of ways. For example, involvement and empowerment are central to much regeneration practice, similarly associating together and engaging in community affairs are crucial to social capital development for Coleman (1998). Putnam (2000) also discusses participation and reciprocity, therefore the concept may be useful in explaining collective action in terms of mutual involvement and the creation of alliances to achieve group and community goals. Collective action is considered difficult to theorise and explain because cooperation sometimes occurs in contexts where, according to theory, social actors should not engage in it. For example, groups have acted collectively within deprived areas where high levels of crime exist. The concept of social capital has been used to explain this (Boix and Posner 1998), in terms of the existence of both trust and networks. This remains relevant to both social regeneration initiatives, which may require collective action to achieve results and community based research as an approach. There are examples of successful community based research findings being mobilised as an evidential base for collective action. For example, The Loka Institute cites several changes as a result of community based research including the creation of a health programme in Chicago

for refugee women and a litigation case regarding toxic waste in which victims received financial reward (Schlove 1998).

Secondly, social capital arguably greases the wheels of communities in that it enables them to run more smoothly. Putnam (1993) argues that where people are trusting and trustworthy and regularly interact with those around them, social transactions are less costly, greatly facilitating social relationships. Putnam (2000) marshals evidence to demonstrate that in high social capital areas public spaces are cleaner, people are friendlier and the streets are safer. If this is the case then social capital is a great resource to harness and use in development. Indeed, local volunteers can play a role in greasing the wheel because they put time into service delivery, empower themselves and others, free up paid workers to carry out other tasks and increase their own employability. Moreover, community based research may well be a suitable channel of and opportunity for volunteer involvement within regeneration, enhancing social capital formation. Indeed, some of the UK policy responses within regeneration have focused upon volunteering and community self-help. New Labour's Coalfield Policy promoted a greater degree of community involvement in and ownership of regeneration activities (Waddington 2003). Thus aiming to build social capital through the strengthening of local community networks (Harper 2001) is directed by social policy and related interventions. However, an examination of the literature points to the complex and subtle ways in which inequality manifests itself in community relationships, which on the surface seem to be based upon trust and reciprocity (Leonard 2004). For example, inclusion and exclusion occurs based upon gender, ethnicity, age and religious affiliation. Therefore a cautious approach is required. Policy makers and regeneration drivers need to know what conditions lead to beneficial outcomes in order to orient policy.

Thirdly, social capital has also been argued to have an economic benefit. This is because the mechanisms by which civic values influence socio-economic performance reduce transaction costs in the market, increase trust, minimise burdens of enforcing and policing agreements and hold down the diseconomies of fraud and theft (Putnam 1993 and Coleman 1990). In both Putnam's (1993) and Coleman's (1990) view, social capital is given equal weight to economic and cultural capital and both suggest that social capital paves the way for the acquisition of other forms of capital (Leonard 2004). However, a number of studies have demonstrated how areas rich in social capital habitually under-perform economically compared to other regions

(Matthews 1983, Richling 1985). For example, in the case of 'niche' economies, kinship and friendship ties operate to enable individuals to make insufficient incomes stretch to meet their daily needs. However, these networks can also provide access to highly exploitative employment (Leonard 2004). Hence, economic benefits are not always as clear cut as some theorists suggest.

In addition, regeneration partnerships may have a role to play in creating civic integration as well as social cohesion. Lockwood (1999) talks about secondary associations intermediating between the individual and the state creating bridging linkages. Such associations are groups constituting civil society. For Lockwood (1999) those involved in these processes of civic integration are collective actors such as community partnerships, regeneration organisations and groups of volunteers who represent and act on behalf of others. Community partnerships attempt to adopt this role of acting on behalf of and representing community members, so they can contribute in this area.

Finally, at the level of the individual social capital has been argued to improve quality of life via psychological and biological processes. Individuals rich in social capital with high levels of social, economic cultural and collective resources cope better with traumas and fight illness more effectively according to Putnam (2000). Social capital can act as a buffer against economic disadvantage by reducing the effects of a lack of economic resources (Campbell 1999). Social capital is said to improve individual awareness of the ways in which the human fate is linked, allowing people to become more tolerant, less cynical and more empathetic to the needs of others. Without these opportunities, facilitated by networking and social relationships, people are more likely to be swayed by their worst impulses (Putnam 2000).

Social capital seems to offer a number of benefits to regeneration initiatives. Schuller et al (2000) argue that one of the key merits of social capital as a concept is that it shifts the focus of analysis from the behaviour of individual agents to the patterns of relations between agents, social units and institutions. Thus, social capital arguably acts as a link between the micro, meso and macro levels of analysis. This allows the concept to make contributions in wider social policy terms. Furthermore, social capital as a concept is multi-disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary; consequently debates about the concept can be found throughout the social sciences. This offers ground for sustained dialogue and future theoretical development within the social

science arena (Schuller et al 2000), creating research ties and opening up networking opportunities between disciplines. Finally, the concept has been argued to reinsert issues of value into the heart of social science discourse. Terms such as trust, sharing and community directly generate questions about the assumptions concerning human behaviour on which analysis and policy are based (Schuller et al 2000) offering new insights into regeneration and possibly other policy initiatives. The need to generate norms of reciprocity, to build stocks of social capital, to produce social cohesion and counter the dislocating effects of globalisation is now recognised. However, empirically exploring these issues does not fall under the remit of this study as the concern here rests with examining community based research.

Social capital creation and community based research: Unexplored potential links

More specifically social capital formation can arguably be enhanced through the processes associated with community based research within social regeneration. On a theoretical level community based research can be linked to social capital formation in a number of ways.

Enhancing civic engagement by creating a 'helping' cycle

Community based research arguably enhances civic engagement and therefore, social capital. Civic engagement means being both well informed about local affairs and influencing decisions relating to the local neighbourhood (Harper 2001). The argument follows that the more you know, the more you are engaged and therefore, the more you influence decisions, resulting in increased levels of social capital. In conducting community based research for regeneration purposes for example, looking at community needs in terms of facilities and training, local people become more informed about their area. Accordingly they can then attempt to influence decisions about future projects. Furthermore, in working together on community based research projects, social development can be enhanced and lead to the achievement of softer economic impacts such as the development of interpersonal, organisational and analytical skills as a result of participating in research. Hence, community based research can increase civic engagement and therefore levels of social capital. This argument is supported by authors such as Brehn and Rahn (1997),

who state that social capital is a tight reciprocal relationship between civic engagement and interpersonal trust. Community based research may also hypothetically provide a helping cycle. British Crime Survey data and General Household Survey data highlight 'helping each other' within neighbourhoods as an important part of social capital formation. The process of community based research involves local people as researchers helping others to air their views about local problems, hopes, aspirations and needs. By participating in the research process as respondents, locals help to provide useful information, build local research skills and knowledge as well as contribute to the regeneration of their area.

Increasing co-operation, social cohesion and community spirit

Secondly, community based research facilitates co-operation within groups internally who have to work together in order to conduct research and between groups, externally adopting research and developing models of practice. This is a key aspect of social capital, being quoted in almost all definitions of the concept (see Coleman 1998, Putnam 1993, Fukuyama 1999). Through community based research people cooperate in a number of ways; by volunteering time, skills, information and opinions to other group members as part of the research process. This information can be developed into written documents in cooperation with partnerships and funding agencies. Volunteering appears to build and consolidate shared norms, expectations and acts of reciprocity. Volunteering for community based research may impact upon local levels of cooperation and consequently levels of social capital.

Furthermore, community based research may increase social cohesion within community settings. Berger-Schmitt (2000) formally conceptualises social capital as a component of social cohesion. Social cohesion can be conceptualised in terms of being close-knit, maximising solidarity and shared identity (Berman and Phillips (2003). Hence, social cohesion is related to the dense ties discussed by Putnam (1993) and the in-group trust associated with Fukuyama (1999). All understandings of social capital and social cohesion place varying emphasis on both trust and associational networks. For example, Berger-Schmitt (2000) cites social capital as a dimension of social cohesion whilst the World Bank uses the terms social capital and social cohesion synonymously. However, the relationship between the two concepts is complex because of the varying interpretations of what social capital is. Despite these problems, it is clear that social capital and social cohesion are related. Indeed, social cohesion can be broadly understood as a sense of belonging in relation to the

community. McMillan and Chavis (1986) discuss four elements of a psychological sense of community. Firstly, feelings of membership, which equate to a sense of belonging. Secondly, feeling influential such as having power to affect the community. Thirdly, sharing values and finally, having a shared emotional connection based upon a common history. Yet community means different things for social actors and is subject to various interpretations. Given the current positive discourses of community discussed in Chapter One, critical scrutiny is again required when examining social cohesion in relation to the community.

Community based approaches create membership of groups undertaking research. Such active involvement can increase both sense of belonging and boosts civic pride (Begum 2003). Community based research also allows members to have influence through their research findings. It can create shared values in terms of a community vision of need and give people a common history through their participation in the trials and tribulations of the research process. Consequently, it can be argued that community based research not only increases cooperation but also contributes to social cohesion, both important in terms of social capital formation. In this sense community based research can also theoretically contribute to 'community spirit' within local areas. Involvement in community based research can add to people's perceptions about their local neighbourhood and consequently contribute to community spirit as well as neighbourliness, both important in social capital formulation (Harper 2001). Chapter One discussed participation in community based research, problematising involvement in relation to exclusiveness and levels of participation. So although community based research as a process may attempt to define what the community as a whole aspires to, and subsequently develop shared norms and increased community spirit, there may be caveats because of the nature of those involved in such processes.

Measuring impact

Finally, community based research can be used not just to enhance social capital stocks, bit also to measure them. Examining social capital at the level of the individual can be useful within regeneration contexts in terms of redirecting evaluation focus. Many evaluations focus upon outputs, target meeting and financial accountability as discussed within Chapter One (Harrison 2000). A community based evaluation, could be used to provide more qualitative detail and to shift the focus from output to outcome. If local people are at the heart of the process designing the

agenda and steering it in the direction that they feel is best for them as individuals and for the wider community, individual benefits are more likely to accrue and as such contribute to increasing social capital stocks. Social capital measures could be incorporated into evaluation models to help examine the long-term impact of voluntary organisations and specific projects.

Wainwright (2003) discusses how social capital can be linked to community involvement and therefore used to measure impact. For example, projects might contribute to bringing people together who would not normally mix and thus help to break down barriers, culminating in the production of both bonding and bridging social capital. Indeed, projects may also provide an opportunity for local people to make their voices heard, potentially impacting upon linking social capital. Several evaluation models based upon the concept of social capital already exist, allowing organisations to evaluate their activities in social capital terms. Furthermore, assessing activities in the light of social capital can put more emphasis on processes and practices, which may be more constructive for future long-term action (Jochum 2003). So, community based research and social capital measures can be united to examine organisational impacts on a more qualitative level. If carried out correctly such research can enhance stocks of social capital by increasing co-operation, participation, involvement and trust.

Furthermore, as a concept social capital is also highly relevant to the voluntary sector and regeneration as it can help organisations improve their understanding of the communities they engage with and the work they do (Jochum 2003). Indeed, within the literature social capital as a concept has been argued to be highly relevant to regeneration because of the contributions it can make to sustainability. MacGillivray and Walker (2000) discuss the ambition of many social scientists and economists to measure social capital objectively. Yet they argue that this, alongside most evaluations done to the community rather than by the community, may diminish the existing stock of social capital as a result of questionnaire fatigue, suspicion of outsiders and lack of feedback.

As a result of such negative perceptions of research and evaluation, arguments can be made for the use of community based research within regeneration because the act of measuring done correctly can contribute to community development with the measurement process increasing the stock of social capital. Indeed, people enjoy discussing research, gathering data and arguing over the results in the pub

(MacGillivray, Weston and Unsworth 1998). It can be argued that information generated by local people is more robust than that generated by the experts (MacGillivray and Walker 2000). MacGillivray and Walker (2000) conclude by arguing that the concept of social capital can be used to measure the success of community development projects and make visible something previously unseen: the effect of regeneration projects on people. Hence, not only can engaging in community based research increase stocks of social capital, it can also provide more relevant indicators by which success can be measured.

The limitations of my study make it impossible to explore all of the potential links between social capital and community based research discussed here. Therefore, whether the process of community based research does in fact enhance social capital through enhancing civic engagement by providing a 'helping' cycle remains beyond the scope of this study. However, this is an area where further research could provide insight and therefore should be given future attention. In addition, the relationship of community based research to increased co-operation, social cohesion and community sprit will not be explored. Finally, the act of measuring impact itself and the associated social capital achievements that may result in practice again are not explored here.

Social capital creation and community based research: Explored potential links

There are a number of other areas in which community based research can be linked to the concept of social capital and these will be empirically explored within this study.

Enhancing social trust

Community based research as an approach can enhance social trust. Trust is the key constitutive element of social capital and the key social locations for its development are in the interconnected social institutions of the family (Coleman 1998, Fukuyama 1999), communities, dense social networks, institutions (Putnam 1993), education (Coleman 1998), religion (Fukuyama 1999) and the morality of people (Whiteley 1999). Trust is ever present in the debates about social capital. Some consider trust to be an outcome of social capital (Woolcock 2001), others view it as a component of shared values and some consider it to be both (Cote & Healy 2001). There are also

said to be two types of trust that we have in people we know and trust that we have in individuals we do not know. In Putnam's (1993, 2000) terms this is thick and thin trust; thick is the property of intimate social relationships and thin is the more generalised trust held in other community members. Fukuyama (2000) discusses a 'radius of trust' whereby a circle of people exists amongst which co-operative norms exist.

Trust is also pertinent to successful community development work. Within regeneration settings there can exist contexts in which residents feel that involvement is futile because of a perceived lack of success, leading to a climate of mistrust (Hibbitt et al 2001). Polices have tended to reinforce the divisions between outsider professionals and insiders, who assume themselves to have superior knowledge to residents, again contributing to mistrust. As a result, a crucial dimension in the potentially enabling role social capital can play within regeneration is to turn mistrust into trust. The role of community groups and partnerships is also vital in this area (Hibbitt et al 2001). Consequently, the argument can be made that by carrying out community based research and informing people of local development opportunities and available funding, people's trust in others within the community may potentially increase because they feel that they have been informed and have had the opportunity to voice their opinion. Community based research can enhance trust because transparency and information exchange plays a vital role in building such trust (Begum 2003). Community based research may also raise levels of trust in local groups and development agencies because people feel that they have been included and offered the opportunity to participate.

In Putnam's analysis, communities steeped in social capital exhibit higher levels of trust, which in turn facilitate general civic trust in outside institutions. However, there may be caveats to this scenario. Leonard (2004) argues that within politically contentious societies trust at one level does not necessarily lead to trust at another. Indeed, trust at the local level may feed upon the distrust of wider institutions. Halpem (2001) suggests that social trust is a simple, quick and dirty measure of social capital, easy to associate with policy outcomes. If what Halpem (2001) suggests is true, social trust appears to be an appropriate measure of the success of community based research in terms of their impact upon social capital. However measuring trust is not as simple as Halpem (2001) suggests. The literature demonstrates how social capital theorists are struggling with measuring trust. How can the degree to which individuals within society trust each other realistically be

measured? Given that measuring trust is a complex endeavour, Fukuyama (1999) argues that rather than investigating positive outcomes of social capital, researchers should instead examine social dysfunction and social deviance to establish the extent of the absence of the concept. My study will empirically explore trust within regeneration settings, asking if community based research can enhance local levels of trust.

Increasing participation and involvement

Increasing both participation and involvement is another possible link between social capital and community based research. In measuring social capital, membership of social groups, clubs and societies is often examined (for example, Putnam 1995). An increase in membership in such groups and organisations is said to reflect a corresponding increase in levels of social capital. Community based research may provide people with an avenue into joining local groups and becoming members of local partnerships and networks by giving them information about public meetings and group sessions. If people are unaware of what is occurring locally they remain unable to participate. If their awareness is raised through community based research they can act upon their new knowledge by becoming more locally active. Local people often want an active role but this is predicated upon the assumption that their views and involvement will make a genuine difference to decision-making (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2004). Community based research can be an appropriate vehicle to enhance involvement as it allows individuals to voice their views based upon empirical evidence. Indeed, any increases in membership of geographical and social groups could well increase levels of social capital. Hooge and Stolle (2003) discuss how associations of various kinds give members information, a sense of connection and loose networks. Involvement in local groups has thus helped to break down barriers between different social factions (Begum 2003). Consequently, increasing levels of group membership and general levels of participation may indirectly contribute to an increase in other forms of participation, with social capital being further developed in this way. This study will empirically explore involvement in community based models of research asking how involvement can be supported within regeneration settings and investigating how such involvement relates to social capital development.

Enhancing associational linkages

Community based research can be argued to enhance associational linkages on a number of levels. Atkinson and Kintrea (2004) cite empirical evidence to demonstrate that deprivation and routes out of it within British cities are clearly linked to the range of social networks, reference groups of individuals and the values held within them. Hence, associational linkages have an important role to play in creating successful regeneration by potentially mitigating against area effects in deprived areas. At the micro level both Woolcock (1998) and Narayan (1999) stress the importance of intra-community ties. Woolcock (1998) outlines potential outcomes emerging from the interaction of social capital ties, with low level linkages and integration resulting in social breakdown and high level linkages creating social opportunity. There are three different types of social capital discussed within the literature; bonding, bridging and linking (see Putnam 2000). It is argued that communities need all three types of social capital to ensure sustainable development (Stone and Hughes 2001). Arguably, community based research as a process can help in creating all three types of social capital.

Firstly, bonding social capital, which is essentially related to common identity with group members having some factors in common (Jochum 2003). Community based research is based upon people getting together and sharing similar values, goals, problems, experiences and interests. The literature highlights the potential negative impact of excessive bonding social capital because it can serve to create exclusivity (Taylor 2000). However, it is still necessary as group identity and relations amongst members can act as a significant form of support for individuals.

Secondly, bridging social capital refers to the weak connections between people such as business associates and acquaintances. Bridging social capital is also likely to be greater in organisations that have a collaborative approach (Jochum 2003), such as adopting community based research to achieve specific goals. Participation in the process of community based research can help to develop bridging types of connections as people make business associations, learn key local contacts and develop acquaintances with other researchers and perhaps other participants in the research process. Thus community based research has a part to play in building 'bridging' social capital. Narayan (1999) pays particular attention to the potential for less powerful and more socially excluded groups to benefit from bridging ties.

Narayan (1999) argues that effective bonding and bridging ties are required to avoid social exclusion.

Thirdly, community based research can be useful in creating linking social capital. Linking capital refers to connections made to those in positions of power by those less powerful (Putnam 2000). Linking social capital is useful in terms of enlisting and engaging support from key agencies and key players within regeneration contexts. Community based research can develop links between people on unequal power footings, for example, community researchers and professionals such as development workers and consultants as well as community researchers and funding agencies. Indeed, creating self-reliant communities through groups, partnerships and networks within specific geographical localities is crucial for successful regeneration. Finally, bonding, bridging and linking social capital are said to interact with each other therefore, community based research as a process may well enhance this interaction through positively creating all three types of social capital. However, there is some debate about whether this interaction occurs automatically and recent empirical findings suggest that moving from bonding to bridging social capital is beset with contradictions. In order to set in motion the framework for bridging social capital to develop, the conditions which lead to the emergence of bonding social capital may need to be undermined (Leonard 2004). Thus, the interaction between the different types of social capital requires further exploration and is not as simple as some suggest.

In terms of building social capital, community based research can positively contribute most through the processes employed to develop networks as part of the utilisation of any research strategy. Community based research involves networking and both informal and formal networks are central to both the conceptualisation of social capital and social regeneration practice. Networks are defined as personal relationships accumulated when people interact with each other in a range of settings such as families, work, neighbourhoods and associations (Harper 2001). Within community development work, networks are recognised as useful in creating and sustaining change. Network characteristics arguably help shape individuals' responses to structural constraints and opportunities (Cattell 2004). Networks offer a mode of organising that brings about change by facilitating cooperation. Thus, they enable resources and information to be shared and exchanged across boundaries without the costs and constraints of formal organisational structures (Gilchrist 2004). Community based research involves the process of networking between a range of

individuals such as local people, local researchers, workers, consultants, partnerships and funding agencies and consequently can be argued to increase levels of social capital as a result, whilst simultaneously contributing to successful local regeneration.

My study will in particular draw upon these themes of networking, involvement and trust in relation to both community based research and social capital within regeneration to explore if the theoretical links discussed here exist in practice.

Problems

Despite these potential links and the surge of policy interest in social capital, there are a number of criticisms of the concept cited within the literature, which will impact and influence the concept in all settings including regeneration. Several theorists argue that social capital as a concept is nothing new and that it is simply being exported wholesale from America to the UK, which ignores the cultural context of its conceptualisation within research studies (Harper 2001). Davies (2002) suggests that the concept is gender blind and ethnocentric whilst other theorists recognise that it is narrow in its focus (Walker and Wigfield 2003). These are just some of the broader criticisms of social capital, other general criticisms focus upon definition, precision, measurement, theoretical underpinnings and epistemology.

Definition and focus

There is clear definitional diversity among social capital theorists. There are a number of terms commonly used in definitions of social capital within the wider literature but these are operationalised in different ways, bringing into question the notion of social capital as a single conceptual entity (Schuller et al 2000). Everingham (2003) discusses how the concept has been taken up by other disciplines in a way that often equates social capital with the social. Consequently, all forms of social interactions and processes, institutions and norms are simply labelled as social capital. Many commentators have noticed this problem and argue that this great abundance of usages has extended its meaning so far that it is in danger of losing explanatory power. The concept has also been criticised because of the huge range of social issues on which it has been positioned (Schuller et al 2000). Portes and Landolt (1996) argue that the concept could lose any distinct meaning because it is being applied to so many events, in many different contexts.

In defence of this criticism, Schuller et al (2000) argue that this over versatility relates more to the way in which the concept is being applied rather than to any intrinsic quality. Therefore, clarification about what the concept means in each context is the key to resolving the problem. Other forms of capital such as human, financial and physical appear to command a far higher degree of consensus in the way in which they are deployed and are less problematic. The concept of social capital must be recognised as relatively immature (Schuller et al 2000) and in need of more theoretical and empirical refinement. There are no reliable research results to tell us exactly how social capital is generated, despite the widespread discussion of the concept's benefits at both the micro and meso level (Hooge and Stolle 2003). Hence, the concept requires more development. To overcome this problem within my study, the concept of social capital is used as a heuristic device to analytically explore community based research within the context of regeneration.

Precision and lifespan issues

Despite recognition of the immaturity of the concept, some commentators argue that social capital is not precise enough. Flora (1998) states that despite social capital serving as a heuristic device for generating interesting theoretical and applied discussion; it is likely to be superseded by a more precise conceptual and applied framework. However, other theorists disagree with this perspective and state that social capital has become popular because of its lack of precision. Everingham (2003) argues that the concept is a shortcut through sociology, which explains everything without having the burden of reading the classical traditions from which it has emerged. The concept can thus be a chimera and reflects a fad amongst non-academics ready to clutch at any term which might offer quick fix solutions for problems associated with the processes of development and underdevelopment. However, some argue that the concept need not be abandoned despite these problems. Instead, it is incumbent upon those using the concept in their research to be aware of its various interpretations and what is evoked by each of them (Wall et al 1998). Theorists using social capital require clear definitions, transparent theoretical underpinnings and the overt use of indicators for measurement as well as more critical awareness. Thus, in my study the development of a clear analytical framework defining social capital for the purposes of this research clarifies its underpinnings.

Measurement issues

Social capital also poses a number of problems in measurement terms. As the concept is defined in numerous ways; it is hard to measure. Schuller et al (2000) discuss three central issues: the methodological challenges of measuring social capital, the problems of explanation over time and the problem of aggregation of data from individual to socio-structural levels. Social capital is generally perceived to be a community characteristic yet it is usually measured by asking questions of individuals and aggregating their replies. Portes and Landolt (1996) argue that collective social capital can not simply be the sum of individual social capital. Similarly, Green et al (2000) question whether a survey of individuals can properly distinguish between the collective characteristics of a neighbourhood and those of the individual. A further measurement issue arises because much of the research on social capital is actually based upon secondary analyses of existing data (Harper 2001). Furthermore, social capital has been criticised for being a circular concept because as a property of communities and nations rather than individuals, social capital is simultaneously a cause and effect (Portes 1998), again creating measurement challenges. Finally, the concept raises issues about normative control with discussions being criticised for blurring the distinction between analysis and prescription (Schuller et al 2000). Perhaps more fundamentally although some attempts to measure social capital empirically have taken place, there are no examples of social capital being measured cross nationally through quantitative indicators. Indeed, the ways in which social capital tends to be measured relates to both the political and theoretical position of the researcher (Walker and Wigfield 2003). This demonstrates how the concept is difficult to operationalise into empirically based and methodologically sound measures.

Despite these measurement challenges, social capital as a concept is now examined within several large scale British Surveys such as the General Household Survey and the British Crime Survey. [7] Various measures have been used by Coleman (1988), Hall (1999) and Putnam (2000) to measure social capital. Coleman (1988) developed indicators in relation to children's educational attainment including personal, family and community dimensions. Hall (1999) focused upon networks of sociability and on the norms of social trust associated with such networks. Finally, Putnam (2000) looked at regional government performance in Italy using an index based upon

several different factors including effectiveness in service provision, responsive provision to enquiries and the quality of legislative records. Statistics New Zealand suggest that an adequate measure of social capital would involve three types of measurement, population data, attitudinal data and participation data (Harper 2001). However, social capital remains difficult due to both its intangibility and presence at different levels and scales of relationship. For this reason it is arguably better as a heuristic device rather than a precisely defined and measurable concept because of the difficulties of operationalisation. The concept can be used as a device to open up avenues for exploration, to shed new insights into the way issues are construed and to strengthen the case for complex and multi-dimensional investigation. In short, social capital has a heuristic quality (Schuller et al 2000).

Theoretical and epistemological issues

Social capital has also been criticised for being too functionalist in that it is often discussed without reference to any negative effects. The popular view of social capital is that it is wholly beneficial with no significant downside - the implicit consensus is that social capital is important because it allows people to work together by resolving dilemmas of collective action. However, whether or not this is actually the case is obscure (Portes and Landolt 1996). Hooge and Stolle (2003) argue that societies might have harmful collective goals and the presence of social capital can allow them to be reached more easily. For example, in white neighbourhoods, community organisations can be used to exclude racial and ethnic minorities. Atkinson and Kintrea (2004) discuss empirical evidence supporting the view that some values held in deprived areas hold people back and despite this such individuals are content with the familiarity and support found locally. Consequently, it is unwise to suggest that their social relations are impaired or deficient in any way.

Thus, not all types of social capital are beneficial. It may be the case that only specific aspects have positive effects for wider society. Although Functionalism is one school of thought that influences social capital, the concept is open to a wide range of other influences. Woolcock (1998) compares conservative approaches to liberal. Conservative views emphasise trust in relation to the state (for example, Fukuyama 1999), whilst liberals see the state nurturing growth in social capital levels. Other theorists see the concept as value neutral, simply facilitating the goal of actors,

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[7] The Office of National Statistics provides clear guidelines about what indicators of the concept are

irrespective of if they are socially desirable or not (Coleman 1998). Furthermore, the notion of capital may well be problematic because it brings with it a whole set of discourses and inevitably links it, in the current context to capitalism (Cohen and Prusak 2001). Current social capital ideas are concerned with endorsing conventional success within a capitalistic context: educational attainment, employment, two parent families and active commitment to the norms of the work ethic and labour market competitiveness (Garmarnikow and Green 1999). Social capital as a concept may also be problematic as a resource for governance and for looking at communities because it can be a negative force.

Portes and Landlolt (1996) highlight the downside of the concept by arguing that strong ties, which help members of a group also, enable the group to exclude others. They demonstrated in their empirical work that some forms of social capital might undermine others, meaning that social mobility may be inversely correlated with strong community ties. For example, peer group pressure may restrict and ghettoise disadvantaged youths. Indeed, community defines 'us' as 'not them' and therefore, networks and trust can be exclusive and their currency can be increased by their exclusiveness (Taylor 2000). The concept is problematic when applied to excluded communities in that strong ties can separate already excluded people further from the society around them (Taylor 2000). For example, the caste system in India with its rigid boundaries (Narayan 1999) serves to produce this effect. Furthermore, strong ties may lead to restrictions upon individual freedom. Portes and Landlolt (1996) discuss small towns within this context - everyone knows you but this may create a feeling of claustrophobia rather than security, which can ultimately asphyxiate the individual spirit. They go on to discuss Putnam's (1995) thesis that the inner city is short on sociability, counter-arguing that there is a considerable amount of social capital in ghetto areas, but that the assets obtainable through it seldom allow participants to rise above their poverty. Thus, strong ties produce public 'bads' rather than public goods for some people - mafia families, prostitution rings and youth gangs. The Mafia is an example of a collectivity with high levels of associational networks and with an ultimate emphasis on trust. So strong ties are not always positive, especially when they are associated with a lack of bridging and linking social capital. This has led some theorists to argue that wide-ranging and dense networks with weak links are the most appropriate way of cultivating generalised trust, altruism and reciprocity amongst groups of people (see Granovetter 1973). It is important that

being applied within their survey research.

communities with strong bonding social capital have access to other types of social capital to prevent the downside of strong linkages from affecting such groups.

Developing social capital remains problematic because although individuals can benefit greatly from social participation and mutual trust, the outcomes obtained will vary depending upon what resources are obtained, who is excluded and what is demanded in exchange. Indeed, Leonard's (2004) research in Belfast demonstrates that males in particular were highly selective in ensuring that they participated with those most likely to be in a position to reciprocate. Sociability can clearly work both ways. Social capital theorists have attempted to tackle this problem by developing typologies of the concept, such as bonding, bridging and linking. As Putnam (2003: 23) puts it 'bonding social capital helps you get by' while 'bridging social capital helps you get ahead'. Although categorising social capital in such a way is useful in terms of understanding its mechanisms, the typologies still do not offer assessments of whether it is good or bad (Everingham 2003). Hence, what is required is a theoretical framework to explain social capital in terms of negative impacts. It is also argued that societies can actually function in the absence of social capital. Distrust, particularised trust, the lack of weak bridging ties and reciprocity, high levels of political apathy, cynicism and corruption may not be the ingredients of an ideal society, but they can form its basis (Hooge and Stolle 2003). Perhaps this is an area of the concept that is under researched and requires further investigation.

Specific regeneration problems

This range of general issues associated with social capital may well have an influence within social regeneration settings. Furthermore, there may be issues particularly pertinent to regeneration, which may also create problems in forming and fostering social capital.

Firstly, trust within any neighbourhood is not guaranteed. The impact of historical divisions within areas, contemporary housing policies, intense deprivation and the sudden presence of streams of money can all act to undermine levels of trust between individuals and groups within neighbourhoods (Hibbitt et al 2001). Moreover, research as a process can have a negative impact in relation to trust because in the majority of cases power in the research situation is unevenly distributed. Crozier (2003) argues that the researched must be convinced that they will gain from participation and that the researcher is willing to or has the ability to deliver

something that is acceptable. This argument is relevant to all research including community based approaches.

Secondly, building social capital through community based research may not be suitable for all regeneration contexts or purposes. The literature recognises that tailored and integrated responses are necessary in addressing neighbourhood problems. Social capital is highly context dependent (Jochum 2003), because different neighbourhoods have different combinations of factors that affect how they work. Consequently, different factors in different places create success (Groves et al 2003). It is at the level of the neighbourhood that external factors such as demography and geography are the most determining. Consideration must also be paid to the socio economic situation and the institutional environment within any area (Jochum 2003). Thus, neighbourhood conditions impact upon resident participation, which is fundamental to community based research approaches in forging social capital. Furthermore, where processes for effective communication and inclusive participation are inadequate or community consultation is deficient or under resourced, a real sense of alienation can develop in a community (Simpson et al 2003). So community based approaches in some circumstances may create a culture of mistrust and have a negative influence on any existing stocks of social capital.

Thirdly, community based research in order to have a positive impact upon levels of social capital requires key people to drive forward the approach. Leonard (2004) argues that the endurance of social capital depends on the ability of certain individuals to mobilise their own cultural and economic capital and that of others. Some individuals are better placed within a community to lead others forward in developing social capital. Despite this suggestion, the literature on social capital has largely ignored the importance of leadership. Purdue (2001) suggests that community leaders play a crucial role in accumulating internal social capital through their work at the grassroots level and are also at the forefront of developing external social capital through partnerships with outside elite groups. Within regeneration these key leaders are often dedicated professionals whose capacity building expertise allows local people to undertake and complete such tasks. However, not all areas have good, experienced and capable workers. Many regeneration professionals are both temporary and migratory, therefore they do not engender the type of commitment to the neighbourhood that residents often do. As such, they are not a resource that forms the fabric of neighbourhood social capital in many instances

but rather a fleeting resource whose primary commitment is to their employers and themselves (Fraser and Lepofsky 2004).

Fourthly, voluntary organisations especially volunteer led ones often rely heavily upon a small number of people. This reliance should raise concerns not only about dependency and sustainability, but also about inclusiveness and diversity. If voluntary organisations are a source of social capital and contribute to building social capital, the question must be asked about whose social capital they are developing. If such groups wish to produce positive outcomes then they need to encourage diversity and inclusiveness (Jochum 2003). Too much bonding social capital between volunteers and high levels of in-group trust will serve to negate any positive benefits emerging from voluntary associations as exclusivity is likely to be the outcome. Communities and voluntary organisations require all three types of social capital to ensure sustainable development (Stone and Hughes 2001).

Finally, social capital is only valuable to the extent that community members recognise and sustain its value. It may be the case that the use of social capital terminology brings out a negative reaction from people working within voluntary and community organisations (Begum 2003), leaving the concept outside the voluntary arena at least for the imminent future.

Summary

Social capital as a conceptual entity then is highly debated within the sociological literature, wider academic fields and within policy debates. Increasingly, within the policy arena, initiatives are employed which attempt to develop local social capital. This is now the case in relation to European Structural funding (Hibbitt et al 2001), with the role of social capital seen as important in achieving success within regeneration. Both Coleman (1998) and Putnam (2000) discuss the macro benefits of social capital and both interpretations suggest that on a broad level social capital is useful within regeneration settings. Indeed, some commentators emphasise the links between the concept and regeneration (see MacGillivray and Walker 2000). These broad linkages remain unexplored under the remit of this study because of the specific concern with community based research and its relationship to social capital.

This chapter draws several theoretical links between social capital and community based research. Adapting Coleman's (1998) discussion of how the concept can

benefit the wider community through the creation of human capital, empirical connections between community based research and other forms of capital will be investigated. Highlighting Bourdieu's (1986) structural Marxist approach and his understanding of social capital in terms of networks, allows a more specific understanding of community based research and its links to social capital to be developed. For Bourdieu (1986), networks operate to enhance or constrain success. Therefore, the way in which community based research contributes to the development of networks requires empirical investigation. Putnam's focus, although more politically based, also emphasises the importance of networks. Putnam's (2000) conceptualisation of bonding, bridging and linking social capital develops Bourdieu's (1986) discussion of networks in distinguishing between specific social capital networks and likely effects. Investigation into how community based research contributes to bonding, bridging and linking networks allows for a more complex picture of the network relationship between social capital and community based research to be empirically explored. If community based research produces bonding and insular linkages, without strengthening bridging or linking connections then it is less useful as a community development work tool than theoretically suggested. Putnam (1993) also discusses involvement and engagement as crucial in the development of social capital, therefore, levels of involvement in community based research will be investigated.

Similar to Putnam's (2000) distinction of types of networks, Fukuyama (2001) discusses types of trust, based upon a radius. Groups with high levels of trust and in-group solidarity reduce their ability to co-operate with outsiders. Narrow circles of trust, like high levels of bonding capital, reduce co-operation with outsiders. Community based research theoretically contributes to increasing trust but if this is insular, in-group trust, it is likely to mitigate against achieving the outcomes of development work. However, if community based research leads to an extension of trust and a broadening of the radius then it is more useful as a development work tool. Therefore, if trust is enhanced through community based research, the type should be identified to determine its level of relevance in development work initiatives.

Drawing upon the work of these different social capital theorists allows community based research to be explored empirically. The themes highlighted from the work of Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1998), Putnam (2000) and Fukuyama (2001) allows the ambiguity of the concept to be clarified for the purposes of my study and outline a clear analytical framework through which to examine community based research.

Adapting relevant aspects of these various definitions overcomes the issue of definitional diversity through the development of a single analytical framework. Drawing through functionalism, political science and structural Marxism with a community and economic foci, the analytical connection between these different theorists is networks and trust, which will be explored in relation to community based research.

An exploration of the literature suggests that community based research can contribute to social capital development in a number of ways; in relation to participation and involvement, the development of local associational networks and by potentially increasing trust amongst participants. These themes are empirically explored in Chapters Six and Seven. Some commentators recognise that social capital is highly context dependent so attention is paid to suitability of context. Experience is also examined because in order to ensure success, key people are required to drive forward the research. Thus, the role of community leaders requires investigation. Finally, inclusiveness is illustrated as problematic in this chapter; hence this is also examined empirically. These links are examined critically to take into account some of the problems of social capital as a conceptual entity, with general problems in defining the concept, in its focus and precision and particularly in measuring it. Furthermore, there are theoretical and epistemological arguments, which need to be understood and accounted for.

In addition, community based research can increase social capital in a number of other ways; for example by enhancing civic engagement and community spirit and by increasing social cohesion and co-operation. Indeed, by measuring the impact of regeneration initiatives using community based evaluation as a tool, positive social capital achievements can also emerge from this process. These potential links remain unexplored within this study because of the limitations of time and scope.

In summary social capital as a concept is open to debate and criticisms, not unlike many other social science conceptual tools, much other social policy terminology and indeed empirical evidence within these fields. Social capital creation in the arena of social policy and urban regeneration needs both a considered and critical approach. However, social capital appears to have much to offer social regeneration initiatives. For example, Hibbert et al (2001) carried out a case study research project in Merseyside looking at the Objective 1 Programme in relation to social capital formation within regeneration. They concluded that firstly, social capital is important

in conceptualising area based regeneration initiatives and secondly that the regeneration programme they examined was strengthening social capital within neighbourhoods and building relations of trust between members of local communities. Thus, social capital can impact positively within some regeneration settings. The question of social capital creation alongside the other research questions highlighted within Chapter One will be addressed later in this thesis. The following chapter turns to explaining how the study was carried out, discussing the methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY:
RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCESS

Chapter Three – Methodology

Research methods and process

Introduction

The aim of this research was to explore the previously understudied area of community based research occurring within social regeneration. Despite community based research taking place in fields such as health, evaluation and social welfare, an examination of such approaches within social regeneration has been overlooked. Given this, the research design and strategy were a challenge from the development of the literature search strategy through to my position as a researcher. This chapter discusses the response to the challenges of this research starting with the literature search strategy. The chapter then focuses upon the definition of community based research applied within this study. The definition of social capital used in this study is also highlighted, whilst the likely social capital network outcomes associated with community based research are hypothesised. The research questions guiding this study are highlighted and the setting in which this study occurred is described. The methodological approach including sampling, data sources and ethical issues are also highlighted to give an overview of the methodology of this study. Finally, both analysis and reflexivity are discussed.

Literature search strategy

To clarify the current status of community based research a systematic review of the literature was conducted across the literature in health, social work and evaluation. The community development work and regeneration literature was explored during the search to determine if community based research was described within this area.

The following bibliographic, reference and research information sites were all searched:

- Social Sciences Citation Index
- Sciences Citation Index
- International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
- Econlit
- National Research Register
- Current Research in Britain

- ISI Journal Citation Reports
- British Official Publications Current Awareness Service
- The UK Higher Education Archives Hub
  Social Sciences Abstracts
  Social Services Abstracts
  Index of theses

Publications Online were searched:

- Jstor
- National Electronic Site Licence Initiative
- Eurotext
- PCI Full Text

Subject Gateways were searched:

1 Social Science Information Gateway
2 Resource Discovery Network

Data Services were accessed:

- Qualidata
- The data archive

The most recent editions of key journals, which were not indexed in the sources above, were searched by hand for other relevant articles. Key journals were then identified from searching the above databases and from consulting experts. Reference lists in key articles were scanned, as this was useful in identifying relevant sources of 'grey' literature such as conference papers. Citation searches were carried out on key papers and authors. Research in progress was examined. Sites such as JRF and Regard were accessed to see if any research in progress was relevant. Also digital dissertations were searched for relevant information and data. A general Internet search engine, Google, was used to search the Internet for references using the advanced search mechanism. The following search terms, for free text searching were used within this overall literature strategy:

Search Areas:

1) community-based

2) evaluation/participatory research

Search Terms:

1) community - people, residents, district, locality, populace, population, public, society, association, identity

2) evaluation - appraisal, assessment, estimation, judgement, rating, valuation

   participation - involvement, co-operation, assistance, partnership, sharing, contribution

   research - analysis, examination, inquiry, investigation, study, exploration, inspection, quest

3) social capital (searching using this term separately)

4) AND searching such as

   community-based evaluation/research AND social regeneration

   community-based evaluation/research AND social capital

   community-based evaluation/research AND capacity building

Once all of the relevant search terms were identified and references were extracted for each search area then the different search areas were combined using Boolean logic.

This strategy adopted specific inclusion and exclusion criteria for references. Firstly, all non-English language papers were discounted due to time and resource constraints. Secondly, no date limitations were imposed on the literature search yet some literature was excluded because it was not on databases due to its age. Thirdly, all of the retrieved references that were relevant were saved and filed by topic. Finally, to assess the quality of any literature found a number of criteria were applied. For example, was there a clearly focused research question? Were the results of the study valid? Both replicability and applicability were examined. Information given about non-participants was considered. The display of results and the data synthesis were assessed. For example, did the results support the conclusions and were there potential areas of bias? Attention was paid to whether the authors mapped out the limitations of the study. Finally with regards to journal articles, whether they were they refereed or non-refereed was taken into account. In using selection criteria during the literature search, any research that was of poor quality or irrelevant to the study, was not included.

Definition of community based research

Following the examination of relevant literature using the above search strategy and an exploration of definitions of the approach cited across other fields, this study developed a specific definition of community based research. Community based research was defined as research carried out by non-academics (volunteers, community members, staff of regeneration organisations and non-academic experts such as consultants) within community settings. All of the community based research examined was based within the community and was attempting to meet the community's interest. Finally the community based research included in this study involved community members, in varying levels of engagement within the research. For the purposes of this study, community was defined as a social or cultural entity, bound by specific geographical parameters. Within all Objective 1 areas the community development partnerships were bound by geographically identifiable boundaries, defined by local people as part of the community action planning process. Thus, identifying the communities in which the research was taking place was made easier by this process.

This definition of community based research was broad and this was intentional because as Chapter One indicates, the literature suggests that there is no specific 'type', format or model for a community based research approach. This broad definition allowed for the incorporation of a continuum of different community based research approaches within this study.

Types of community based research

The piloting telephone interviews conducted at the outset of this study demonstrated that there were four different types of community based research used within the Objective 1 context, when the action plans were being developed. Therefore, a continuum of community based research approaches was developed to facilitate the investigation of these approaches. The continuum was based upon control, involvement and participation within the empirical work of community based research. There were four clear types of research existing along this continuum within this context. There are no boundaries existing between the different types of community based research and they are interrelated. Given that four types of community based research are evident within this study, it is arguable that there may be other types of community based research occurring within different contexts. The four approaches

discussed here are not exclusive to the Objective 1 context and are not the only approaches available for use in practice.

These four community based research approaches were used as an analytical framework in which to explore the themes outlined in the first two literature chapters. These are described in detail in Chapter Four and consist of type 1, a grass roots research approach characterised by local community members controlling the entire research process and fully participating in the empirical work. Type 2, the grass roots contract approach, involved local community members simply carrying out the data collection aspect of the research process, therefore, volunteers controlled less and participated less in the empirical aspect of the work. Type 3, the in house contract approach, consisted of staff actually carrying out the research so there was less control by volunteers and no empirical participation by volunteers. Finally, type 4, the out sourcing contract approach, was made up of hired external professional help brought into the local area to undertake the required consultation. Again there was less control and no participation in the empirical side of the work. These four types of community based research are derived from working with the literature and specifically paying attention to control and participation within community based research as well as the initial exploratory stages of the fieldwork in which telephone interviews were conducted.

Defining social capital and discussing its implications

Given that four types of community based research were examined within this study, the differences existing between them could potentially lead to varying outcomes. However, before outlining these in social capital terms, a definition of this concept has to be made clear. Social capital, for the purposes of this study is understood to be a form of interaction allowing people to network and enhance social trust. Drawing upon several theoretical traditions and authors, the aspects of social capital important in relation to community based research are networks (Bourdieu 1999), community level benefits (Coleman 1990), involvement and engagement (Putnam 1993) and trust (Fukuyama 1999). Thus, the indicators of the concept explored here are bonding, bridging and linking networks as well as trust.

Now we can hypothesise about the impact of some of these differences. For example, volunteers are differentially involved in the empirical work across the contrasting types of community based research and this may have implications for

social capital development. For example, data gatherers play a different role to commissioners of research. Therefore, where higher levels of control and participation are exhibited it is likely that bonding social capital will emerge from the process. Comparatively, where there is less control and participation, linking social capital is more likely to be the expected outcome. There is also middle ground between these two extremes where volunteers are actively involved within the data collection aspect of the research but do not remain involved in the analysis or have full control of the process. In this case, it appears likely that bridging social capital will be the outcome of engaging in this type of community based research. The following matrix represents the hypothesis that the type of community based research employed in practice will lead to the development of specific types of social capital.

Matrix 1: Types of community based research and likely social capital outcome

	Bonding	Bridging	Linking
Type 1	High		
Type 2		High	
Type 3			High
Type 4			High

This study investigated whether this hypothesis was borne out in practice by examining the links between social capital and community based research within regeneration. Chapters Seven and Eight discuss the empirical evidence in relation to this hypothesis.

Research objective and questions

The overall research objective of this study was to examine the pitfalls and benefits of applying community based research and evaluation within social regeneration, specifically focusing upon the context Objective 1 South Yorkshire. There are a number of Objective 1 regions in England and Europe with South Yorkshire, as the focus of this study being just one of them. In order to achieve the research objective

several questions were examined within this study. The five overall research questions addressed within this study were as follows.

1. Firstly, what are the theoretical, methodological and practical issues in promoting community based research models within social and economic regeneration programmes?

2. Secondly, the question of whether the context of a social regeneration programme provides the opportunities, resources and support required to facilitate the development of full community involvement and participation within both research and evaluation was addressed.

3. Thirdly, the negative aspects of community based approaches within social regeneration programmes were examined. What obstacles existed, on what levels and potentially how these can be overcome?

4. Fourthly, on a more positive note the study looked at the benefits of using such an approach. Do the benefits of this approach, as described in the literature apply to individuals involved in social regeneration programmes? How can these benefits be maximized?

5. Finally, this study looked at the links between social capital, community based research and regeneration.

Chapter One as an examination of the literature in the areas of health, evaluation and social welfare provided a framework for understanding the range of issues, which have arisen in practice within these settings when community based research is applied in practice. Thus, a number of themes were derived from this literature chapter and explored within this study to address the above research questions.

To address the first question which asks what the theoretical, methodological and practical issues are in promoting community based research models within social and economic regeneration programmes, the following themes were empirically investigated; definitions of community based research, epistemological foundations, theoretical underpinnings, axiological use of research and methodology. Finally, any issues occurring in relation to these themes were identified by tracing the process of community based research across each type of approach examined in this study.

The second question asked whether the context of a social regeneration programme provides the opportunities, resources and support required to facilitate the development of full community involvement and participation within both research

and evaluation. Chapter One suggests that community based research has much to offer social regeneration programmes in terms of being both a useful research and evaluation tool and a mechanism from which to build skills amongst local community members and groups. Consequently, this study examined if such research was applied within the Objective 1 regeneration context and how it was used. Whether such research was applicable to both community development work practice and wider social regeneration initiatives was also explored. The support available for such approaches including time, money and skill availability and involvement in community based research across a number of geographical areas were also investigated.

Thirdly, the negative aspects of community based approaches within social regeneration programmes were examined by exploring a number of themes again drawn from the literature discussed in Chapter One. These were power imbalances, lack of trust, issues of legitimacy, representation, time constraints, inequalities in participation, the need for leadership, resources, different needs and interests and individual perceptions about what is possible in terms of community based research. This study established what obstacles existed, what levels these appeared on and indeed if they could be successfully overcome.

Fourthly, on a more positive note the study examined the benefits of using community based research. The benefits described in the literature were explored to establish if they applied to individuals using community based research within regeneration. Thus the following headings, derived from the literature were taken forward into the data collection and analysis to focus upon the benefits of such approaches; skills development, empowerment, the development of social relationships, positive local outcomes and increased local knowledge and strengthened local networks. This research then identified how these benefits could be maximized within regeneration settings.

Finally this study examined the links between social capital, community based research and regeneration. Chapter Two illustrates how there are potentially a number of links between social capital and community based research. Again several themes highlighted in Chapter Two were empirically explored. These themes were; trust, suitability of context, the role of community leaders and inclusiveness. Particular attention was also paid to the development of networks. By applying these themes across the different types of community based research, it was possible to draw out comparisons and to discuss which types have the most to contribute in

relation to social capital formation. The themes drawn out from the literature are analytically explored in Chapters Five, Six and Seven where they are used to interrogate interview data and to provide insights into community based research within regeneration. The research questions are addressed in Chapter Eight.

Objective 1

This study was developed in partnership with Objective 1, South Yorkshire. So the aims of this research were met via a study of this programme which provides funding across some of the most disadvantaged communities in England to restructure under performing economies. This is achieved through investing in business and enterprise, people, skills and communities and finally development and infrastructure.

This study is concerned with Priority Four, described by Objective 1 as the investment made in people, skills and communities to build neighbourhood strength and reintegration. Firstly, the measure of 'tools for integration' aims to give people the skills needed to participate in and lead local economic renewal. This will be achieved in a number of ways including through the provision of opportunities for communities to commission innovative training and development opportunities. This measure allows space for individuals to create training opportunities in community based research and evaluation techniques. Secondly, the measure of 'building neighbourhood strength' aims give local communities the capacity to contribute to their own development. These aims, reflective of current social inclusion discourse, were met by the development of local action plans and partnerships, enabling local people to be actively involved in regeneration.

The research questions of this study were addressed by an examination of research carried out within the development of community action plans. Thus, research to identify local needs and to gather background information was central to producing community action plans. This research study focused upon the consultation aspect of the action plan process, retrospectively investigating the development of the research within specific geographical locations.

Action plans

The use of the community action plan approach ensured that many Objective 1 communities carried out research and consultation with a local area based remit.

Collecting data within specific geographical locations, volunteers and professionals working within community partnerships were able to identify local issues and potential solutions in order to create a document demonstrating a map of community need. Consultation with the community in order to identify its needs was a core part of developing a community action plan.

Therefore the community action plans allowed community based research to be explored in this context. This consultation took a variety of forms, categorised into four types of research as discussed earlier in this chapter. Primarily the research for these action plans was an examination of relevant issues within the community, the community wants, needs, aspirations and hopes. The consultation and the wider action plans also detail what can be done to address these issues. In formulating and developing an action plan specific detailed information was required for the plan including statistical data from existing secondary sources. Therefore, developing the action plans included gathering relevant secondary information as well as more direct community consultation. This in itself is a research exercise. Thus, within this community action plan process there was clear community-based research occurring; the consultation did not have to be done by professionals. The measure of building neighbourhood strength aims to create opportunities for local people to act as primary agents of change. Therefore actions, which are supported under this measure, include community based and community led research. The action plans as a community development work strategy had a large amount of scope and space in which to develop community based approaches to research.

Furthermore, part of the action plan process included designing an evaluation of the completed plans. Guidelines for communities state that there should be ongoing monitoring of projects on a quarterly basis and an annual review of the plan itself. Finally there should be an evaluation at the end of the funding term to assess how far the community has progressed and to see if all targets have been met. This creates the opportunity for community members to undertake such evaluative work. However, whether this type of community based evaluation occurred was beyond the scope and time scale of this study.

Methodology overview

To answer the five research questions a qualitative methodological stance was adopted. The aim of this research was to provide description and understanding

rather than objective explanations associated with a positivist approach. A qualitative approach is more suited to these aims. A qualitative research approach is appropriate for capturing people's views, feelings and practice as well as their experience and the kind of atmosphere and context in which they act and respond (Wisker 2001). This approach is most appropriate for examining community based approaches to research and evaluation within social regeneration for a number of reasons. Firstly, the very principles that underpin community based research as an approach recognise the multiple and socially constructed realities (Hills and Mullet 2000), that constitute research findings. A qualitative approach is most likely to capture a range of realities and experiences. Secondly, as community based approaches also aim to reflect individual experiences, understandings and meanings of the world (Hills and Mullet 2000), qualitative research is more suited to gaining access to people's understandings through the narrative descriptions they provide. Consequently, a qualitative ethos and qualitative understandings of research underpin this study.

Other methodological approaches were considered and could have been used to address the research questions. For example, a national survey of regeneration projects could have been carried out as a way to answer the research questions highlighted. However, using such an approach would create several issues. Firstly, there is a problem in terms of how to conceptualise community based research. What people understand by the approach complicates the use of the survey, given that the initial work for this study found that many projects do undertake community based research but fail to identify it as such. During the exploratory stages of the fieldwork, telephone interviews were conducted to establish if community based research was occurring. Despite community based research being a core part of the action plan process many participants, when asked about it, needed clarification of the terminology. A traditional survey approach would allow limited scope for any clarification of terminology such as community based research. In addition, given the demands upon both volunteer and staff time within the voluntary and community sector, questionnaires may well produce a low response rate. The resulting research results would also have given a broad picture rather than in depth understanding. Given that community based research is rarely discussed within regeneration, a qualitative approach allowed a deeper picture to be elicited.

So what qualitative methodology was adopted within this study? Again a number of approaches were considered including focus groups. Focus groups were considered as a method to elicit individual views, however in this case the disclosure of some

information might be an issue because members of the same community were likely to know each other. Furthermore, history within areas can influence disclosure, personal relationships may not be harmonious both within and between partnerships and individual respondents may wish to make statements in private and off the record. Focus groups could be problematic in overcoming these issues, therefore semi – structured interviews were adopted as part of a broader qualitative case study approach.

Case study approach

Case study research refers to the investigation of a few cases or even a single one, in depth and is thus associated with a qualitative approach (Hammersley, Gomm & Foster 2000). Case study is an approach which employs various methods such as interviews, participant observation and field studies, with the goal of analyzing from a sociological perspective, to highlight the features and attributes of social life (Hamel et al 1992). Case studies are conducted

> "by giving special attention to totalizing in the observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under study" (Zonabend 1992: 52).

Case studies allow for detailed data collection and analysis via comparison. Within this study a descriptive and analytical case study approach was used to facilitate the understanding of each area sampled and each group of people undertaking community based research. This case study approach was applied across eight areas focusing upon the people who had participated in community based research. This study did not adopt a participatory research approach with the researcher positioned as an initiator, consultant or collaborator with community members within their research fields. Community based research was simply independently studied to try and gain an understanding of it. A number of areas were sampled to develop a collective and comparative case study approach. Detailed case studies are useful for exploration and for researchers searching for explanatory laws (Stake 2000). Given that the aim of this study was to explore community based research, the case study method is well suited to achieving this through the investigation of a number of cases.

Indeed, the examination of several cases in this study also overcomes the criticism that using a single case only permits the understanding of individual facets on a micro-sociological scale (Hamel et al 1993). Studying several cases thus makes it

possible to mitigate against such a limitation by facilitating detail, perspective and comparison. Qualitative researchers uses comparison as a means to analyze findings (Mason 1996) and several commentators argue that comparative analysis is often the basis for developing sound theoretical conclusions (Hammersley, Gomm & Foster 2000). By using analytical induction to develop hypotheses which fit the cases being examined, and carrying out further investigation to confirm these, theory is generated. Consequently, the detailed comparative case study approach applied here in order to explore and answer the research questions of this study provides detailed understanding comparison and the facilitation of theory development.

In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on contemporary phenomena with some real life context (Yin 1994). Such an approach was suitable for examining areas, people and contemporary regeneration practices because there were many variables of interest examined within this study. Furthermore, this study used a comparative approach investigating and comparing several different areas in terms of the different types of research they applied in practice, the levels of support, funding and staff they had to assist with the process and their different geographies, histories and partnership structures. The aim of this study was to produce understanding, insight and theory associated with community based research within regeneration rather than large-scale generalizations. Given the fact that what works for one regeneration area, may not work for others, such generalization is not the way forward. Stake (1995) argues that the real business of case study is particularization, to take a case and get to know it well in order to create understanding. However, Stake (2000) also argues that by gaining full knowledge of the particular and being able to recognize it in new and foreign contexts, some form of generalization is possible. Thus,

> "That knowledge is a form of generalization too....naturalistic generalization, arrived at by recognizing the similarities of objects and issues in and out of context...To generalize in this way is to be both empirical and intuitive" (Stake 2000: 22).

Hence, in using a case study approach encompassing brief telephone interviews, in depth semi-structured interviews, observation and an examination of documents, detailed understanding was gained and became a platform on which to generalize from. In this study, generalization stems from the experience of those researched

and their tacit knowledge of how things are and why they are that way. Thus the research findings of this study may apply in other contexts in which community based research is being carried out.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) label this as transferability rather than generalization, suggesting that the 'fittingness' of research findings should be determined on the basis of the similarity of contexts being compared. Thus, transferability should be considered for each context in which the original research findings are relevant. This conceptualization suggests that the research findings from this case study may be broadly applicable to other similar contexts in which community based research is being carried out, depending upon their transferability. Hence, the qualitative case study approach adopted within this study allows for both detailed and comparative data collection as well as the wider generalization of findings to similar contexts.

Within this broad case study approach, brief telephone interviews were conducted at the outset of the fieldwork to establish if community based research had taken place as part of the action plan development. Semi structured interviews were used to gain understanding of the process of community based research from participants. This was the most appropriate technique in light of the qualitative approach adopted within this study. Such interviews address the need for comparable responses between participants, with the same questions being asked of each interviewee whilst allowing for the conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee to be developed (Wisker 2001). Thus, participants who engaged in community based research were interviewed on an individual basis to gain understanding of their experiences according to a number of predetermined themes, drawn from the literature.

The advantage of this type of interview is that its more relaxed nature allowed respondents to steer the interviews in any direction they saw as relevant and to raise issues not included in the interview schedule. Semi-structured interviews also assume that a fixed sequence of questions is not suitable to all respondents (Silverman 1993). This great flexibility associated with the semi-structured interview provided the opportunity to discover exactly what the respondents were articulating and to clarify any arising ambiguities in both questions and answers. Probing for shades of meaning was also possible in using such a technique. Undoubtedly, the exploratory nature of this study is suited to this type of research method with a clearer picture being more likely to emerge from a less formal and more conversational setting.

Individual semi-structured interviews allowed for the multiple realities of participants experiences within each area to be represented. Semi structured interviews allowed individuals to report on what they felt, as well as discussing their lives, opinions and beliefs (Ackroyd and Hughes 1992). The use of open-ended questions allowed informants to articulate their opinions. Stakeholders were asked a range of similar questions and directed to the same topics of conversation during the interviews. This allowed for broad comparisons to be made between their different experiences and opinions of community based research within regeneration. In this sense, some of the inquiry is normative because it is examining community based research in a framework derived from the literature. However, it is often the case within qualitative research that despite the utility of any framework employed, it may need broadening to include new experiences (Thornton 1993). Adopting semi structured interviews allowed for the incorporation of new experiences and opinions within this study and these are illustrated in Chapter Seven. However, interviews do have problems.

Interviews are interactive and problems can arise from this. The data gained from any interview depends upon the way the participant defines the situation and their perception of the interviewer. Furthermore, all interviewers have values, attitudes and expectations and these may be communicated during the interview situation. Interviewer bias and 'leading' respondents have to be guarded against by. A number of interview approaches are discussed within the literature such as taking the stance of polite neutrality or in comparison being aggressive, playing games and using skepticism to draw out information. The array of techniques described suggests that there is no one best way of interviewing. Despite the ongoing debate about the use of interviews and the obvious problems with their use, on a positive note, some interesting insights emerge from interview data.

In addition to the use of the semi-structured interview, where possible observation was carried out within the case study areas. For example, observations of management group meetings, training events, open days and community events. Observation can be a rich source of information as it allows the observer to capture what people actually do rather than just what they say they do (Wisker 2001). Both participant and non-participant observation were adopted depending upon the event being observed and the expectation about the appropriate behaviour of the researcher. Observation was not always possible or appropriate and as such data

gained from the observations was simply used to contextualise the existing interview data.

In this research a total of twenty-five interviews were carried out as well as a number of observations across the different areas sampled. Each area sampled was classified according to the type of research that the partnership adopted when developing the community action plans. The following table reveals the total data collection carried out within this study, according to the different approaches.

Table 1. Fieldwork summary

AREA	INTERVIEWS	CONTEXTUAL MEETINGS
Type 1, area a	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x worker 3 x volunteers	◆ Presentation by Chair ◆ Management group meeting ◆ Training day ◆ Met new community worker ◆ Attended conference with Chair
Type 1, area b	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x worker 2 x volunteers	◆ One meeting with Chair ◆ One sub-group meeting
Type 2, area a	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x consultant 1 x local researcher	◆ Met with community development manager twice.
Type 2, area b	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x worker 1 x Chair	◆ Management group meeting
Type 3, area a	1 x initial telephone contact 2 x workers 2 x volunteers	◆ Met with learning net manager and child development manager
Type 3, area b	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x volunteer 2 x workers	◆ Met with new community worker
Type 4, area a	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x worker 1 x volunteer	◆ None

AREA	INTERVIEWS	CONTEXTUAL MEETINGS
Type 4, area b	1 x initial telephone contact 1 x consultant 2 X Volunteers	♦ Met with new community worker
Stakeholders	2 x Objective 1 Staff	♦ Director of Academy for Community Leadership ♦ Objective 1 Project Development Officers x2 ♦ Numerous Objective 1 Conferences ♦ Social Enterprise organisation undertaking research in the community

Sampling

Due to the large number of areas creating action plans and the time, funding and resource limitations of this study, it was not possible to examine all action plan areas. Objective 1 South Yorkshire was, at the time of this study, supporting forty action plan areas. To simply examine one area from each type of community based research would be too limited therefore; two areas from each approach were examined. Eight areas in total were used as cases to address the research questions. The eight areas selected include four different types of community based research across four different local authority wards with different demographic characteristics, issues, histories and partnerships. The areas were also at differing stages in terms of community development experience. These areas were sampled for inclusion in this study because of these differences. Examining different areas with varying levels of expertise and a range of factors influencing the context of the community based research, allowed for more interesting comparisons to be drawn from the data. Arguably these differences should be examined to investigate and explore the relationship between these factors and the ensuing types of research adopted. The table overleaf details a summary of the fieldwork areas sampled and included in this study.

Table 2. Summary of fieldwork areas

Area Name	Geographical Ward	Research	Community Development Status
Type 1, area a	Rotherham	Type 1. Local community volunteers carried out the research. The whole process was completely community led.	• Partnership is a company and was set up to develop the community action plan. The partnership began as a public meeting and developed through a series of public meetings. • Partnership had a small amount of funding but no core funding or staff at the time of the consultation. • Small group of people drove the process and 4 key local people undertook the writing of the plan • Some support from one paid worker employed by the Local Authority.
Type 1, area b	Barnsley	Type 1. Local community volunteers carried out the research. The whole process was completely community led.	• Partnership is a charity, made up entirely of volunteers. No paid staff employed. • No other funding and no office base to work from. • Local community members received training at Northern College as part of this process. • Some support from paid workers and a local resident who is employed at Northern College and is on the Management Group.
Type 2, area b	Sheffield	Type 2. Although community members carried out the data collection aspect of the research and some limited analysis, the whole research process was controlled and designed by a specially employed consultant.	• Partnership is a development trust, a company and a charity. Partnership was set up Sheffield Hallam University and has accountable body status. • Partnership has over ten staff members and an array of volunteers including researchers. • Has Single Regeneration Budget funding and a large financial turnover. • Consultation is an ongoing process and has occurred in a variety of forms. • Area has high levels of black and minority ethnic cultures.

Area Name	Geographical Ward	Research	Community Development Status
Type 2, area b	Rotherham	Type 2. A number of community members were recruited to carry out the data collection aspect of the research, the whole research process was overseen and controlled by existing staff. The administration worker was responsible for the analysis.	• Partnership is a Development Trust and started in 1998. • Has received other funding sourced from the New Opportunities Fund, the Coalfield Regeneration Trust, and the Home Office. • There is one paid worker full time and a number of part time staff.
Type 3, area a	Barnsley	Type 3. Staff employed at the partnership were responsible for developing workshops and a series of public meetings as part of the consultation process.	• Partnership established by local council but now independent. Employs 19 people. • Has other funding, for example, from the Coalfield Regeneration Trust
Type 3, area b	Sheffield	Type 3. Existing staff, community development workers employed by other agencies in the area carried out the research.	• Partnership is the meeting of 2 forums, without any legal status because they were newly established to develop local action plans. • No paid staff at the time of the consultation. • Area has a high concentration of black and minority ethnic cultures.
Type 4, area a	Doncaster	Type 4. Employed consultants.	• Partnership is a company. • Partnership has other funding through Single Regeneration Budget (pays for existing workers whose remit is to support groups in the area). • Consultation done by consultants and action plan then written by the local community worker.
Type 4, area b	Doncaster	Type 4. Employed consultants.	• The partnership is constituted but has no legal status. It's run by management group and was initially set up by the local authority following the liquidation of another regeneration initiative in the area. • Gained funding for one worker who was able to support some of the consultation and community action plan process.

Data sources and access

The data collection focused upon gathering information from those directly involved in community based research. Key figures in each case study area were identified and then interviewed. Objective 1 staff provided a list of contacts for all of the community partnerships developing action plans and these were the individuals who were contacted in the initial stages of the research whilst carrying out telephone interviews. Access to the community partnerships was greatly assisted by the sponsor relationship with Objective 1. However, being given a list of names although helpful, clearly does not grant the level of access required for a study such as this. Hence, once initial contact had been made, further access had to be negotiated. Many areas were keen to be included in the fieldwork and so following on from the initial contact, several individuals from the overall list were contacted again and interviews were arranged with them. These individuals were drawn from different Local Authority wards, types of research and partnerships for comparative purposes. At the end of these face to face interviews, participants were asked to identify other relevant individuals who had participated in community based research in the area. Thus, a snowball sampling approach was adopted. Using such an approach gave a sample that was small, limited and in no way representative of the general population. However, this was intentional as the research was examining a specific concept within a particular Objective 1 site, across a number of community development partnerships. This study aimed to provide interesting insight from these interviews rather than a set of conclusions that were likely to be equally true of the population as a whole. Therefore, the sampling technique could be non-random with individuals picked from unequivocal criteria.

As a number of different individuals played a part in the completion of the community based research project, a range of participants were interviewed. Firstly, community members and volunteers were interviewed. These participants were asked about their individual experiences through the process of community based research. Consideration was given to what community based research meant for those involved, what needs they had to address to ensure success, the impact they feel it had individually and locally and what worked for them. Participants were also asked to describe how they believed future community based research could be improved and how their experiences fitted into the wider remit determined by Objective 1. For example, did employing community based research allow people to redefine issues as they were perceived by the community? How did employing such consultation

relate ·to the writing of the action plans? Did the research employed increase involvement for local people in the mechanisms of social regeneration? Secondly, professionals were interviewed. Community development workers, support workers and consultants involved in the process of community based research were also interviewed to determine how they supported people through the process, the difficulties they faced and the benefits they attained. Finally, relevant stakeholders were interviewed. A review of key stakeholders' views was carried out in relation to the potential utility, acceptability and practicality of developing community based research. Here the study focused upon relevant staff members within Objective 1 such as community action plan support workers and managers.

Given the range of people interviewed, it was inappropriate to ask all of the participants the same questions because they played different roles in the process of community based research. Thus, a range of different interview schedules were developed, tailored to the role that participants played. However, despite the use of the different interview schedules, many similarities are clear between them and overall the questions aimed to allow for detailed consideration of the same issues. All of the interview schedules included questions about the process of community based research, the levels of involvement experienced within the area, the support that people were provided with and the impact of the research in terms of dissemination, community spirit, networking and the development of trust. The interviewees were also asked about models of good practice and the negative aspects of the research process. In addition, participants were asked about the meaning of community based research and their beliefs about its applicability to social regeneration in general. The interview questions were designed to fit with the exploratory nature of this research and to address the five overall research questions by exploring the themes drawn from the literature discussed in Chapters One and Two. Indeed, the aim of this research was to analyse the experience for those interviewed rather than suggesting a grand narrative.

The experiences of community based research for all participants were examined retrospectively because the consultation had been completed and the action plans developed at the time of this study. The descriptions of community based research for those engaged in the process were recalled from memory. Some commentators argue that this is a problematic aspect of using interviews for social research. However, it is also argued that the richness of such experiences is something that can only be contained within memory structures (Linstead 1994). The interviews in

this study allowed each person as a speaker to tell a new story and a new event through recounting their personal experience (Denzin 1997). The interviews as a space for participants to create their own story were conducted in a variety of locations, with the venue chosen by the respondents. Thus, the interviews were carried out in offices, meeting rooms and homes. Given that respondents chose the venues, it is unlikely that they felt uncomfortable. Each interview was recorded and some notes were also taken during the course of the interviews. All participants gave their consent for the interviews to be recorded and all were given access to the transcribed interview transcript should they wish to read it. Only one respondent received a copy of their interview transcript but no amendments were requested or made. The recording of the interviews allowed full transcriptions to be made and ensured that all of the information supplied by the respondents was documented. These individual narratives were then used to create in depth descriptions of community based research within the Objective 1 context. The data from the interviews is interrogated in depth in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

Analysis

Once the interviews were completed, the data were analysed in a series of stages beginning with coding. Due to the nature of the interviews the data were coded in relation to the overall research questions and the themes identified in the first two literature chapters. Categories of questions were initially grouped together to establish patterns of response in what Wisker (2001) describes as a broad-brush approach. Some data did not fit into the existing categories therefore, emerging themes were also identified where participants commonly discussed issues unrelated to the themes identified in the literature such as their working relationship to Objective 1. Open and axial coding were used to reduce the data collected within this study. Although coding categories were established before the analysis began, it is recognised within the literature that when analysing qualitative data it is often impossible to separate the various aspects of the research process. Data collection, reduction and analysis tend to blur into a cyclical process when using qualitative approaches (Eckett 1988). Despite this, the central feature of qualitative analysis is coding because coding facilitates description and the generation of theory (Blaikie 2000).

Once coded all of the data were interrogated. Firstly, data relevant to the research questions were identified. The data was explored in a question-based manner, for

example, searching for examples that supported the benefits described in the wider literature as well as contradictory evidence. The data were also investigated to identify commonalties and differences in more general terms. For example, the four types of community based research were explored in relation to the pre-determined themes to establish similarities and differences. Data were plotted on matrixes and in tables to determine if relationships existed between specific concepts and themes, for example, were causal connections evident in relation to social capital development? The analysis carried out was related to the analytical framework developed from the social capital literature and described in the previous chapter. Therefore, the theoretical connections suggested were explored to determine if they were analytically borne out. For example, did community based research enhance participation and involvement? How did community based research relate to associations and networks? How did community based research relate to trust? The social capital hypothesis was also analysed to determine if it was borne out against the data generated in this study. Were the theoretical understandings of social capital theorists useful in understanding community based research in this context? Therefore, the analysis carried out was a circular process of describing, classifying and finally connecting (Dey 1993) to discover regularities, variations and singularities allowing theory to be developed (Blaikie 2000).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is subjecting research itself to investigation and the researcher's role to analysis (Wasserfall 1993). For example, a reflexive researcher will pay attention to gender, race and class. Qualitative researchers recognize that they inevitably inject something of themselves into the research process and into the outcomes (Blaikie 2000). Consequently, reflexivity is required especially for qualitative researchers to ensure that analytical distance is maintained. Mason (1996) argues that qualitative research involves critical self-scrutiny by researchers. For Mason (1996), researchers cannot be detached from the evidence they create and so should understand their role in the process. Hence, an important choice for all social researchers is the stance they take towards the research process and participants. There are a number of such positions that can be adopted which vary according to the researcher's view. The researcher's position was not one of being an expert and maintaining a detached position, but rather took elements from the positions of mediator of languages and reflexive partner to allow a variety of voices to be heard.

Thus, in this study emphasis was placed upon the dialogue emerging from the research, with the study aiming

"..to produce a 'polyphony' of voices rather than a single voice, in order to reduce bias and distortion' (Fontana 1994:214).

Therefore, numerous voices are evident within the findings of this study, which is important in overcoming researcher dominance.

Although numerous voices are articulated in this study, the impossibility of detachment has to be recognised, as does the variety of researcher roles adopted. These included student, interested observer, former youth worker, Objective 1 employee and Objective 1 associate. Furthermore, research knowledge from a qualitative perspective is recognised as both a collaboration and construction. Therefore, attention must also be paid to the characteristics of the researcher and how these impact upon the research process. In discussions of research methodology gender relations are highlighted as having an impact upon data collection (England 1994, Tooke 2000). Both researchers and their subjects constitute each other in multiple and shifting ways in relation to characteristics such as gender, experience and values. Thus, researchers and the researched bring sameness and difference to interactions, which impact upon the data collection and the production of knowledge. Indeed, my gender did have an impact upon the data collection in terms of gaining access within the Objective 1 context. One partnership sampled as a case study was male-dominated and had no female representatives or workers. The partnership was located in an ex-mining community and had a strong working class ethos. Access to this partnership was the most difficult and took several negotiations to achieve. Although never overtly recognised as an issue, I perceived my gender as a barrier to gaining access within this context. I felt that had I been a male researcher that access would have been easier to negotiate. Interesting that ethnicity was less of an issue than gender because respondents were all white, irrespective of different neighbourhood profiles. Therefore, ethnic sameness was the norm. However, given that some partnerships were located in areas with high numbers of black and minority ethnic groups, representativeness was clearly an issue within some partnerships.

Furthermore, my class background and experience of living in a former mining community left me with the question of whether my status left me as an insider or

outsider relative to those being studied. In some interviews my background may have helped with data generation but in others it may have hindered. The status of any researcher is constantly shifting whilst research relationships are negotiated (see Haney 1996) and this is affected by power within such relationships. Power within research relationships requires attention because power organises knowledge production (Wasserfall 1993). Power is often situated in the privileged position held by the researcher. Participants in this study were informed of the purpose of the research, of how the data would be used, of their right to access interview transcripts and amend them as well as the feedback they would receive, in an attempt to make the process more equalitarian. However, the dynamics of power were also evident because of the research funding and the involvement of Objective 1 as an organisation commissioning the study. It was here that the issue of loyalty emerged in that there was a responsibility both to Objective 1 as sponsors and interviewees as participants in community based research, to accurately report views. Contradictory and critical articulations can be found in the findings of this study because analytical distance was maintained by taking account of the various perspectives and interests working in this context. Thus, power differentials were considered in both the data collection and analysis.

Finally, feminist researchers argue that the researcher's positionality affects all aspects of the research process including the articulation of the research questions through to the collection and analysis of data (McCorkel & Myers 2003). Thus, values and assumptions are present in all research and cannot be eradicated by the use of research methodologies (Harding 1991). In terms of asking questions and providing answers, researchers can enhance some forms of understanding whilst impeding others via their motivations, assumptions and gaze. This can be overcome by involving participants in data analysis and asking them if explanations resonate with their experiences (McCorkel & Myers 2003). However, this approach was not adopted within this study. Hence the findings articulated although grounded in the interview data are given importance by the researcher rather than the researched.

Ethical issues

All research has ethical implications and attention must be paid to this. This study was carried out in an overt manner from the outset and as such it did not involve any deception or covert observation. All those participating did so with their knowledge and consent. The study did not involve participants who were particularly vulnerable

or unable to give informed consent, for example, children or adults with learning difficulties. Furthermore, the study did not focus upon sensitive topics and as a result did not raise confidential or personal issues or intrude upon privacy or comfort. Finally, it did not harm any participants, cause them psychological stress, anxiety or negative consequences beyond risks encountered in normal life. The study used non-invasive techniques such as interviews, overt observation and documentary analysis. Furthermore, consent was obtained in writing from all participants prior to each interview. A statement was also made to respondents before they participated to ensure that they were fully informed. Within this statement it was made clear to participants that they could refuse to participate, that they could withdraw at any stage and that their wishes would be respected. Participants were also given the opportunity to make comments off the record and off tape if they so wished and several participants did take-up this opportunity.

A particular ethical implication arose in this study because of its small scale. The small focus of this study means that it may be possible for some people to be identified within the thesis by others who live and work in the area, despite the removal of identifying indicators and the anonymisation of participants. Those participating were made fully aware of this and were given the opportunity to refuse to participate as a result. All participants interviewed were assured that despite the small-scale nature of the project, they would be made anonymous as much as it is possible within the writing up of the research findings. The removal of all identifiers took place and pseudonyms are used where appropriate in order to break the link between the data and individuals. This also occurred as part of the data storage. Information pertaining to participants is kept in a confidential manner and securely stored. Thus, participants were informed about the requirements of their participation prior to arranging interviews. Finally the use of the information they provided and the dissemination of the overall research findings were discussed with all those interviewed.

In order to ensure that people were giving fully informed consent they were given written information about the project and its objectives, the methodology, the sponsors and the risks and inconvenience that their participation might incur. All respondents were given an outline of the research project both verbally and in writing so participants had some knowledge of what the research was examining and why. However, the level of information they received about the research was limited so that the responses would not be influenced by the purposes of the research or

become biased in any way. Furthermore, participants were told about the sponsors of this study because despite not being employed by Objective 1, part of the sponsorship for this study is derived from the organisation. Respondents were made aware of this and the problems that it might create. In terms of Objective 1 as the research host, some research findings articulate views of the organisation, which are both critical and negative. However, these findings are still published in the thesis and the potential conflict between the sponsor and the findings was discussed with the organisation at the outset of this project.

Attention was also paid to the question of what participants within the fieldwork would gain. There was no financial recompense available to participants for the time that they contributed to this study. However they were informed about the research results. As a result, before beginning the fieldwork, participants were offered the choice of feedback from the research in a number of forms and made aware of the time scale in which this would be delivered. Thus, all individual people involved received a copy of the executive summary of the overall findings. In addition, each partnership requesting further information received a summary of the research for their area. Finally, each partnership was offered the opportunity to discuss the research findings through a local meeting, in the form of a group feedback session. These sessions were arranged by the partnership with everyone involved in the research in the local area invited to attend so that both the management groups and individual respondents had an opportunity for more personal feedback as a result of their involvement.

Continuous feedback was also given to Objective 1 throughout the study. Bi-annual progress meetings were held with two Objective 1 representatives for the duration of the study. These meetings involved the presentation of an update report to inform Objective 1 of the progress and direction of the research. An annual presentation was also given, each year for three years to a wider Objective 1 audience of staff and community representatives, again detailing progress and ongoing findings. Finally, a brief report of 5000 words was completed at the end of the project specifically for Objective 1 summarizing the main findings of the research and their implications for policy-making.

Shortcomings of this study

Of course, critical discussion can be focused upon this study. Firstly, the generic problems of using semi-structured interviews have already been outlined and as such the social nature of the interaction taking place within them will have played a role in the data gathering aspect of this project, although the extent of this remains uncertain.

Secondly, only a limited amount of qualitative data was gathered because of the resource implications influencing this study in terms of both time and money. Thus, only twenty-five interviews in total were carried out. Indeed, the retrospective nature of this study, examining community based research that had been completed meant that some participants were in fact difficult to trace because of the time slippage. People had moved out of areas, some no longer participated in partnerships whilst others did not feel able to volunteer time without recompense. Thus, some additional data collection such as more interviews, observation across all of the areas sampled and the expansion of the study's focus to include other several other areas undertaking community based research may well have yielded further insights.

Thirdly, there were limitations in the way that achievements resulting from the application of the community based research in practice were examined. For example, the positive benefits resulting from community based research were only examined in the short term, because of the nature of this project. It would have been interesting to carry out a more longitudinal study to assess the impact that the process of community based research had after the life span of Objective 1 funding came to an end. Furthermore, the remit of this study did not include establishing a baseline in any form. For example, an evaluation of before and after the application of community based research did not take place, thus this study effectively assessed the success of community based research without reference to any baseline measure. This has specific ramifications when the social capital impact of community based research is discussed because it is impossible to say what levels of social capital existed before community based research occurred. With reference to the baseline measurement of social capital levels prior to the commencement of this study, the impact of community based research upon social capital would have been much clearer.

Finally, the issue of generalisation must be considered. Given the small-scale nature of this study and the small numbers of participants, the study has clear shortcomings in relation to generalising the results to a wider context. This study only examined a specific category of community based research carried out in order to develop community action plans within a localised context, that of Objective 1 South Yorkshire. However all research has limitations and the design of this study was comprehensive. It included telephone interviews, observation, documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the findings of this study can be confidently articulated.

Summary

This chapter discussed the literature search strategy, the definition of community based research and social capital used within this study. A social capital hypothesis and the five research questions were outlined. Attention was also paid to the setting, the most appropriate methodological approach, sampling, data sources, analysis, reflexivity and the ethical approach used within this research project. This chapter discusses why this study employed the approach it did and the limitations of this approach. In summary, all research has limitations both theoretically and practically. However, despite this and any epistemological criticisms, the research achieved its aim of examining the pitfalls and benefits of applying community based research within the Objective 1 context. This was achieved through a qualitative case study approach using interviews, observation and documentary analysis in order to address the five overall research questions underpinning this study. The data gained from the qualitative methods adopted within this study are discussed in the following four chapters. Chapter Four discusses the different types of research examined within this study, Chapters Five and Six discuss the findings of this study which support the existing literature from other fields and Chapter Seven highlights new and emerging themes from the data. The next chapter turns to the discussion of the four types of community based research examined within this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEFINING APPROACHES: THE FOUR TYPES OF COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

Chapter Four – Analytical Beginnings

Defining approaches: The four types of community based research

Introduction

During the exploratory, initial stage of the fieldwork when telephone interviews were conducted with all of the accessible partnerships engaging in the community action plan process, it became clear that amongst the array of methods employed in practice, there were four types of community based research. This chapter examines these four approaches used for the development of community action plans in an attempt to gain regeneration funding from Objective 1, South Yorkshire. These four types of community based research were used as an analytical framework to explore the themes drawn from the literature. This chapter discusses how these research types were defined, how these different types were treated within this study, their differences and similarities and what these approaches tell us about community based research.

Defining the research type

The first stage of the fieldwork was asking participants them how they had completed the consultation required for the action plans. This was scoping research to gain initial information about the action plan areas and the research undertaken. This initial stage of the fieldwork was useful in establishing contact with key workers and volunteers within partnerships to establish trust and contact upon which the more detailed fieldwork could be based. Essentially, this initial fieldwork was useful in terms of starting to open up access. All of the Objective 1, Priority Four areas were contacted by telephone and where possible telephone interviews were conducted. There were forty community partnerships developing action plans and with the exception of one partnership all areas were contacted and completed the telephone interview. The questions used for these telephone interviews were;

1. How was the consultation carried out?
2. Who controlled the consultation?
3. Who designed the research?
4. Who carried out the data collection?

5. Who was responsible for the analysis?

6. Was there a research report and if so who wrote it?

7. Finally who wrote the final action plan for Objective 1?

These questions relate to the obvious components of research such as design, data collection and analysis. Different levels of participation are possible in community based research and varying levels of participation in the empirical work were documented in this study. The question of control also emerged from reading the literature because community based research is described as a participatory approach to producing research, with non-researchers holding varying levels of control. Therefore, control was empirically investigated. The results of the telephone interviews demonstrated that areas within the Objective 1 Programme adopted different approaches to the consultation in terms of participation in the empirical work. Participants also had varying levels of control throughout the research process. The following table reveals the initial results of the telephone interviews.

Table 3. Results of telephone interviews

Area	Research	Control	Design	Data Collected	Analysis	Report & CAP	CBR Type
1	Audit	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
2	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Agency format	Agency staff	Agency staff	Agency staff	Agency staff	Agency staff	3
4	Survey	Existing staff	New staff	New staff	New staff	Existing staff	4
5	Existing data	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	Various types	Staff & locals	Staff & locals	Staff & locals	Staff & locals	Staff & locals	1 & 3
7	Mapping project	Existing Staff	New Staff	New Staff	New Staff	Existing Staff	4
8	Survey	Existing staff	Existing staff	Locals	Existing staff	Existing staff	2
9	Public meetings	Existing staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	Existing staff	3
10	Interview format	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
11	Survey	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
12	Open days	Agency staff	Agency staff	Agency staff	Agency staff	Agency Staff	4
13	Survey	Existings taff	Existing staff	Locals	Existing staff & locals	Existing staff	2

Area	Research	Control	Design	Data Collected	Analysis	Report & CAP	CBR Type
14	Workshop format	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	4
15	Existing data used	O1 staff	O1 staff	O1 staff	O1 staff	O1 staff	3
16	Audit	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
17	Interview format	Consult staff	Consult staff	Locals	Consult staff	Consult staff & existing staff	2
18	Audit	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
19	Open days	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
20	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
21	Public meetings	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
22	Various types	Existing staff	Existing staff, consult staff	Existing staff, consult staff & locals	Existing staff, consult staff	Existing staff, consult staff	2, 3 & 4
23	Planning for real	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
24	Planning for real	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
25	Survey	Consult staff	Consult staff	Locals	Consult staff & locals	Existings taff	2
26	Consult staff design	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff & existing staff	4
27	Interview format	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff & existing staff	4
28	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
29	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
30	Strategic review	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3
31	Workshop & open days & events	Existing staff & consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Existing staff & consult staff	4
32	Survey	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff	Existing staff & consult staff	4
33	Public meetings/ workshop format	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff	3

Area	Research	Control	Design	Data Collected	Analysis	Report & CAP	CBR Type
34	Audit	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
35	Open days	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
36	Interview format	No contact	No contact	No contact	No contact	No contact	N/A
37	Questionn aire	Existing staff & consult staff	Consult staff	Consult staff & locals	Consult staff	Existing staff & consult staff	2
38	Open day	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
39	Audit	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	Locals	1
40	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

This table demonstrates that across the array of research done within the community partnerships, there were four clear approaches based upon the control of the research and the level of participation in the empirical work. There were clear differences in terms of who controlled the consultation from the beginning of the process until its conclusion with four different types of control evident across the areas. There were also differences in relation to the levels of participation in the empirical work across the partnerships. Some volunteers participated fully in the empirical work whilst at the other end of the continuum, volunteers did not participate at all. Consequently, these different approaches were categorized into four types of community based research for the purposes of this study. Despite the distinctions made between these approaches, they should be viewed as inter-related and as existing on a continuum without boundaries. Although most areas used a specific type of community based research, partnerships often went on to use other approaches for different community development work purposes. This demonstrates the inter-relationship between these types of research and the fluidity of the continuum upon which they are situated. Therefore, these approaches are in no way mutually exclusive. They are broadly described in the following table.

Table 4. The definitions of the four types of community based research

Type of Research	Characteristics
Type 1 **Grassroots volunteer model**	Complete control over process by local volunteers who design research, carry it out, analyse data, write a report and disseminate findings. **Control:** Locals **Design:** Locals **Data Collection:** Locals **Analysis:** Locals **Writing Up:** Locals Full participation in the empirical work of community based research.
Type 2 **Grassroots contract model**	Local people in either a voluntary capacity or as paid workers do the data collection aspect of the research. In some cases they had a limited amount of involvement in the analysis for example, inputting data into the computer. Paid workers and consultants design the process, analyse the information, write the reports and retain control. **Control:** Workers/Consultant **Design:** Workers/Consultant **Data Collection:** Locals **Analysis:** Locals, Workers/Consultant **Writing Up:** Workers/Consultant Participation in some aspects of the empirical work such as data collection and limited levels of data analysis.
Type 3 **in-house contract model**	Paid workers employed within the local area carry out the consultation and control it with limited volunteer input. These staff were not necessarily employed within the community partnership undertaking the consultation, often working for other regeneration agencies. **Control:** Workers **Design:** Workers **Data Collection:** Workers **Analysis:** Workers **Writing Up:** Workers No participation in the empirical work.

Type of Research	Characteristics
Type 4 **Out sourced contract model**	External professional help is brought into the area to undertake the consultation. Generally, local people and existing staff pay the consultants and are in effect their employer but they have limited control in terms of the actual research, which is designed and carried out by the professionals. **Control:** Locals, existing staff & consult staff **Design:** Consultant **Data Collection:** Consultant **Analysis:** Consultant **Writing Up:** Consultant, locals & existing staff No participation in the empirical work.

This table details the four different types of research demonstrated within the initial findings of this study. The first approach is grass roots research characterised by local community members designing a research strategy, collecting their own data, analysing the data themselves and producing a written report that is then used to develop the community action plan. The second approach is characterised as the grass roots contract type of research and involves local community members doing the data collection aspect of the research and some data analysis but not actually controlling the whole research process. The third model is the in house contract approach and consists of staff employed through local partnerships carrying out the research. Finally, the fourth type of community based research is the out sourcing contract approach, in which external professional help is brought into the local area to undertake the required consultation. This is how the types of research were defined for the purposes of this study.
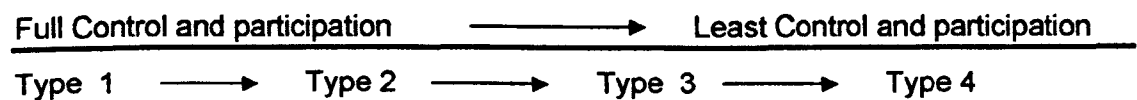
Differences in the types of research

In identifying four different types of research within this study, there are differences in these approaches. So what are these differences and do they impact upon the analysis of data and answering the research questions? These four approaches, despite any differences, fit upon a continuum because the research was carried out for the same purpose in all areas, to develop a community action plan. In addition the research was carried out within community partnership areas that were geographically distinct and governed in the same way, by Management Group. This

continuum relates to the levels of control and participation that volunteers had within each partnership area. These types of research are derived using the variables of control and participation.

Those in type 1 areas had full control over the entire research process from its inception to its completion and participated in the whole research process. Type 2 participants had less control because they only carried out the data collection aspect of the research but did not organise or design the strategy. A number of participants had some involvement with the data analysis but this involvement was limited. Type 3 participants again had less control because they were stakeholders in the process, which was actually carried out by professionals on the behalf of the community. Finally, type 4 participants had the least control because although they contracted and managed consultants as such stakeholders, volunteers were not involved with the data gathering, analysis or any practical aspect of the research process.

Figure 1. The continuum of control and participation

Full Control and participation   ⟶   Least Control and participation

Type 1   ⟶   Type 2   ⟶   Type 3   ⟶   Type 4

Despite discussing these approaches as different when using the control variable, this continuum is not static. There are commonalties in all of the four types along this continuum. The continuum is not static because areas can progress in either direction when applying different research in practice. Some areas had used different types of community based research for various purposes. So the classification of types within geographical areas in this study was based upon the community action plan consultation alone. Consequently, it is analytically useful to view these types of research, at least in the case of this study as being derived from the same 'family tree' and as being closely related. Thus, for the purpose of the analytical discussion within Chapters Five, Six and Seven, the differences in the types of research are largely ignored. The findings of my study are analysed according to the key themes drawn out from the literature, highlighted primarily in the first two chapters of this thesis. These themes are discussed generally in relation to all of the community based research approaches irrespective of this typology. The differences between the types are largely ignored because the findings often reflect commonalties.

However where clear differences emerge, these are illustrated. This study pays attention to some of the differences between these models of research here and later in Chapter Eight where the findings of this study are drawn to a conclusion and discussed in relation to their policy implications.

Given that there were four different approaches, it is unsurprising that differences existed between the types of research on a number of levels. A number of these differences are discussed in Chapter Five such as different levels of involvement with type 1 approaches gaining more involvement that type 4. Different benefits were also accrued with engagement in type 1 community based research creating individual benefits such as research experience and type 4 giving participants contract and management skills. There were varying lengths of time for partnerships to complete their community based research, with more experienced partnerships completing quicker than those at embryonic stages of development. Several other differences were clear. Firstly, the purpose of such research was broadened by some partnerships to include capacity building as an outcome of the research in addition to the requirements of the action plan document itself. This was particularly true of the newly emerging partnerships in which community based research and capacity building were entwined. Community based research was used as part of a capacity building exercise to develop skills amongst partnership members and to enhance partnership structures. For example, within both type 1 areas the partnerships used research to gain specific skills and experience of development work through recruiting volunteers, learning about funding, networking with other organisations and seeking training to develop the capacity of their management group. .

Another difference related to the money invested within the process of community based research across the areas. Some areas had no funding (for example, area a, type 1) whereas other areas had significant amounts of money available to them (for example, both type 4 areas). The table overleaf demonstrates the differences in financial provision for research work experienced across the different partnerships.

Table 5. The varying levels of financial support across the areas

Type of Research	Characteristics
Type 1, area a	No specific funding for the research. Very limited funding drawn from the budget of the Community Development Worker employed by the Local Authority. The exact amount is not clear. The money was used for paying volunteer expenses.
Type 1, area b	Successfully applied for £5,000 from the South Yorkshire Key Fund to support their research. This grant was used to pay for volunteer expenses, printing and advertising costs.
Type 2, area a	This well established and extremely well funded partnership drew upon its core funding to cover the costs of the research. The actual cost is unclear but did include the employment of a consultant, payment of local data collectors (a set amount per survey they completed), printing and advertising costs.
Type 2, area b	This partnership again used the available core funding it had to support their research and this included the payment of volunteer expenses, advertising and printing. Again the exact amount spent is unclear.
Type 3, area a	No specific funding for the research. Existing funding drawn upon to cover any costs incurred. Staff time (and therefore cost) dedicated to the research is unquantifiable.
Type 3, area b	No specific funding for the research. Existing funding from other agencies was used to cover the costs. Again staff time relating to workers from a number of agencies and dedicated to the research is unquantifiable.
Type 4, area a	The local authority funded the research, paying £25, 000 for the employment of consultants.
Type 4, area b	The local authority funded the research, paying £25, 000 for the employment of consultants.

The money available did not affect success because all of the areas completed their community action plans and had them endorsed by Objective 1. However, the areas

with the least finance for the research used the process more as a capacity building tool to gain skills and learn. The areas with the larger amounts of money simply used it to employ external consultants. Does less money result in a more grass roots approach and perhaps encourage creativity and innovation in employing research? Within the Objective 1 context, it was the areas that had less money for research that expanded the purpose of research to include capacity building as well as grass-roots values. However, as these partnerships were also developing as regeneration organisations, their research was also linked to their level of experience. So it is likely that the combination of these factors led to the approach adopted, with money being just one influencing dynamic. In addition to the very different levels of funding, the levels of support available from sources other than Objective 1 varied according to the geographical location of partnerships. Some local authorities invest more funding in community development than others leading to disparities in provision. In some instances the provision of support related to successful partnership working. Some areas describe developing partnerships and engaging in partnership work as highly problematic (for example, area b, model 3). In such instances partnerships act as a barrier to research and progress rather than enhancing such work. In contrast other areas used partnerships much more successfully to achieve their own ends (for example, area a, model 1).

Partnerships also faced huge differences in terms of the resources that they had at their disposal. These are discussed in more depth in Chapter Five. These differences related to facilities, the number of volunteers and the number of staff employed within the partnerships. These differences affected the capacity of partnerships to engage with development work and community based research. The partnerships were also at varying stages of development in terms of both community development experience and previous consultation experience. Therefore, some areas were at an advantage because their volunteers had substantial experience of undertaking research.

Finally, the degree to which the research and action plans were community led also varied. In some areas respondents felt that it was less community led than it should be. However, some partnerships remained fiercely independent of the local authority and other agencies, in attempts to keep their work engaged at the level of the community.

However, the question that remains is, can any partnership be truly community led? A single partnership can not represent all views. Within any community there are different and often conflicting views. Frequently there is a core group of people representing the community and perhaps only one representing the community partnership (e.g. the Chair). So is any partnership and any research truly community led? One of the similarities across these approaches was that they were all led by a small number of people, which has clear implications for representation and voice.

Similarities in the types of research

The four approaches although distinct were in fact similar in a number of ways. The first similarity is that both the research and the partnerships in all of the areas were driven by a core group of people, usually a small number of volunteers. In some of the smaller and newer partnerships, the volunteers who directed and carried out the community based research and developed the action plan were the same people running the partnership (for example, areas 1a and 1b). The larger partnerships tended to have separate people for these different roles (for example, area 2a). In addition, all of the areas describe gaining public interest as a problem despite their repeated attempts at generating interest through a variety of mechanisms. Many of the areas listed local members and sent them information about activities but this did not encourage volunteers or improve attendance at public meetings. The general public poorly attended public meetings, advertised in many ways.

All of the partnerships examined within this study used community meetings as a fundamental part of their community research. All types of research emerged through public community meetings, irrespective of the stages at which the partnerships were. Often the research approaches developed out of a series of such meetings.

"Basically it came about the initial consultation ..from a meeting in this room organised by community development worker........" **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

. "....the first thing we did was......public meetings to get the board of directors....then we took it forward from there... " **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

So in the early days what they did was have a number of public meetings where they had council workers and community local activists and they talked about the idea of a local action plan and what it meant in terms of them trying to put a document together that would speak about what people in the local area thought was needed. So.....they had a series of meetings." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"There had been three public meetings for people involved in local projects to come and identify a way forward and to identify key things.." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area b (interview 5)**

"Well....we had a meeting with people from the school, the council and the Church so I suppose that is when the partnership began to form and ......And then that year we got together a sub-group so we could organise the consultants to help with the process.." **Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

Community meetings were the favoured approach to developing practice within this setting. This relates to the structure of partnerships, issues of accountability, attempts to increase public awareness in their activities and mechanisms to ensure transparency. Indeed, development work often includes the use of public meetings so this can be construed as 'normal' practice. Furthermore, all of the areas engaged in some form of networking and the development of models of good practice, irrespective of the way in which they approached community based research. Generally networking involved partnerships located in close geographical proximity to each other often using the same type of research. However, some partnerships made a more concerted effort to widely disseminate their practice. For example within type 1, area a, the role of the Chair included presenting information about research and development work practice to other partnerships and agencies across the district. Networking practices also extended to include local authority representatives. Was community based research useful in encouraging areas to network or would they network anyway? In adopting community based research, the areas had common ground upon which to meet and could compare models of good practice based upon a specific course of action. So community based research enhanced networking practices.

A further similarity across the approaches was that the outcome of the research, the action plan, was not just for Objective 1 as the commissioning agent. The action plans were intended for the wider audiences of the community and other funding agencies. Thus, projects and targets were included which Priority 4 could neither fund nor meet. Several partnerships used the research to look at their area's

requirements for the future, so the plans extended beyond the life span of Objective 1. This was encouraged by Objective 1 in a bid to enhance sustainability and build continuity, but the question of life after the money runs out still remains unanswered. There remains an issue about whether the community action will be accepted by other funding agencies. Post Objective 1 could mean the same exercise again for the same partnerships, that is consultation for new funding.

Finally, the last similarity between the areas was that all described their relationship with the funders as problematic. Participants highlighted a range of issues and these are discussed in more depth in Chapters Six and Seven.

The types of research and community development

The question of why some areas chose specific types of research remains unanswered. An examination of the eight case study areas reveals that there are a number of influences in each area that should be considered when examining the choice of research. For example, demography, history, the partnership development, the strength of local involvement, the level of available support, access to funding, the time available and the values and attitudes of those responsible for the consultation all had an influence. A number of influencing factors exists in each area, which led to the adoption of a specific type of research in practice. This reflects that when partnerships are at certain stages of development and are faced with various influencing factors, different types of research are more appropriate. As partnerships have different capabilities in terms of their research capacity and have distinct histories and demographic influences, one type of research will not simply fit all. As partnerships developed different approaches to community based research for varying projects, it is likely that as influencing factors change then the choice of research will be correspondingly adapted. The following table demonstrates the influencing factors upon the types of research used in this context.

Table 6. Factors influencing type of research

Type of Research	Key Influencing Factors
Type 1 **Grassroots volunteer type** Complete control over process by local volunteers who design research, carry it out, analyse data and write the report.	• Low capacity – no staff, limited money, no experience. • Newly emerging and embryonic partnership (untarnished and naïve members?) homogeneous attitudes and values. • Community activists with clear leadership potential. These organisations are grass roots and so carry out grass roots research. There is very little option in terms of adopting different models of research because of their limited capacity.
Type 2 **Grassroots contract type** Local people do only the data collection aspect of the research and possibly some limited analysis in either a voluntary capacity or as paid workers. Paid workers and consultants design the process, analysis the information, write the final reports and retain control.	• A medium or high level of capacity to undertake development work – some staff, some funding, previous consultation work. • Both were well-established partnerships. • Both partnerships working in clearly fractured communities – distinct communities of immigrants located within the geographical boundary of the communities. These conditions led to attempts to include all sections of the community through survey/interview approaches, with such approaches being directed by professionals (workers and consultants) in order to maintain professionalism and control.

Type of Research	Key Influencing Factors
Type 3 **In–house contract type** Paid workers employed within the local area carry out the consultation and control it with limited volunteer input	• Interestingly the partnerships adopting model 3 approaches were completely different in terms of capacity, size and demography. However, both had heterogeneous attitudes and values and local authority and other professional agencies heavily influenced them. The influence of local authority practice and other development agencies affected the research approach taken by partnerships.
Type 4 **Out sourced contract type** External professional help is brought into the area to undertake the consultation. Local people pay the consultants and are in effect their employer but they have limited control in terms of the actual research	• Medium capacity present, both had history of development work and both had workers. • Both had problematic issues in the past in relation to funding leading to a desire to dispel negative images and a perceived need for professionalism. • Both successfully gained funding to buy in professional expertise. • Both located in the same Local Authority ward and both drew the research funding from the same source. The combination of a problematic history and available funding resulted in the purchasing of outside professional help.

There are a number of factors influencing the choice of research with context being highly pertinent to the types of research developed. The partnerships took different routes into consultation based upon varying influences within the context in which their research occurred. Thus, the starting point for each partnership was different with some areas being more experienced and better equipped to conduct community based research.

Summary

In summary the initial fieldwork involved conducting telephone interviews with partnerships that had engaged in various forms of research. These interviews revealed that although a variety of methods were employed, all the approaches used can be categorised into four types of community based research, based upon who controls the process and the levels of participation in the empirical work. Several

definitions of community based research in the wider literature (Hills and Mullett 2000, Schlove 1997, Minkler and Wallerstein 2003) emphasize collaboration and participation in the research process underpinning such approaches. Given this emphasis, the community based research used within the Objective 1 setting was differentiated according to levels of control in terms of collaboration and participation in the empirical aspect of the research. This led to the identification and definition of four types of community based research. The approaches are different but as such are interrelated because of the context in which they are employed and the purpose of their use. The approaches were analysed to assess similarities and differences in relation to the themes identified in both Chapter One and Two. So are the barriers to community based research the same despite the different approaches? Is this true in relation to benefits? Are the principles, which underpin community based research the same across all of the four approaches? Do these different types of community based research lead to the creation of different types of social capital networks? These themes are explored in the following two chapters.

This chapter discussed some similarities between the types of research and illustrated how the approaches are generally treated the same for the theoretical and analytical purposes of this study. Where there are no analytical distinctions to be made differentiation is not applicable because the types are being used to provide common data. However, some differences are discussed both in this chapter and specifically in Chapter Eight, where the implications of these differences in relation to policy are made clear. Finally, the types of research are not mutually exclusive because areas can employ the different approaches for a range of purposes across time. Furthermore, data from the eight areas reveals that as partnerships have different capabilities in terms of their capacity to do research, distinct histories and demographic influences, one type of community based research will not simply fit all. Within Chapter One, Berk and Rossi (1990) are shown to argue that in using such research, there are no recipes for success and no guarantees of producing a worthy product. The findings from the Objective 1 context support this claim and reflect that community based research is not a 'one' approach tool. The next chapter now turns to the discussion of findings, which support the literature from the other fields illustrated in Chapter One.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYTICAL BEGINNINGS; COMPARATIVE, THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW DATA

Chapter 5 - Analytical beginnings

Comparative, thematic analysis of the interview data

Introduction

The findings of this study support the literature reflecting similarities in a number of areas. This confirms that several arguments made about community based research within social welfare and evaluation apply to these approaches within social regeneration. This chapter explores similarities between the empirical findings of this study and the existing literature. This chapter focuses upon several themes derived from the literature, which were highlighted at the end of the first chapter. These themes include definitions of community based research, the epistemological and theoretical foundations upon which it is based and the methodology it encompasses. Finally the axiological utilisation of research is illustrated. These themes allow the interview data to be interrogated in relation to the first research question asking how are such approaches used within social regeneration and what use are they? The themes of empowerment and involvement are also examined as these principles cited within the literature as underpin community based approaches. The question remains as to whether these principles operate within regeneration contexts. The second set of themes derived from the literature relate to the second research question, which focuses upon the benefits of using community based research within regeneration. Thus, the interview data were explored to determine if skills development, the development of social relationships, positive local outcomes, increased local knowledge and strengthened local networks resulted from community based research within the Objective 1, South Yorkshire context

Definitional similarities

The first similarity to the existing literature relates to definitional aspects, characterising community based research. Community based research in Chapter One is defined as the participation and influence of non-academic researchers in the process of creating knowledge (Israel et al 1998). Community based research is rooted in the community, serves a community's interests and encourages community members to participate at all levels (Sclove 1997). Finally such research is conducted

within a community with the active engagement and influence of community members in either some or all aspects of the research process (Israel et al 1998). There is recognition within the literature that no specific 'type', format or model for community based research exists. Hence, successful community based research generally involves the collaboration of community members, organisational representatives and researchers.

This study examined four different types of community based research. All had features in common with the literature defining community based approaches. Firstly, all involved the participation and influence of non-academic researchers in creating knowledge although this influence was to varying degrees. Secondly, all encouraged participation and attempted to serve the interests of the community by gaining funding for community development. Thirdly, all conducted research within distinct geographical areas therefore, within specific social and cultural boundaries. The approaches had varying levels of engagement and influence from community members. Finally this study highlighted four types of community based research. All four involved collaboration from a range of people reflecting the diversity of approaches falling within the umbrella of community based approaches.

Similar epistemological foundations

Chapter One also discussed epistemology, demonstrating how community based research rests upon an extended epistemology which endorses the argument that the knower participates in the known and that evidence can be generated in many ways (Hills and Mullett 2000). This study demonstrates that the knower participates in the known because community members were crucial in defining their development needs within the parameters of community based research.

> "…..we looked at the village, what is missing… they wanted better facilities like a community resource centre, they wanted a better environment, they wanted to see it look prettier if you like and also they wanted to be healthier. And they felt, they wanted to try to get people back into jobs, employment cos there was still some residual unemployment from the mining industry and the steel industry." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

> "…They talked about the idea of a local action plan and what it meant in terms of them trying to put a document together that would speak about what people in the local area thought was needed." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

> "…..we tried to get them to identify areas for development, what they could do…whilst we did the best study in terms of statistical collection….we did workshops

around what the partnerships themselves had identified as major areas for work ....we got as many of the partnership members in a room and did what was called colour vote, what this did was to get them to take paths." **Consultant, type 4, area a (interview 19)**

Definitions of need arose from the research process for some participants and for others it arose from the research findings. This reflects the socially created nature of knowledge (Israel et al 1998) and multiple ways of knowing are incorporated into the findings. More importantly in regeneration terms this approach allowed knowledge to be contributed by community members, facilitating grass-roots development.

Corresponding theoretical underpinnings

Furthermore, the evidence was generated in a number of ways across the different areas for example, surveys, interviews, workshops, and open day events were used. This demonstrates that community based research arises in a number of methodological forms.

"..we tried lots of different ways ands we have kept reinventing ourselves in this way ..."**Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

"So at every opportunity we will ask people for whatever reason to give us some feedback because feedback is crucial... We do research all of the time of course. It is necessary" **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

When discussing theory some commentators argue that on a theoretical level community based research does not see theory as something known and informing practice. Rather, community based research views theory as created by traveling through the iterations of action and reflection (Hills and Mullett 2000). None of the partnerships within this study held the belief that theory should inform practice at the outset of their projects.

"So we came up with, we had an open workshop where people could come along to put the questions together." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"It was a day's workshop actually, with free lunch so quite a few people came along (laughs)......... And anyway in the second part of the actual thing in the afternoon, we had a brainstorming session....**Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

"....the first thing we did was......public meetings to get the board of directors....then we took it forward from there... actually all about the operational plan, the projects.....what we actually wanted to do for the local action plan..." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

This examination of the process itself reveals that methodology was the focus of the initial work before consideration was paid to theory. In this case community based research adopted the same analytical stance as much qualitative research using induction rather than deduction.

Methodological congruence

Chapter One highlighted that methods adopted as part of any community based approach can not be predetermined but rather emerge from the chosen principles of the project and the research questions (Hills and Mullett 2000). Within this study a range of methods were applied across the areas examined. Many areas interchanged the methods they used for consultation and data gathering according to the different projects they were applying, affirming the argument that community based approaches are not method driven.

> "We have just had a women's day in March as part of International Women's week and as part of that I developed an organic box scheme questionnaire, you know and 145 women filled in the questionnaire and it is a very valuable sort of information to us. So at every opportunity we will ask people..." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**
>
> "Firstly we did the RAVE report...... it was I suppose a local skills audit and an evaluation and from that we identified gaps in services and hopes..... So we then got representatives from all different organisations and organised a planning day....so as part of that we had this big wish wall and some questionnaires as well. And we also did a questionnaire to local schools... So after all of this research we wrote what we called was an issues paper......the consultants being employed......And then after that we have used the Planning for Real stuff....." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

Many areas used a range of methods for different research purposes, reflecting that the choice of method often relates to the principles of the project being developed as well as the research questions being addressed. It should be community members themselves who decide on the methods for community based research according to Hills and Mullett (2000). However, this was only the case in type 1 approaches in the Objective 1 context. For true grass-roots development to take place then community members themselves should decided on the methods.

Although there are similarities in relation to epistemology, theory and methodology between understandings of community based research in the literature and the Objective 1 context, these findings are not exclusive to community based approaches.

Traditional research often generates evidence in a number of ways and qualitative approaches use induction rather than deduction, developing research strategies in response to the subject and the nature of the questions.

Axiological level equivalence

The first chapter discusses how on an axiological level, in terms of value, community based research has interest in more than just the usual research outcome. The utility of research is judged on the difference that it makes to transforming the community. Consequently, capacity building is a relevant by-product of community based. Capacity building can occur within the research because engaging in the process means that participants gain skills and personal capacity. Capacity building can also occur after the research, as a direct consequence of it because of access to funding improving development opportunities. Across all of the types of research applied in this study, visible and quantifiable outcomes were perceived.

> "The key thing is I suppose about the development of the projects.... So the survey has been connected into all of these things that have happened really." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

> "It is about working with the community and benefiting them at the same time." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

> "So without a doubt the public have benefited greatly from it, we are here and funded and carrying out regeneration activities that people want to see happen to make their lives better. Yes so I think it has had a big impact. "**Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Participants involved in community based research described capacity building as a benefit at both the level of the individual and the level of the community. Those involved in type 4 approaches discussed the benefits at the level of the community,

> "I suppose we have a fairly wide church of interest really from professionals, teachers, health visitors...a good cross section of commitment from these people....... It is slow but now we are really starting to get somewhere and things are starting to come through...things are happening." **Volunteer, type 4, area a (interview 25)**

> "Well I think that hopes of people have increased the community spirit and there are not more opportunities and people have become empowered through success..."**Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

Comparatively, those involved in type 1 approaches described the benefits on a more individual level,

> ".....positive consequences for personal development...confidence.... time management...assertiveness...skills that are transferable...jobs from skills...empowerment...and then the other aspect is ownership, they own the projects. Here are local people being involved in these projects....they can turn around and say they have done it, this is what I have done, it is ours, our village..." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

> "....and if all you have ever done before is clocked on and been told what to do, you know if you treat people with a bit of respect and they call themselves a researcher there is something in there that might give people a little bit of aspiration" **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

> "For me it has been an individual learning curve from my point of view so it has been well worthwhile for me and I wanted to do it and it gave me insight" **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

Thus, participants within community based research, evaluated the research in two ways. Firstly, they discussed the difference it made in terms of the wider impact it had upon the community and secondly, they discussed the difference the research made on a more personal level. These comments support the literature discussing the added value that community based research contributes on an axiological level. Hills and Mullett (2000) conceptualise axiological benefits emerging from community based research in terms of 'human flourishing'. Thus, the development of individual level benefits represents a way in which participation has allowed community members to flourish and build capacity. The benefits described at the level of the community are also important in an axiological sense because they too represent capacity building. Furthermore, Coleman (1990) argues that human capital creates social capital. This development of individual skills described by participants serves to increase levels of human capital within the community. Consequently, doing community based research in intrinsically worthwhile in social capital terms.

Underpinnings of empowerment

Several principles associated with community based approaches are discussed in the literature. Empowerment is among these. Community based research is said to rest upon the principle of empowerment; building upon strengths and resources within communities and promoting a co-learning and empowering process to address social inequalities. Participants in the process gain knowledge, skills, capacity and power (Israel et al 1998). In all of the areas within this study participants did gain increased

knowledge and skills, which contributes to increased empowerment. For example, in types 1, 2 and 3 participants gained research skills and knowledge and in type 4 participants gained experience of tendering, employing professionals and directing a research project. Participants describe empowerment resulting from their participation in community based research and subsequent development work.

> "....people have become empowered through success ....they have set up four new groups and they have applied for funding and successfully done it and I mean you know the forms they are not easy and some professionals have been turned down so they are doing really well..." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

> "There's something very much about finding a purpose for me, so finding something you are good at, starting to feel good about yourself, being a researcher is quite a, well it is a very responsible job..." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

Empowerment underpinned the community based research within the Objective 1 context. By enabling participants to use their own strengths and themselves as resources for development, community based research can be an empowering process. The axiological benefits of skill development and capacity building also contribute to the empowerment of individuals within the research process. Gaining knowledge, skills and capacity through research is a form of empowerment. However, involvement is crucial in this process and therefore needs investigation.

Issues with involvement

Involvement is discussed within Chapter One as a crucial requirement within community based research because the approach theoretically accommodates the participation of those involved (Hills and Mullett 2000). Despite this, there is reference made to the difficulties associated with gaining involvement (Israel et al 1998, Ferguson 1999). The difficulties associated with involvement are confirmed by the findings of this study, which demonstrate differences in participation across the research approaches. One of the differences that emerges from the interview data is that people were less interested in becoming involved within type 4 areas than in type 1 areas. This may not necessarily be the result of applying different research approaches within these areas; it may simply be the case that fewer people were always involved in the activities of the partnerships. Irrespective of the reasons why, differences existed in the level of involvement achieved.

> "I mean the Partnership is open but people who work here get more involved rather than those who live here...it is a continuous struggle. We did get a number of people

attending but not really getting support from them, how could you get more support?"
Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)

"...people aren't really interested in consultants....we had one or two meetings that were well attended. ...but people mostly not." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 17)**

In comparison the grass roots (type 1) research gained more involvement. This approach requires higher levels of involvement to facilitate its successful application. However, whether type 1 areas gained the necessary numbers of volunteers, even if only for a limited amount of time, as a result of the approach is debatable; more people may have simply been interested. Whatever the reasons, more involvement is evidenced,

"....again they brought in other volunteers for the collation of the work and the survey. There was quite a lot of work in terms of doing that, in terms of putting that together so they brought in other volunteers, other members of the partnership...." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

"I seem to remember some volunteers, trustees, we were all involved, we also had a worker. I remember spending days at the office and analysing the information, checking the tick boxes...." **Local Vicar, type 1, area a (interview 25)**

"Oh yes, I mean we got the local scouts involved and we gave them a donation for delivering the questionnaires and we had volunteers as well. We had an advert for local people....a recruitment drive that said paid expenses and stuff..."**Worker, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

Despite differences across the partnerships in relation to how involvement was perceived and achieved, it was cited as problematic across all four of the approaches. Involvement within all areas included in this study was lower than partnerships would have liked, in terms of the research and the general meetings associated with the mechanisms of the partnerships.

"......but there could have been more people involved." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

"The partnership was founded in 2000 by a public meeting and about 30 people got involved then but over time people drop out....." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

"...no is the answer to your question. We got very few responses from people willing to participate in the process." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

"It is a large town but the people turnout for these things is quite poor really but how do you get people involved...it is like getting blood out of a stone. I think the workshops that the consultants did were quite active...... you know people were putting comments, stuff on the walls so people were quite interested then but it was quite early on and people were giving answers in a directed way. Membership is actually open to all but there are not that many local people interested." **Volunteer, type 4, area a (interview 22)**

Across all of the approaches there is a fundamental similarity in terms of involvement, which is a core group of people become involved and then drive forward the process of community based research and the development of the action plan.

"....they (questions on survey) were designed really by an interested group if that's what you would call it. They debated the questions and talked about the wording and really it was the same small group who directed it all." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

"It is the same core people. Some who were involved have left the partnership...it is the same ones really. I mean you need key people to drive things and the minority don't drive it on. So really there were about 8 people, maybe 6 who were really active doing the research or at least in the sub-group at first who did the training....the brainstorming and the rest." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

"I think it was really four key players who did most of them" (referring to the interviews) **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

"I mean the sub-group involved 4 or 5 people through the whole process...." **Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

"Well we have got a group of people who are really committed to the process and so they have helped raised interest and kept it going. I think really we have a small committed group at the moment...." **Volunteer, type 4, area a (interview 21)**

This core group of dedicated individuals doing the majority of the research was also the case in terms of other development work. Only a small number of people committed to any community development activity including research occurring under the umbrella of this work.

"There were difficulties to do with lack of people available to be involved so it meant a few people did a lot of work although everything was open to anybody. It was like anything else. So it meant that there was a lot of work for those people who did it." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

Does this reflect that volunteering is a minority activity and that generally people do not volunteer? Or does it reflect the nature of inclusion within community groups? Do community groups tend to exclude non-members because they work as a closed

shop, despite their appearance as open organisations? No evidence of 'closed shop' approaches was found in the Objective 1 context but the positive policy views of community require critical analysis because this core group of volunteers driving community based research and development work more generally reflects exclusivity. The question as to whose ideals are being realised through research remains unanswered. The issue remains that some community members effectively exclude themselves from participating in both research and development work. Issues such as time, availability, competing commitments, and relevant skills can act as barriers preventing some from engaging not just as volunteers but also as respondents to research, irrespective of its community based principles. Hence, despite people wanting to see positive local impacts happening, they may be unable to commit to delivering them.

"I think people on the fringes as it were only want to see results, they want to see the changes but they don't really want to help affect them because of the issues with volunteering." **Volunteer, type 4, area a (interview 21)**

So what about the nature of involvement? Some people having been involved in the beginnings of the partnership went on to remain highly involved, whereas others did not. The nature of involvement within this setting was highly fluid with some areas failing to retain volunteers recruited for research purposes or for more general projects. Comparatively, other areas successfully kept volunteers engaged and involved within their organisations.

"..what didn't work for us as far as I am aware we didn't get, the people who actually did the research didn't necessarily go on to be volunteers and activists in the community..."**Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

"....but then there are other things that have come up from...once you are involved in one thing you soon get drawn into other things that you see happening and because a lot of the groups and things that are happening all link into each other." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"First of all, all of those volunteers still volunteer for ORGANISATION....."**Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

"Oh absolutely, at least three quarters of my workers are former volunteers. They have gone on to the management, they have been vice chairs and they now have jobs, which is wonderful." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Several participants working within regeneration were aware of the problems of maintaining involvement and therefore adopted specific strategies in an attempt to increase involvement and ensure that involvement stayed continuous. For example, in one partnership the local data collectors were paid for their work but only after they had completed a number of surveys in order to retain their involvement.

"...they were also paid for that but only after they had done ten surveys......it is just a way of keeping them on board." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

Other partnership areas offered incentives in a bid to engage more people.

"....we did a presentation at the end of stage B, open to all the community, we even gave £200 prize money from our own budget at the event and whilst there was a reasonable attendance, it still wasn't great..." **Consultant, type 4, area a (interview 19)**

Despite partnerships expecting to retain volunteers, the process of volunteering itself was cyclical as well as linear in this context.

"...then we also sort of get a rotation of volunteers....some just see one project as relevant and so get their satisfaction and commitment from that but then don't have any more involvement after that so the people change...." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

So are these variations across partnerships due to differences in the areas themselves, differences in partnerships, differences in individuals living in the areas or the result of a general lack of interest in research irrespective of the approach adopted? These differences can relate to the way in which those engaged in development work perceive involvement. Involvement for some people was simply about being informed rather than being actively engaged.

"...to be fair it is not difficult to recruit people, it is difficult to get them to do something once you have recruited them." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

"But most people are talkers not doers..the same as all groups." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

Some individuals felt that the process of regeneration and the way in which it works, including the community action plan process, was enough to discourage the wider general public from becoming involved;

"The whole process does not help people to get involved because of the way the funding works and the objectives so the format of the community action plan is quite unique and detailed with all of the cross references and things....I suppose people have a lack of interest in the subject of community work." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

"It is about building capacity and it's a catch 22 the process itself. The level of interest is poor, people 'talk shop' but local people want to help with practical things but not ideas so the process tends to engage professional people..." **Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

Apathy was described as a problem within this setting.

"I mean I think people can't see the benefit so they don't get involved..they are generally apathetic and things like this have very little impact for ordinary people." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

"Well the meetings are not really well attended by the general public......is it apathy or something else? I think that people need to see something happening otherwise they get a bit disillusioned and then they don't get involved. I think because it is such a lengthy process people just stop being interested." **Volunteer, type 4, area a (interview 21)**

In some instances the public became interested in specific local issues such as toxic waste and were heavily involved in campaigns. However, this is not the case in relation to partnership activity, suggesting that community development is perhaps not widely recognised as producing results or as relevant to people's lives.

".....we had one or two meetings that were well attended, we had various speakers and things...but people mostly not. People do care, I mean there was supposed to be a chemical waste plant getting put here and loads of people were interested in that but generally people are negative.." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 17)**

These different perceptions surrounding involvement beg the question of how involvement should be measured within regeneration. Involvement when discussed by participants in this study is conceptualised in a number of ways. One such conceptualisation relates to attendance at meetings. For example,

"The negative aspects..me personally it is community involvement for me personally, it is a major problem, we set meetings up sometimes we might get 8 people there, sometimes we might get 12, obviously people are busy. ...." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

"I mean there could have been more with the size of the area." (referring to numbers of people at a local meeting) **Local data collector, type 2, area a (interview 14)**

However, this may not be an accurate way of representing involvement from the wider community, nor is it the only way. Proponents of the anti-secularisation thesis argue that 'bums on seats' do not measure levels of belief. So here numbers in meetings can be argued to be an ineffective measure of involvement. As one worker highlights, people generally enjoy being involved in more practical aspects of regeneration rather than its associated mechanisms such as meetings.

"Some in area get involved in the activities but not in the partnership....." **Volunteer, type 1 area b (interview 10)**

"We have a lot of members and the majority of the members never attend a meeting, they won't ever come to a full partnership meeting because that is not what, what people want to do. People want to be actively involved in community activity a lot of the time but they are not particularly interested in the mechanisms and the meetings and the scenarios necessarily....... people want to be involved in quite practical projects out there in the community and you do get your odd people who want to be involved in the organisational aspects" **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

This is not the case for all individuals because some volunteers do want to be involved in the mechanisms of the partnership rather than projects or groups;

"I know some people have made a conscious decision that they don't want to be involved in other groups, in other things, they want to put their attentions into the partnership and from that point stay neutral with all the other groups." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

So involvement can be conceptualised as attending meetings, engaging in the running of the partnership as well as participating in practical projects;

"....some of the projects that we have actually set up have got people involved from the actual community, like the garden centre....local community help out...." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

Involvement can also take the form of volunteer work experience and training;

"We have all sorts of cases of volunteers who have come and worked for us, women who wanted to return to work but who were too scared to so they have worked here as admin workers, volunteer admin workers, and have gone and got jobs. People have come and been supported and then they go on and get jobs." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

If people wish to be involved in more practical projects rather than the mechanisms of partnerships then involvement within research should be theoretically less problematic. Indeed, more people were engaged and involved with type 1 approaches than type 4 approaches.

The complexity of regeneration settings and the multiple influences on research impact upon both involvement and interest within any research applied in practice. Accounts from the interview data reflect that agents involved in regeneration perceive involvement as an ongoing process however, the question remains as to whether involvement has to be continuous in order to be successful. Perhaps it is more useful and appropriate to view it as a stepping-stone within research and regeneration. In fact, involvement in one particular project or activity may simply be enough for some participants; involvement could simply be a 'snap shot',

> "Some of them that is all they want to do, they are quite happy just to play their part in one particular piece of work or one particular project." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

> ".....some have dropped off....you get that don't you.. when they have seen the project through that is it for some people ...." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

Furthermore, volunteers are unable to become involved if they are unaware of what opportunities exist. How partnerships communicate with the wider community is crucial in relation to how they increase involvement. Some partnerships had more time, money and capacity to engage people and arguably as a result gained higher levels of involvement.

> "Well we had a recruitment drive. There is a newsletter that goes around so we put a flyer in that and then had a drop in session some people could come and pop in for a chat because this type of thing is really not everyone's cup of tea......" **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

> ".....those are the different methods that we used to try to get the information out to people....... lots of local community groups were contacted to ask if they wanted to have an input but also lots of the other agencies and local businesses were invited, what you would expect, like the council, the police, things like that, local councillors in the area......all the usual suspects." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 9)**

In some areas gaining involvement was achieved through word of mouth,

> "We didn't get many to the drop in but then it was really word of mouth and people saying oh I am coming to the thing can I bring my friend?" **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

However, in some areas irrespective of the amount of advertising and recruitment conducted, involvement does not necessarily ensue despite any increase in general awareness.

> "Yeah I think it was good for getting people to be aware of the partnership but people still do not get involved." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

To summarise the empirical findings relating to involvement, in this case the research approaches that required higher levels of involvement gained higher numbers of volunteers for the research but it is not clear which came first; the volunteers or the research. In addition, many of the areas did not necessarily keep their volunteers for prolonged periods of time and so unsurprisingly involvement in all partnerships was less than most members would have liked. The general lack of involvement resulted in a small number of committed people driving the processes of research and the action plans in all areas, irrespective of the type of research being used in practice.

There are a number of issues with volunteering and therefore involvement (time, money, availability, and other commitments), meaning that in practice people often are unable to commit to being involved as a volunteer for community based research or any other projects. The nature of involvement is highly fluid within social regeneration. Some areas managed to successfully retain volunteers for future work whereas other areas did not. Many partnerships recognise the difficulties associated with holding onto volunteers and retaining involvement and therefore offered incentives in attempts to secure involvement.

Furthermore, involvement is not necessarily linear; it was experienced as cyclical in some areas with a rotation of volunteers frequently occurring. Some partnerships did experience involvement as linear, recruiting volunteers for specific projects including community based research and then retaining them. Involvement can also be a one time experience for some volunteers.

Overall achieving some level of involvement is not difficult, for example getting names on lists and members for partnerships is unproblematic; recruiting people and getting them interested is not difficult but actually getting people to undertake tasks is the hard part. Involvement within regeneration may be problematic because of the nature of regeneration as time limited and the processes associated with it such as gaining matched funding and accessing streams of money. The pace at which change happens is often too slow in the eyes of many community members. Involvement can also be conceptualised in a number of different ways. For example, it can mean attending meetings, being involved in the mechanisms of partnerships, being involved in specific projects such as community based research as well as engaging in work experience and receiving training. Thus measuring involvement varies according to how it is defined. Finally, some partnerships have the capacity to advertise and recruit volunteers more so than others. Therefore higher capacity to recruit can mean higher levels of involvement. However in the areas examined within this study, raising awareness did not necessarily increase involvement. This study demonstrated that there are problems associated with involvement. Involvement, like partnership, is a feature of current regeneration discourse requiring further investigation.

Confirmation of the resulting benefits of community based research

In Chapter One, discussions of definitions principles of community based research were developed to elucidate some of the potential benefits of applying such research. A number of benefits are described across the literature and participants within this study correspondingly described these. So the benefits of using community based approaches, as described in the literature, applied to individuals involved in community based research within this context.

The benefits described in Chapter One include skill development (Green et al 2000), the development of social relationships (Schloves et al 1998), positive local outcomes and increased local knowledge (Ayers 1987) as well as strengthened local networks and empowerment (Greve 1975). Furthermore, community based research can provide accurate and reliable information for decision making (Ritchie 1996). Community based research can bring together people of diverse skills and knowledge, contribute locally grounded and empirically sound information and increase the likelihood that the results will be used by the community involved in the research (Cockerill et al 1998). The interviews from this study reveal similar benefits when community based research is used within regeneration.

Some participants described empowerment as a result of participation.

> "Well I think that.....people have become empowered through success... and I think that there are now more groups in the village and there are better links between them all really........" **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

> "I am the only non-local worker here. Everybody else is from the area, which is how it should be so in terms of that absolutely. We have all sorts of cases of volunteers who have come and worked for us, and then they go on and get jobs. We run training here. We have, that is part of the plan to run training that is relevant to them so at the moment we are running an IT class for people with special needs you know, which is great to see. We are running baby weaning classes teaching parents how to feed their babies. So in terms of empowerment we have touched thousands of people through a project like this." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Empowerment was just one individual benefit described. Several other benefits highlighted by participants in the research process included increased confidence, learning, a sense of pride and a range of transferable skills. For example,

> "For me...I mean it helped with my confidence and I got good reactions from others so people now know who I am in the area.....I mean they are shouting me and waving and I think who are you and I did the questions in their house so it is good cos I have not been in this area long...." **Paid data collector, type 2, area a (interview 14)**

> "For me it has been an individual learning curve from my point of view so it has been well worthwhile for me and I wanted to do it and it gave me insight into when we did the training. I think the exercise as a working group was good and I still feel pride at producing that report, the document." **Volunteer, type 2, area b (interview 10)**

> "Most people do it cos they really believe in it, they want to get some skills." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

> "So I think the benefits are massive and you know, the capacity building side which is so much more than skills for me, its about expectations, aspirations, the belief that you can change things and make a difference.......that those researchers, if done well almost becoming role models in their own areas, so they become models of aspiration for other people. They might the first ever local community workers in that area, yeah?" **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

> "...that is a really good way of first of all training local people to be researchers, we have a whole bank of local people who have gotten various training...Because it is about who you know, it is who knows who, which is why most of my staff are local people." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

The benefits resulting from community based research were not just at the level of the individual. Participants also described positive aspects at the level of the

community. For example, they talked about increased local knowledge and the resulting investment in the local community.

> "......quite a few people feel that they are more informed about what is going on in the area and that they know more people, you know walking down the street they talk to more people as they have seen these people when interviewed." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

> "About a third of the cost of the project goes back into the community and it is just one way of an organisation getting money into the community in a practical way and people getting training and references and all sorts of stuff." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

Indeed, the processes of community based research were entwined with and fundamental to the development of several local partnerships. Partnerships are key organisations within social regeneration practice in terms of employment, funding and establishing development work.

> "That was an interesting process because it was actually the partnership, which was involved with really their first employees. So there were some important processes they went through in terms of interviewing, recruitment and selection. So the consultation actually had lots of other positive things built in... For me the research process was much more, it was integral really I suppose in terms of my work but also the partnership and in terms of the engagement process that was happening between groups, groups working together." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

> "...was quite positive, it brought together the directors of the organisation and got them working together and thinking together......it raised our profile if you like because we were out there doing research. It has also given us a driver document which I think is very positive even though a lot of isn't necessarily relevant now, it is still something, it is a bit like having a bible, you keep on referring to it. You may change it, you may go off in different directions but it still a body of work that is referred to on a regular basis and I think that is a very positive focus for an organisation to have that document.... I mean it is not perfect but it has come a long way, the need to do that action plan has brought people together and made them think, a sense of working." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

> "It was about feeling that we were actually doing something worthwhile....as time has gone on the importance of it has become more and more obvious and it has become apparent that it was an essential, important thing and it has influenced us. Without it we would have been struggling to get funding particularly the big pots of funding that we have had but there is motivation there for anything that I do that it is doing something for the village and just hoping at the time that the village will benefit from it. And it is like a lot of things; it is not until a long time afterwards that you actually see the benefits of it." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

Furthermore, carrying out community based research also had an impact upon the development of community work by creating goals and targets as well as giving those

involved a sense of ownership. Thus, there are a number of ways in which the data are supportive of the arguments made in the literature, which state that such research create positive local impacts.

"Positive in terms of targets, long-term targets and short-term targets and medium term targets." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

"Without the local action plan we wouldn't have such a clear path in terms of where we are going and what we are trying to do in our community. Certainly it has been a good mechanism to focus this organisation and of course we are a community organisation." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"....in the end it is our action plan, the word is our, not their and cos there is always trying to say theirs and you know when they don't like something they say it is theirs....in case it doesn't work out.....and so it has changed that way of looking at things." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 7)**

"......it is about local things.....local area.....what people want to see and need.....it is a living document.." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 6)**

A further benefit discussed by participants was the development of networks and partnerships working between groups. Within current regeneration, partnership working is fundamental to success and is a key objective of both funding and government policy. The interview data from this study highlight that community based research within social regeneration can assist with the development of networks. For example,

"......Yeah....Obviously it makes the groups actually in VILLAGE aware of what we are doing and what they are doing, we know that the situation is and we know what the situation is if we want to work together. Rather than them doing one thing and us doing one thing..we are aware of what's happening...... It has helped a lot with projects ...Yes. People come for advice... we make a charge. We went through the structure of the partnership, the funding and we took them to the garden site." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

The importance of networks in creating social capital was identified in Chapter Two and the implications of different networks are examined later in Chapter Seven. Although networking is important within current regeneration practice, partnerships still require volunteers and local involvement to be truly grass roots in their approach to development work. Despite the issues with involvement illustrated earlier, in some areas developing research resulted in a perceived increase in involvement from local

people as well as a higher degree of commitment from some of the volunteers who had been engaged with the research work.

"Yeah, they think well why bother, you know so that's why I was surprised...they were interested you know even with all the knocks that they have had...cos some of them are still with us and there is a couple of them out of the chew and chat sessions...." **Volunteer, type 3, area a (interview 1)**

"..some of the projects that we have actually set up have got people involved from the actual community, like the garden centre....local community help out....and what we try and do now, we try and get directors to have a part in the projects so they know exactly what's happening." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

"Yeah of course. People did become involved.....we don't see bums on seats in meetings as the reason we exist, the reason we are here is to carrying on doing projects to get regeneration happening and to get local people involved in that regeneration. To us them being involved doesn't have to be them in a meeting, it can be far more practical." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"Well we have got a group of people who are really committed to the process and so they have helped raised interest and kept it going. I think people on the fringes as it were only want to see results, they want to see the changes but they don't really want to help affect them because of the issues with volunteering. I think really we have a small committed group at the moment, I think individually we all would not have got anywhere but through the partnership we did get somewhere. It is slow but now we are really starting to get somewhere and things are starting to come through...things are happening." **Volunteer Chair, type 4, area a (interview 21)**

A number of benefits listed in the literature pertain to the social regeneration context examined. Firstly, the development of skills, confidence and employability amongst community members involved in the process (Green et al 2000) was described as one benefit of community based research. These benefits were echoed in research types 1 and 2. Individuals can learn from each other by sharing their personal experiences as well as going out into the community to gather information (Papineau and Kiely 1996). Participants in type 1, area a affirmed these benefits.

Secondly, networking can result from community based research as such approaches involve the building up of useful contacts and consequently the strengthening of social networks (Greve 1975). All of the areas engaged with community based research in this study described networking as a positive benefit associated with carrying out research.

Thirdly, involvement in research can lead to the emergence of leaders at different levels, who represent a range of skills and functions (Greve 1975). Therefore, community based research can create more sustainable improvements within the community by enhancing the position, skills and knowledge of people located within the research process. In two of the areas included in this study, clear leaders emerged through involvement in research. For example, in type 1, area a the research led to a strong Chair directing the partnership and in type 1, area b one volunteer directed and led the entire research project.

Furthermore, the comments of participants illustrate that positive local outcomes (as discussed by Ayers 1987) can ensue following on from the use of such research. For example, carrying out community based research had an impact by creating goals and targets as well as ownership. Indeed, the research carried out in all of the areas sampled in this study led to increased local knowledge (see Ayers 1987) and the availability of information for decision making (see Ritchie 1996), evidenced in the production of community action plans. Given that these plans allow for funding to be accessed to meet some of the targets outlined, it is clear that the results are being used by the community involved in the research (see Cockerill et al 1998).

Summary

In summary this chapter highlights a number of areas in which the findings of this study support the existing literature, discussed earlier in both Chapters One and Two. The findings suggest that despite the literature on community based research being from different fields including health, social welfare and evaluation, it is indeed relevant and applicable to social regeneration settings.

Firstly the definitions of community based research approaches described in the literature do apply to the research examined within this study. This study examined four types of community based research and all had a number of features in common with the literature defining such approaches. For example, they involved the participation and influence of non-academic researchers in creating knowledge and encouraged participation. All of the community based research was conducted within distinct geographical areas and attempted to serve the interests of that locality by

gaining funding for development work. Finally the research involved collaboration from a range of people thus reflecting the diversity of approaches falling within the umbrella of community based approaches.

Secondly, the types of research were based upon similar epistemological foundations. Community members defined their development needs and participated in the research. The relationship between community based research and the use of theory described in Chapter One is also borne out in evidence from this study. None of the areas used theory to inform practice at the outset of their projects. In addition, at the axiological level, the community based research had interest in more than the usual research outcome. Across all of the approaches the research was judged in terms of the difference it made to the community in terms of visible and quantifiable outcomes. Finally, in terms of methodology, the literature argues that methods adopted within community based research are not predetermined, and within this study a range of methods were applied across the different areas. Many areas interchanged methods according to different projects, affirming the argument that community based approaches are not method driven. Whether this remains the same in other regeneration contexts will depend upon the funding of such research.

As Chapter One demonstrates the literature lists a number of principles underpinning community based approaches. Empowerment was reflected as an outcome of such approaches in terms of participants gaining knowledge, skills, capacity and power. For example, in types 1, 2 and 3 participants gained research skills and knowledge and in type 4 participants gained experience of tendering, employing professionals and directing research. In terms of the social capital framework developed as a lens through which to view community based research, this finding links to Coleman's (1998) argument. Human capital in the form of skills and abilities can, according to Coleman (1998) enhance social capital production. Community based research does increase participants skills and therefore in broad functionalist terms contributes to social capital development.

Chapter One also discussed involvement as crucial to the success of community based approaches but there was recognition that gaining involvement can be problematic. Again the findings of this study reveal that all of the areas included in this study perceived involvement as an issue irrespective of the level of participation achieved. When discussing involvement respondents illustrated a number of conceptualisations associated with defining it. Furthermore, a number of issues were

revealed in relation to volunteering and the nature of involvement, which was highly fluid within this context and not necessarily linear. It was also cyclical and a snapshot. Involvement therefore varies depending upon how it is viewed. Given that the nature of participation varies this has an implication for social capital development. Both Coleman (1998) and Putnam (1993) emphasise involvement in social structures and voluntary associations. However, they overlook the differences in types of involvement and therefore leave unanswered the question of which types of involvement are likely to have the most positive social capital outcome.

Chapter One also listed a range of benefits relating to the use of community based research. These are reflected in the benefits described by participants within this study. These included empowerment, increased confidence, learning, a sense of pride, transferable skills, increased local knowledge, increased local investment, the creation of targets and finally the development of both networks and partnerships.

In conclusion this chapter examined a number of similarities between the findings of this study and the existing literature relating to definitions of community based research, epistemological foundations, theoretical underpinnings, axiological level equivalence, methodological congruence and the principle of empowerment. The benefits from community based approaches as described within the literature were also borne out in the evidence here.

The next chapter continues to discuss the empirical findings of this study, exploring further themes emerging from the findings, which again reflect similarities to the existing literature despite its non-social regeneration base.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTINUATION OF ANALYSIS; FURTHER COMPARISONS

Chapter 6 – Continuation of analysis

Further comparisons

In this chapter the discussion continues in relation to the general findings of this study supporting the existing literature discussed in Chapters One and Two. The third research question of this study relates to an examination of the problems associated with community based research. Problems well cited within the literature are explored within this chapter. These include power imbalances, lack of trust, issues of legitimacy, representation, time constraints, inequalities in participation, the need for leadership, resources, different needs and interests and individual perceptions about what is possible in terms of community based research. Several themes highlighted in chapter two are also discussed in relation to the impact community based research has upon developing social capital. These themes are trust, suitability of context, the role of community leaders and inclusiveness. This chapter illustrates how these themes are echoed within the interview data. Therefore, they are relevant to community based research occurring within the Objective 1 setting.

Similar problems associated with community based research

On a negative note a range of problems were underlined in Chapter One in relation to the practice of community based research. There is no set format for using community based approaches, just techniques and tools and even the best tools do not always create a worthy product (Berk & Rossi 1990). Community based research is not a magic solution within local settings because problems do occur. These include power imbalances (Stringer 1996), lack of trust, issues of legitimacy (Israel et al 1998), representation (Taylor 2000) and time constraints (Israel et al 1998). Community based approaches are demanding for all those involved during all phases of the project (Schroes et al 2000). As Barr (2002) argues, attention must be paid to inequalities in participation, the need for leadership, resources and different needs and interests. Barriers also concern individual perceptions about what is possibly achieved in terms of influence resulting from these approaches (Truman and Raine 2003). The interview data from this study reveals similar problems faced by individuals implementing and adapting community based research within this context.

Individuals engaged within community based research felt they were lacking control and their lack of experience in using research compounded the situation.

"...we were all new to it, new to the process and you didn't really understand what action plans were.. ..." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

"Obviously there were things, as I have said that that we realised afterwards that we had done wrong and perhaps if we had more advice and support we might not have done those things. ....I think sometimes you have got to make your own mistakes to learn your own way anyway because what works for one area doesn't work for another area so although we could have taken advice and got support from other people in other areas it was important that we did it the way we did and learnt ourselves." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"Perhaps they should have done more but in sense where do you stop...... Whatever you do is never ideal, I mean you have got to sort of say this is the best with what we have got, in the time that we have got. In a sense it is always a compromise and you could always do better in terms of research, couldn't you?" **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 7)**

".....sent out a postal survey, and we got 37 replies, not all of which we could use because some of them were filled in incorrectly so then we decided we were going to do some.... a bit more user friendly consultation." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area b (interview 5)**

Many partnerships as new organisations did not have experience of community based research. The lack of control and experience is reflected in these accounts, demonstrating several difficulties such as lack of piloting and failed attempts at data gathering as a result. Those partnerships that were newly established and at embryonic stages of development, faced difficulties in terms of how they approached and experienced community based research because they had not undertaken previous consultation. In comparison the more developed partnerships had carried out consultation for various purposes. This lack of experience in both community development work and carrying out research led to technical difficulties in terms of the research. Many participants faced problems when simply deciding upon what questions they wanted addressing within the consultation process.

Question formation was a difficulty described by several using surveys.

"And also deciding what questions to include. Afterwards there was a problem that we realised with some questions, we hadn't been specific enough or made the question clear enough and so answers differed which made it difficult to put the data together some of the time." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"Then it was formatting the questions, what questions they wanted to put in, what they thought might be too controversial...we put it under themes..... So we had to be careful with the wording on some of the questions, we didn't want to upset or be too controversial." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

"And really agreeing the questionnaire was the most frustrating and hardest bit, it took at least 6 months... They debated the questions and talked about the wording" **Worker, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

Had partnerships previously conducted community based research, deciding what questions to include on surveys would have caused debate but could have been more quickly resolved. Many new partnerships did not have a wealth of research experience. Although research experience is not thought of as part of successful community development, it is often necessary because funders require empirical evidence of need. Several partnerships in this context were only just beginning to apply for funding and therefore were new to employing community based research. This lack of research experience created a number of problems.

"Like we might have done a pilot first like that but there was nothing that was insurmountable and I think sometimes you have got to make your own mistakes to learn your own way anyway." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"Yeah..if we were doing it again, we would do it differently cos don't forget we were still green and naive when we did this. (name) was a dinner lady and I'd been a shop assistant so all this was new to us." **Volunteer, type 3, area a (interview 1)**

"So at that stage we were all very green, we knew nothing......we had quite a few skills between us as a group but we had no regeneration knowledge." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

Despite the lack of experience being an issue, the only way to overcome it is to gain experience. Although appropriate training can prepare participants, doing research is the key to learning. Undertaking community based research and overcoming some of the problems emerging in practice creates a learning curve for those involved and gives them experience for future projects. Problems such as the wording of questions, a lack of knowledge in terms of carrying out pilot studies and writing reports can also be addressed through appropriate training and support being made available for those undertaking community based research, especially those with no previous experience.

Many areas were also faced with practical difficulties in terms of organising the research. As some partnerships were still at an early stage of development, they often did not have even the most basic facilities.

"Really it was a very large area to cover and we didn't have any contact points or premises, which is not really good." **Worker, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

Consideration of the resources needed to facilitate research is important, premises and contact points tend to be assumed by commissioners of research. In other areas, despite being given training, instructions and guidance, data collectors still experienced problems.

"Well we were all given areas and we were meant to stick to these areas and then people didn't and they over stepped theirs and then we didn't know what had been done and you would knock and people would say I did it last week...so I think we could have done more places and covered more if we had stuck to our areas...it got to the stage of not knowing who had done what." **Paid data collector, type 2, area a (interview 14)**

Given the organisation and time that participants invested into local research, some were disappointed by the lack of interest from the more general community. Thus, low response rates were also highlighted as a problem in some areas.

"I don't think it was really negative....I suppose we needed a bigger response rate than just 9% if time was not a problem. So a better response rate...the way to achieve that would be waiting for people to fill in the questionnaire and we could have done that to improve the response rate." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

Some of the difficulties associated with implementing community based research could have been minimized if more time had been available for those carrying out the research. The lack of time available was well cited in the interviews as one of the main problems faced by those carrying out community based research and this is discussed in depth later in this chapter. In addition, the interview data revealed that another difficulty faced by those involved in community based research related to funding. Individuals discussed a lack of money available to support community based research as a barrier to the process. The issue of value for money when external professional consultants were employed was also raised.

"Brass...." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

"The money isn't always there to do it Louise, and I think that's the problem." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

"....part of that is there is no match funding." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 7)**

"Well the funding ran out in September 2003 and this had a big impact...but now we have got some more funding again....and really it has been such a slow process and

we could have made it much quicker if we had drawn in expertise." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

"..there are those whole administrative barriers to unlock to say here's what we are doing, there is understanding needed, but given endless funds we could have done more." **Consultant, type 4, area a (interview 19)**

"Well there is the whole value for money question really with the consultants because the partnership gave CONSULTANTS all of the information that they produced as research findings..they didn't come up with anything new so was it really worth that amount of money? I mean I was pleased with the final document but personally felt that it was a lot of money for information that we already had. We could have saved so much money, you know one person could have sat down and done it in a shorter space of time really..I mean the money could have been used to fund a whole project rather than just consultation. But that is what the funders gave us the money for so that is what we had to spend it on." **Volunteer Chair, type 4, area a (interview 21)**

Lack of money was not the only funding issue. Participants highlighted problems in terms of the expectations held by funders. Their relationship with the funders was complex and at times fraught with difficulties, which has implications for trust within such settings. As the literature highlights, a lack of trust is often a problem within relationships required to complete community based research.

"....was a template from Objective 1 but the problem was that they kept changing it so we would send a draft and it would come back saying this bits not right and that bits not right so it was like that for nearly 18 months really. Yeah it took us 18 months to actually get it to a position where it was actually acceptable to them........" **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

"Objective 1 shall we say they were moving the goalposts ....so I was getting really frustrated with it to be honest." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

"The reality was that Objective 1 felt that they had to fix tighter deadlines in order to get the process moved forward and at very short notice we were faced with a deadline of April, right." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

"I think that sort of thing is sometimes down to targets that it is based upon and expectations." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 7)**

"In terms of Objective 1 it was a real bumpy road to begin with because we were the first organisation coming up to having a local action plan, so all of the others hadn't completed theirs when we had so in a way we were sort of a template so that is why it was slightly bumpy....They would tell us what they wanted and we wouldn't understand, well we thought we had done it you know so there was a lot you know in the early days misunderstandings and fallings out like that...At one point we got to the point where Objective 1 were dictating exactly what they wanted to see in this local action plan...because they were so powerful and because they had the purse strings I think some of the action plan..it has just been done for funders." **Worker, type 3. area a (interview 4)**

These difficulties reflect some of the problems associated with partnership working in

regeneration. Difficult working relationships with funding agencies are unlikely to overcome any in-group solidarity existing within deprived communities and may serve to strengthen insular trust and bonds. However, at least in engaging in partnership working, the weak ties required to expand insular links are being created. Wider levels of trust can also be encouraged in this manner. However, involvement is crucial in partnership working. Participants cited a lack of involvement in community based research as one of the main barriers to its success. As the previous chapter highlighted individuals do not always become interested and involved and this has implications terms of representation and voice. If local people do not become involved then whose voice is being projected towards funding bodies? Such inequality in participation is again discussed in the literature review in Chapter One.

"The idea of this is supposed to be community led but...It is to a degree but there are times when it is not.." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

The lack of involvement might relate to the way in which partnerships work in practice. Contemporary regeneration discourse cites partnerships as the most effective way of working and developing good regeneration practice. However, partnership working was highlighted as problematic by some of those engaged in community based research and wider social regeneration practices and this can affect levels of involvement.

"...and there are other things like you know all of the issues are to do with working together so you have to get all of the partners all involved, community and everything else working together ....because part of this idea of partnership is that more and more they want community to be involved so we all want a rep for this...Although you have got this responsibility you haven't got the power so it is all about that...so you are running around to all of these partnership meetings....and whether that is just for you know community cover..." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 7)**

"The part that concerned me most in terms of the organisations responses was the negative response from the local parish councillors and to a lesser extent the local government councillors, they really.....I wouldn't believe that they wouldn't want to be part of this process because it would have given them an opportunity to put questions in that they wanted to ask, things they wanted to know... From the responses we did get there were things said at the time that did discourage people from getting involved, it was just a cross we had to bear at that time." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

These issues associated with partnership working and involvement reflect how development work can effectively exclude some because of the mechanisms underpinning it. Only a limited number of people participate and this may obscure the diverse range of views held within the community. Indeed, those that do participate

may find themselves marginalised within partnerships, which can impede success in terms of achieving locally identified goals. Many people involved in community based research within the Objective 1 context felt that there was a lack of impact following the research for those living in the wider community. This was a perceived barrier to success because individuals need to see results.

> "Its like, you know things are on the back burner and nothings actually happening, people get frustrated and downhearted but sometimes it does take time. People who are actually on board...don't realise sometimes, some of these projects it might take perhaps a fortnight to deliver it but it might take nine months to actually organise." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

> "....it has been completed but whether it has an impact is another thing isn't it? It has not got, none of the projects have gone ahead apart from WORKERS job... but in terms of the effect in the community you know all that has sort of....." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 6)**

Results are necessary for the creation of sustainable impacts. One respondent raised the question of sustainability. Many areas had successfully used community based research to develop their local action plans and had begun to access funding to achieve some of their goals. However, time limitations on funding availability leaves a fundamental question unanswered,

> "....how is this process going to be sustained?" **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

Although community based research resulted in action plans and some development work once Objective 1 ceases to exist, the future of many partnerships is uncertain so sustainability will not be an outcome for all community partnerships. Sustainability following on from community based research is therefore another problem area.

The problems that exist within social regeneration when applying community based research models are numerous. A lack of control was experienced by participants relating to their own lack of confidence in conducting research, uncertainty about what questions to ask and where to actually stop the research process once it had been initiated. Several partnerships were newly developing, as was Objective 1 as an organisation, which compounded the situation leading to a lack of cohesion within the action plan process. Lack of experience for many was a negative aspect of the process and this applied to partnerships, volunteers, support workers and the funding agency itself. Indeed, the lack of established practice and under development within some areas led to basic problems such as inappropriate facilities in which to work. These factors impede the process of developing research strategies. Partnerships

need basic facilities such as a comfortable and appropriate place to meet; access to telephones, computers and photocopying facilities. Such basic needs are assumed to be in place by funders however, if partnerships are beginning to develop then they may not have the most basic facilities.

Another barrier to the process described by participants was the lack of funding. The lack of funding related to the approach adopted by Objective 1 who set out guidelines for the completion of community action plans. Once the plans were completed and endorsed then partnerships could draw down funding. Therefore, many areas completed their research without funding from Objective 1. Objective 1 signposted partnerships to other funding agencies but many did not have experience with applying for or managing funding. A further barrier to successful community based research in this case was the expectations held by the funders. Participants referred to the targets set by Objective 1, the lack of cohesion and clarity about such targets and the lack of available guidelines.

Finally, a lack of involvement and impact were also issues in relation to the wider community. The lack of interest and involvement from the wider community in both the research itself and the wider action plans disappointed many. Participants felt that as the plans were not having a clearly visible impact in the immediate term for some time, community members were once again being disappointed by another social regeneration initiative.

Another similarity to the existing literature relates to the concept of partnership. Community based research is underscored by the principle of partnership working, because it aims to integrate knowledge and to produce benefits to all partners involved in the research process. Hypothetically those involved participate as equal members and share control (Israel et al 1998). The literature recognises that partnership is a discourse adopted within policymaking (Taylor 2000). Within any partnership conflicts can occur as a result of differences in individual perspectives, priorities, assumptions, values, beliefs and language (Israel et al 1998). Such approaches may maintain rather than challenge hierarchical relationships. In effect then, research can become part of the problem rather than the solution (Lloyd et al 1996). Both partnership and empowerment do not just simply happen, rather they require support and facilitation. In this study the community based approaches were underscored by partnership working with a range of actors such as the local authority, funding bodies and professional consultants. However, many participants felt that

they were not equal partners and recognition was given by some to the issues associated with engaging in partnership working.

The issue of representation also emerged within the findings of this study. Again this is another area in which potential problems are recognised within the first chapter. For example, who represents the community and how is the community defined (Israel et al 1998)? Community development work can have problems in relation to staff domination and domination by particular residents (Ferguson 1999). This study found that in most partnership areas it was a few core volunteers and workers who engaged with research and directed it reflecting problems with representation. Most partnership areas attempted to create space for everyone within their area to participate but the limitations of time, money and staff often meant that the hard to reach groups remained so.

Comparable social capital impacts

The new empirical findings from the interview data in relation to social capital are discussed within Chapter Seven. This chapter focuses upon empirical findings similar to the existing literature.

Firstly, the literature recognises that trust within any neighbourhood is not guaranteed. The impact of historical divisions within areas, contemporary housing policies, intense deprivation and the sudden presence of streams of money can undermine trust between individuals and groups within neighbourhoods (Hibbitt et al 2001). This study found that history within some areas did have a negative impact upon trust.

> "Well the funding ran out in September 2003 interest dropped off and we lost the workers...I was Chair of the project at the time and we lost the admin and the community development worker..." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

Thus, if an area had previous community development work that did not achieve its aims and as a result left a feeling of cynicism amongst the wider local community, this may well influence the views of current regeneration practice and as such views of community based research supporting such regeneration.

> "...but I think because of the history people are cynical. There is apathy and cynicism due to the past promises and the history of the past partnership and what happened when it was dissolved. People are cynical about funding, would it achieve anything?" **Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

This cynicism reflects what Fukuyama (2001) calls in-group solidarity, a narrow radius of trust where people's ability to co-operate with outsiders is reduced. In this case, this was the result of failed development work serving to support and strengthen in-group solidarity. So can successful community based research expand trust outside of narrow community circles? Areas that had been successful with gaining funding in quick succession to their research and had publicised their success felt that trust in their organisation had increased as a result.

> "The actual results because it has enabled us to get funding for different projects has obviously had a great impact, there has been quite a few projects that have come out of the results of the survey." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

Therefore, community based research can expand trust where visible results are clearly demonstrated. Action must follow research. Although weak ties are important for Fukuyama (2001) to expand the radius of trust, and these are necessary in regeneration, visible outcomes are also important in increasing trust within geographically deprived areas.

Secondly, the question of suitability arises. The literature recognises that tailored and integrated responses are necessary in addressing neighbourhood problems. Chapter Two discusses how social capital is highly context dependent (Jochum 2003), because different neighbourhoods have different combinations of factors that affect how they work. Consequently, different factors in different places create success (Groves et al 2003). Neighbourhood conditions can impact upon resident participation, which is fundamental to community based research approaches in forging social capital. Furthermore, where processes for effective communication and inclusive participation are inadequate a real sense of alienation can develop in a community (Simpson et al 2003). Consequently, community based approaches in some circumstances can create a culture of mistrust and have a negative influence on existing stocks of social capital. This study found that the issue of how the community perceives both research and any results ensuing from its application are, in practice, difficult to judge.

> "What we don't know is how, whether people in the village realise how much the survey has impacted on it ...." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

Even if the involvement of locals in community based research mitigates against a narrow circle of trust within communities, the lack of realisation of how research

influences development work, may mean mistrust is still not overcome through community based approaches.

Thirdly, experience emerged as an issue in that community based research, in order to have a positive impact upon levels of social capital, requires key people to drive forward the approach. In some areas key people were present to drive forward community based research approaches (type 1, areas a and b) however, other areas do not necessarily have individuals with the skills, time or commitment needed to successfully complete the process.

"....did have an experienced worker involved....so she was overseeing the research and she did have a very skilled community base to work from..." **Worker, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

"I think it is about community champions and their enthusiasm and not just skills but obviously that all depends upon the individuals and there will be differences between areas of course." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

Experience is fundamentally tied to involvement and so does not guarantee positive outcomes. Putnam's (1993) understanding suggests that if engagement does not happen then neither will social capital development. Engagement can also be affected by the operation of networks. Bourdieu (1999) discusses networks as a potential resource and networking is important in regeneration practice. However, if people are unable to tap into networks then engagement is consequently limited and inclusion becomes an issue.

Finally, inclusiveness can be problematic in terms of developing social capital. Chapter Two demonstrates that not all social capital is positive or beneficial to everyone. If voluntary organisations are a source of social capital and contribute to building social capital, the question must be asked about whose social capital it is that they develop. If such groups wish to produce positive outcomes then they need to encourage diversity and inclusiveness (Jochum 2003). However, as this study reveals only a small number of committed people develop research. If this small group of participants develops social capital as a result of their work then it may not be positive and inclusive in relation to the wider community, rather it may just be the social capital of their group. Some of the comments made by participants in this study reflect that inclusiveness is indeed problematic,

"....lovely men but mainly men who are on the management committee and the women don't want to be. And that is something about the culture of the organisation I think... I think it is because of the people involved, the personalities." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

The discussion in Chapter Five reveals limited involvement in both research and development work. Therefore, diversity is not necessarily accommodated within partnership practices. This has implications for social capital development because any social capital created is unlikely to benefit all community members.

The influence of dynamics within areas

The literature suggests that community based research should not be applied to every population. Chapter One highlights that attention must be paid to participation, leadership, different resources, needs and interests (Barr 2002), as well as practical limitations and the perceptions of those engaged (Truman and Raine 2003). The findings of this study reflect that dynamics within areas have an impact upon the application and usage of community based research.

Across the different areas within this study there are clear differences. These differences are highlighted within the methodology and include varying levels of development work skill. There were also differences in terms of funding, staff numbers and volunteers available across partnerships. Differences existed in terms of both geography and demography. Thus, some areas were small and isolated with clear boundaries to mark their geographies. Others were widespread, had higher numbers of residents and were geographically divided for example, split by railway lines or sections of busy roads. In addition, some areas were predominantly white whereas others areas had higher proportions of black and ethnic minority cultures. Indeed, the areas also differed in terms of how they approached consultation. All of these differences lead to questions about how such area dynamics influence the approaches to research adopted and the success of community based research.

Several themes emerged from the interviews relating to the differences within areas and how these impact in practical terms. Firstly, the size of some areas can have an impact upon how successful research is.

"But we are lucky from that point of view that we have a very defined area to work within." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

> "And the area is divided as well. NAME and NAME is distinct from NAME and NAME so this affects working in the area and it is a big area.....resources have to be spread out and there are facilities in some parts and not in others...**Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 10)**

Small and more clearly defined areas are easier to work in and larger areas more difficult especially if they are divided in some way. For example, racial divisions or geographic influences such as roads and motorways dissecting communities can create communities within communities.

Secondly, participants recognised that existing skills within areas are an advantage in terms of developing research. The levels of existing skills affected the dynamics of consultation across the areas.

> "....and he obviously had skills in some of the areas that we needed for doing.. because obviously putting a survey together, being involved the whole way through, it is different skills that are involved in different parts." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

Experience in terms of research knowledge and skill amongst volunteers will advantage some partnerships. In addition to the requirement for relevant skills, there was also a need for volunteer commitment towards the development and implementation of research and the partnerships. Thus, there is a need for community champions within areas to motivate others and to use enthusiasm to drive these processes.

> "...if there is no one to carry it on, it takes an awful lot of time but if there is somebody there prepared to take it on then it does get lots more people involved...if there is a local champion for it.. but it is really difficult to get.... yeah and they are a bit like a resource, getting other people involved, and being there for other groups..." **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 7)**

Not all areas have the necessary skills for research or community champions to drive forward research. The lack of community champions and suitable volunteers can result in high levels of pressure and demand upon existing volunteers, which in turn can have a negative effect upon them and their work.

> "Oh, yes I think that part of the problem is that people get jaundiced like community activists." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

"....but sometimes you just feel like you are having the same conversation all of the time, it must be really grinding down for community activists because there are with these partnerships but don't actually feel that they are moving forward..." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 6)**

Furthermore, there may also be differences between areas in terms of the support available for those engaging in community based research. Good networking and well-developed partnerships facilitated success within some areas.

".....fantastic support in terms of morale. When we have been in a really low ebb, when it has looked as if the whole thing will fall on its face, he has come in and said now come on lets look at this properly you know, at the most difficult times he has been there, you know. Between those three people.....they have brought us through a difficult time......If I am able to continue working with them that is a very strong team ...." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

"And the other factor is if all the support is there....all the community partners, community workers, community action plan team workers and they all work together to try and get the process forward...in the community partnership areas where it has happened there has again been significant benefits for communities. I understand that people don't always work together but if they do...it helps the process." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

Differences in levels of support and training existed between areas because Local Authorities employ divergent strategies in their own locale in terms of community development work support. The interviews show that key people, with some level of skill and the right type of support are more likely to be successful in developing community based research. However, these are not the only dynamics to have an impact upon community based research. There are also issues about timing in that if the research is carried out at an appropriate time then it is more likely to be successful.

"...there has been a positive contribution to the village...I am just trying to think ....yes I think also the formation of the partnership has...came at the right time..." **Vicar, type 1, area a (interview 25)**

Difficulties emerged for some partnerships because of the time at which they began their community based research. Thus, some difficulties related to the point in time at which partnerships began their research in relation to the establishment of Objective 1 as an organisation. This demonstrates the importance of timing.

"Really we were the first that was a problem, Objective 1 were new, it was all new and we were all just starting out." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Some partnerships began their research earlier than others and this was not necessarily an advantage because there were no local models of practice to draw upon and Objective 1 was still dealing with internal organisational issues.

A further dynamic discussed within the interviews was the role that history can play in some areas. If community members have participated in community based research before and have not seen any visible outcome as a result then cynicism and a lack of corresponding involvement may result.

> "And I know that can be very demoralising for people some of the time. And I think in some areas, although not as many as I would have thought, in some areas I think people feel that they have been surveyed to death." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

> "....well I think what can happen is that it can raise a lot of expectations and sometimes those expectations can't always be met and that can cause quite a lot of frustration and negativity." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 15)**

The result of previous failed attempts can be increased distrust and strengthened in-group solidarity meaning that future outside interventions are treated with caution or ignored.

Finally, the nature of partnerships as organisations can also influence the success of community based research. For example, some organisations purposely maintain an independent standpoint and clearly differentiate themselves from other organisations.

> "We are one of the few partnerships that is independent of the council and don't have them on the management. There isn't many who have got that. A lot of partnerships actually have got councillors as chairs of their partnerships and local people are sceptical of them." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

The independent nature of some organisations may further their success by avoiding the wider public's negative views of statutory bodies. The nature of organisations can act as a barrier to success by discouraging involvement from some sections of the community. Organisations and partnerships can be founded upon exclusivity rather than inclusively and this has implications in terms of restricting membership. This also has implications for social capital development as discussed earlier in this chapter.

The dynamics operating within specific areas had an impact upon the success of community based research and development work as arguments within Chapter One

suggest. For example, a small undivided geographical area facilitates easier development of community based research. Areas with volunteers who have skills and enthusiasm are also more likely to find community based research easier in comparison to areas with a lack of skills and jaundiced community activists. The history of an area can have an impact upon how community based research is received by the wider community.

The differences in areas in terms of the wider support available can also impact upon the levels of difficulty experienced by those employing community research, with good networking and well developed partnerships facilitating success. Finally, the very nature of partnerships can affect the success of community based research in practice with inclusion and independence achieving more than exclusivity.

In summary, a range of dynamics influence community based research. Some dynamics such as an existing skills base, good support and enthusiastic community champions are more likely to engender easier community based research and facilitate success. Comparatively, other dynamics such as a problematic history and exclusivity within partnerships act as barriers.

The issue of time

Time is discussed as problematic within the first chapter because community based approaches are more time consuming than traditional research (Israel et al 1998) as a result of establishing engagement. Participants in this study described a lack of time as a problem. The areas undertaking community based research took different lengths of time to complete both their research and action plans. Some research approaches took longer because they were more complex and involved higher degrees of learning from participants, such as type 1 approaches. Some of the research approaches were closely bound together with the emergence and the development of the partnerships, again taking longer.

Most participants described the lack of time as a problem across all of the approaches. However despite this perceived lack of time, all of the action plans examined within this study were completed in time for the deadline imposed by Objective 1. Some were even submitted before the deadline, indicating that a lack of time in terms of meeting this deadline was not a problem. However, not all of the

community action plan areas did successfully complete on time. Therefore, the eight areas included in this study can be taken as good examples rather than the norm.

Table 7: Submissions according to the Objective 1 deadline

Area	Submission in relation to deadline
Type 1, area a	Submitted early
Type 1, area b	Submitted on the deadline
Type 2, area a	Submitted early
Type 2, area b	Submitted on the deadline
Type 3, area a	Submitted early
Type 3, area b	Submitted on the deadline
Type 4, area a	Submitted on the deadline
Model 4, area b	Submitted early

So what then are participants talking about when they are describing a lack of time? What are the issues associated with time? One of the issues that emerged for some partnerships engaging with community based research was the way in which Objective 1 imposed the deadline. At the outset of the community action plan process, Objective 1 informed partnerships that they could conduct research and develop plans at their own pace. However, Objective 1 staff eventually decided to impose a deadline upon the process because partnerships were taking lengthy amounts of time to complete both research and the plans. This in effect created a lack of time for some partnerships because they could not adhere to the original time scales they had developed.

> ".the plan to take the survey out originally was over a much longer time scale, we had planned to do it over about 9 months so we could have as much consultation in as many ways as we thought. The reality was that Objective 1 felt that they had to fix tighter deadlines in order to get the process moved forward" **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

This demonstrates the important of internal deadlines for some partnerships. External deadlines have to be met but the use of internal deadlines can be a strategy employed within partnerships to manage workloads. Despite the criticism of Objective 1 and the way in which the action plan deadline was imposed, deadlines are not always perceived as detrimental to developing models of community based research and achieving positive outcomes.

"positive aspects were it enabled a picture to be built up of an area quite quickly really because it had to be focused because there were times scales to it, which were a good thing, right?" **Worker, type 2, area a (interview 8)**

In fact in some areas people imposed their own deadlines and hence talked about a lack of time to complete the work whilst still meeting the Objective 1 deadline. Perhaps then in some areas the lack of time described by participants relates to the pressure they felt to complete community based research rather that meeting the deadline from the funders.

"....it was all quite rushed last time. That was another thing that we learnt to take more time about putting it together and to take the time, rather than trying to rush to get it out to everybody, to take the time to do a small pilot to check that people understand the questions as we intended them." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

Here the respondent is talking about the lack of time available to put together the questionnaire and to complete a pilot study. The lack of time in this area was self-imposed in relation to completing the research process.

Furthermore, carrying out community based research is a lengthy process especially for participants who have never undertaken such a project. Given that many of those involved within social regeneration settings undertake such work as volunteers, the length of time to complete the work may well have infringed upon other aspects of their lives and thus be conceptualised by participants as time consuming.

"....The process itself was lengthy I mean we hand posted the questionnaires into peoples houses and collected them in some areas for example." **Worker, type 1, area b (interview 9)**

There was some recognition from one Objective 1 stakeholder that both research and development does take time, again illustrating that these processes are lengthy.

".....a negative effect is that it does take time and one of the problems is with doing different initiatives, the difficulty is this is about community development and it takes time." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 10)**

One worker argued that time was an issue in terms of the methods that were employed in practice within the type of community based research used.

> "I think in the end it was, time was a major constraint in terms of a variety of consultation methods...... I think that the short time scale restricted the types of consultation that we were able to do, we would have like to have opportunity to get people together. We would have liked to do some sort of planning for real exercise but basically the time scales just, you know, made it impossible for us to have a range of consultation methods. So I think that in the end restricted the responses...."
> **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

There are a variety of consultation methods and mechanisms available for use within any setting. However, most partnership areas simply adopted a predominant method for this work. For example, both type 1 and 2 areas used surveys, whereas type 4, area a used a series of workshops. A wider combination of methods could have been used in practice if there had been more time available.

Furthermore, the point in time at which organisations began to engage in community based research had an impact upon networking and the development of models of good practice. The areas beginning community based research before others found that they were flagships for others to follow and derive good practice from. The first areas employing community based research had no examples of good practice because other areas were not carrying out similar work.

> "I think people have looked at what we did and used our ideas but we were the first in AREA so...." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

> "... I would like to think so but more or less they drew upon my ideas and copied exactly what we had done. So in many respects I think that most of them followed us because we were first." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

> "..we were the first area in AREA to develop our action plan....our model...obviously there are variations in the area but most ore similar so people looked at ours as we were the first." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

> "I think people have looked at what we did and used our ideas but we were the first in AREA so..." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 17)**

> "We were the first community partnership to get it together and it was our first thing.....it was very very hard going and people didn't know....." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

Being the first partnership in an area to undertake community based research was not an easy task because there were no models to use to inform practice. So in this sense time was important in terms of the point in time at which people engaged with community based research.

In summary, time was an issue for those engaging in community based research in a number of ways. Despite meeting the deadline set by Objective 1, some felt that the way the deadline was imposed had shortened available time and so limited their practice. Several areas imposed their own time scales, recognising that community based research is a lengthy process. Indeed, the point in time at which partnerships initiated their community based research also had an impact upon their work because being the first in an area to undertake such work meant a lack of examples available from which to draw good practice. The point in time at which community based research is implemented remains important in relation to the receptiveness of the wider community to such approaches and the available support form funding agencies such as Objective 1, which specify the need for such research. If all agencies supporting community based research are recently established their lack of experience in using such approaches can complicate the process.

Finally, the different areas took different lengths of time to complete their research, as the table below clearly illustrates.

Table 8: Area differences in terms of time

Area	Time taken to complete research
Type 1, area a	6 months for research
Type 1, area b	One year for research (took approximately 6 months to agree questions on survey)
Type 2, area a *	4 months for research (initially had planned to do work over 9 months but drastically cut time taken because of deadline set by Objective 1)
Type 2, area b *	4 months
Type 3, area a	One year
Type 3, area b	6-8 months
Type 4, area a	6 months
Type 4, area b *	6 months

This table demonstrates that the longer established and more experienced partnerships were the ones who completed the research in the shortest time (those marked by *). Experience of both partnerships and volunteers has been highlighted in this chapter because it serves to advantage some areas over others. This is supported by the length of time partnerships took to complete research with those being more experienced unsurprisingly completing more quickly.

Summary

Chapter One discussed the problems that can emerge when applying community based research and this chapter confirms that many of these problems occur within social regeneration settings. The problems listed in the literature and supported by the findings of this study include lack of control and experience, technical difficulties, practical issues, a lack of funding, the high expectations of funders and a lack of involvement. Participants also raised the issue of both impact and sustainability following on from the research.

The findings of this study also support arguments made in Chapter Two, which suggest theoretical links between the processes of community based research and social capital formation. Fukuyama's (2001) discussion of a radius of trust highlights the importance of trust within neighbourhoods undergoing regeneration. Is insular, in-group trust strengthened by community based research or does such research extend the existing radius of trust within partnership areas, serving to enhance development work? The findings of this study suggest that when relationships with external agencies such as funders of community based research are difficult, this can serve to increase in-group trust. However, community partnerships have to continue working with external agencies in order to survive therefore this enhances weak ties and expands trust. Yet the extent to which this takes place was not quantified in this study and it is clear that trust within any neighbourhood is not guaranteed. For example, the impact of previous development work negatively influenced levels of trust in some areas. Social capital, in any form including trust is also highly context dependent because different factors affect neighbourhoods in a variety of ways. Community based research may not positively contribute to trust because of how it is perceived by community members.

Indeed, for community based research to have a positive impact in social capital terms, key people are required to drive forward the approach. For example, experienced volunteers with knowledge of networks to tap into as resources (see Bourdieu's 1999 conceptualisation). However, the involvement of a core group of key people raises questions about inclusion and therefore exclusion. Inclusiveness can be problematic because not all social capital is positive or beneficial to everyone.

This study raises the question of whose social capital is being developed by community based research and is this to the benefit of all.

General consideration was also given to the context in which community based research is applied. Chapter One highlights that attention must be paid to participation, leadership, different resources, needs and interests and the practical limitations of those participating. The findings of this study reveal that different dynamics impact upon community based research in practice. Positive dynamics include an existing skill base, good support and enthusiastic community champions. Comparatively, dynamics such as problematic history and exclusivity within partnerships act as barriers to community based research. The nature of involvement in such research was also discussed because partnership working and previous experience of development work can affect levels of involvement. Consequently, these dynamics either serve to encourage access to resources such as networks or to block access (Bourdieu 1999). The next chapter discusses how community based research links to the development of networks in more depth.

The issue of time is given attention in Chapter One in that community based approaches are more time consuming than traditional research. Again participants in this study described time as a problematic aspect of the process, with the areas undertaking community based research taking different lengths of time to complete the process. An examination of time within this context revealed that some research approaches took longer because they were complex, involved higher degrees of learning and were closely bound together with the emergence and the development of the partnerships. However, all areas met the deadlines set by the funding agency irrespective of their experiences of time.

In conclusion, attention was paid to the problems associated with community based research as described within the literature. Again the problems experienced within social regeneration were akin to those described from other fields. The next chapter continues to discuss the empirical findings of this study, exploring themes emerging from the findings, which are not discussed within the existing literature.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINAL ANALYTICAL EXPLORATION; CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE DISUCSSING NEW AND EMERGING THEMES

Chapter 7 – Final analytical exploration

Contribution to knowledge discussing new and emerging themes

Introduction

The previous chapter discusses findings of this study reflecting similarities with the literature and confirming that several arguments made about community based research within health, social welfare and evaluation apply to such research when used within social regeneration. The findings of this study also include a number of emerging themes not evident within the literature which is unsurprising given the little attention paid community based research within social regeneration. This chapter explores new and emerging areas with these new themes making an original claim to knowledge in this area. In general, these findings do not contradict the existing literature rather they add to the existing knowledge base. The themes given attention in this chapter are the nature of consultation and community based research, the social regeneration context, Objective 1, social capital and attitudes and values.

Problematising the literature

The argument that community based research is a vehicle for creating equality, discussed within Chapter One, is contradicted by the findings of this study. In ontological terms, community based research adopts a postmodernist perspective. For example, knowledge is as much about politics as it is about understanding. Community based research in this context can be a search for meaning, an attempt to come closer to the reality of daily life and an attempt to neutralize power differentials (Skinner 1996). Within this study participants attempted to allow a wide range of voices to be heard and all partnership areas controlled knowledge creation and construction to a certain extent. However, this occurred within specific parameters set out by the funding agency, with research findings having to be presented in a predetermined fashion. Participants in the research process perceived constraints because they were carrying out their research for a particular funding agency. This had an impact upon how much voice was heard and what control participants experienced in presenting and formatting their research results. Indeed, this lack of voice and control is reflected in the interview data,

"....was a template from Objective 1....." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

"......in a sense the survey was driven by the action plan process....as surveys go I thought the questions were directive. " **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

Although Objective 1 had control over the community action plan template and what was ultimately included in the final plan, this did not mean that Objective 1 had control over the actual community based research or the way in which the research was written. However, interpretations of this process by participants may not necessarily reflect this. Much research is carried out within development work settings for funding agencies and so the question remains as to whether those carrying out research in this context can have 'true' voice, control and equality within the process without jeopardising the future of their organisations by not meeting funding agencies criteria.

Furthermore, a range of benefits are ascribed to community based research within the literature. However, not all of these benefits were confirmed in this study. Firstly, the achievement of more positive outcomes as a result of community based research is highlighted within the literature. Arguments are made that unlike traditional research, community based approaches tend not to produce negative consequences (see Schloves et al 1998). However, the research carried out in this setting had several negative consequences irrespective of the fact that it was community based. For example, some areas failed to demonstrate any visible outcomes to the wider public,

"....it has been completed but whether it has an impact is another thing isn't it? It has not got, none of the projects have gone ahead" **Worker, type 3, area b (interview 6)**

"No, not a large impact in terms of the results..I mean there are issues about expectations being raised by consultation and then no real impact. Consultation is fine but people want results." **Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

This lack of results can create perceptions of ill feeling amongst the wider community, increase distrust and therefore have a negative impact in terms of social capital development. The negative impact described here relates to the way in which the funding operated. Several participants in this process assumed that the research findings and the demonstration of local need would result in funding for projects, yet this did not automatically occur. Although the action plan was evidence, funding still had to be claimed and this was within predetermined areas as money was dedicated

to specific target areas. Hence, this perceived negative impact says something about the funding of projects post research rather than being an explicit critique of community based research as a concept by participants. The way in which Objective 1 operated funding is the same as other agencies within this context. Therefore, this issue is likely to arise when community based research is used within regeneration to support applications for funding. Furthermore, ill feeling as a result of community based research was described by some participants. Many described aspects of the process as negative. In terms of conceptualising the negative experiences resulting from participation, different respondents describe their negative experiences in a variety of ways; reflecting that what is problematic for one individual may not necessarily be so for another. Thus, consideration needs to be paid not only to the barriers that exist in relation to such research, but rather to the impact these barriers have at the level of the individual.

A further area of the literature, which this study fails to confirm, relates to service changes. Community based research has been positively linked to changes in services. Within Chapter One, community based research is discussed as having the potential to stimulate new ways of looking at on-going projects and to review both existing services and the potential use of new services (Cooper 1986, Skinner 1996). Therefore, a more community based approach to the evaluation of existing services or to the designing of new services is arguably more likely to produce changes that people want and require. In this study, community based research was not used to evaluate existing statutory services and therefore could not attempt to change them. However, existing services within the community action plan areas not encompassed as part of statutory provision did sometimes change but this was not the result of community based research carried out to develop action plans.

In addition, Chapter One argues that community based research can focus upon local agendas by raising specific issues and concerns as well as involving local groups (Schloves et al 1998). Thus community based research is steered in the direction that local people want. However, in this study there were conflicting opinions evidenced in relation to the realisation of local agendas. The funding agency felt that by allowing local people to consult and to include all of their ideas in a plan that they were allowing space for the full local agenda to be heard, even if the stated needs were beyond the scope of their funding.

. "I think too often we pass you know neighbourhoods that have things done to them. It is very much about an external agency or organisation doing it to them as it were. And in general I think what community based research does is it shifts the balance of power back to the community so it is much more about community influences and having a say in what happens..." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

Despite Objective 1 being keen to point out that the community action plans were not solely for the purpose of their funding, some local people felt that the agency, in only funding specific areas limited their scope for addressing their needs.

"At one point we got to the point where Objective 1 were dictating exactly what they wanted to see in this local action plan..." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Differences in attitudes between funding agencies and claimants are hardly surprising. The limitations on amounts of available funding and the processes put into place to ensure monitoring of funding create issues for those in receipt of money. For example, the funding agency, having issued a template for the local action plans perceived this as helpful where as the local people involved in this process felt they were being controlled.

"Through the action planning process we have come up with a template that says well you do need to do that, you do need to identify what the issues are locally and you need to tell us how you have done that." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

This confusion may relate to problems of interpretation between the funding agency and the community partnerships. So can community based research truly allow people to raise their local concerns? These competing perceptions about the purpose of community based research as a community development tool, reflect that local agendas are not easily accommodated. In this context there was compromise between the desired local agenda and what was locally realised because of the way in which funding operated and the expectations of funders.

These issues of voice and control within community based research relate to power. The problem of power imbalances is frequently discussed within the literature in relation to applying community based research. Power differentials should be neutralized so that the interests of the powerful do not take precedence (Stringer 1996). However, how realistically this can be implemented in practice is questionable. Can power differentials be neutralized when the initiator of consultation is a funding agency? In this situation the funders hold the purse strings and therefore some measure of power. Objective 1 had ring-fenced money for specific geographical

areas, however this was only accessible following the completion of an action plan and consultation. Objective 1 also had power in the form of knowledge in relation to sign-posting partnerships to appropriate funding agencies to allow money for community based research to be gained.

> "...what we try to do is work with communities to help them to do it. So it is about giving them the tools to do it whether that be money, if they want to, some communities might actually want to bring someone in to help them to do it so we can help pay for that or it might be in terms of giving them the tools and skills to do it so it might be providing training or providing the people who can go in and facilitate that kind of activity..." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

Power is not just financial but within regeneration funding is often a prerequisite to development work and the aim of the community based research in this context was to successfully gain funding. Hardly surprising then that participants in this study felt that the funding agency had power, often moved the goal posts and were frequently unhelpful. These perceptions are discussed later in this chapter.

So given the existing power imbalances between participants and supporters of community based research, what impact does this have upon trust? A frequently discussed challenge within the literature about community based approaches to research relates to the relationships between researchers and non-professionals in that there may be a lack of trust between them (see Israel et al 1998, Chapter One). However, the issues associated with trust in this study were not centred upon relationships between researchers and non-researchers, rather they related to the trust that the community held in development partnerships in their area. For example, some areas had experienced problems with funding in the past (both type 4 areas) and as a result felt that the wider community were suspicious of their motives and sustainability. In addition, other areas felt that their lack of capacity to deliver results following on from their community based research also had a negative impact upon trust (for example, type 3, area b).

The issue of legitimacy is also raised within Chapter One. Questions of legitimacy arise when community based research is adopted with some commentators not regarding community based research as genuine because of perceptions that it is unscientific (see Israel et al 1998). In this study there were no issues with legitimacy as the funding agency were the commissioning body for the community based research. The issue of legitimacy that arose in this context stemmed from the wider

community's perceptions in relation to the partnerships about both the impact of the research and the results of previous work.

> "There is apathy and cynicism due to the past promises and the history of the past partnership and what happened when it was dissolved. People are cynical about funding, would it achieve anything?" **Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

> "...it is a continual ongoing thing to find a way to get through to the community." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

> "In terms of dissemination I think I said before I worry that this is where the money runs out quite often and where the energy has run out and often the questionnaires are completed and that's the end of it, the end of the life of the local researchers and I think that's rubbish." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

This reflects that legitimacy operates on more than one level and that questions about the nature of research as scientific are more of an academic concern. Legitimacy at the level of the community relates to transparency, knowledge dissemination and the outcomes of the research. Legitimacy also links to sustainability within regeneration contexts. Legitimate organisations and any associated practices such as community based research should result in sustainable outcomes. Given the lack of money for dissemination and the wider problems with funding, the question of sustainability can not be ignored. Sustainability is a problematic area in relation to social regeneration and research more generally. The first chapter discusses how community based approaches can contribute to sustainability within regeneration. Hills and Mullett (2000) argue that when orthodox research ends then so does the project but this is not the case with community based research which makes a lasting contribution by enhancing the capacity of the community to continue to engage in research and evaluation. In employing community based research as a technique and providing local people with skills, sustainability is arguably more achievable after the end of the project's life span because local people are left with knowledge and skills to use in the future. However, these skills are only useful if future research and associated partnership work are required and if people stay in the area and are available to engage in such work. The notion of skills sustainability is predicated upon such assumptions and this may not be the case in practice as people are migratory, situations change and volunteering is an area in which people do not necessarily remain engaged.

Emerging themes

The investigation of applied community based research within social regeneration is largely unexplored within the literature. Consequently, several emergent themes are evident within the findings of this study. These findings are new and therefore add to the existing literature and original knowledge base in this field.

Nature of consultation and community based research

As demonstrated in Chapter One, the literature is scant in terms of discussing community based research within social regeneration. Consequently little reference is made to the nature of community based research when it is applied within such settings. This study illustrates some insights into community based research within the South Yorkshire, Objective 1 context.

Despite the different types of research used by partnerships, the interview data revealed a number of similarities between these areas in terms of their approaches. These similarities relate to the nature of consultation when it is used within development work settings. In practice the different partnerships employed a number of consultation methods at various points in time rather than simply and exclusively adhering to one specific research approach. The types of research outlined within Chapter Four are not used exclusively within specific geographical boundaries and particular partnerships. These types of research were just one particular method adopted to consult with the community. Often these methods were combined with other approaches as part of ongoing consultation.

> "..we consulted in a number of ways. In the March we had the official launch which was a business, a full days event actually. We had a business breakfast, started off in the morning, invited the businesses in and then I think we had 2 or 3 presentations..... The consultation took forms, if there was anything happening, say there was a community gala or something then we had a stall with stuff, you have seen the stuff but it was different to that and they would have a sit down, it was a PR job. We sat down and talked to people and got them interested." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

Research within the established partnerships was not new and a variety of approaches had been used to consult for other development work purposes, reflecting the fluidity and ongoing nature of consultation within these settings.

"….we have workers who are all local and who did a focus group about where we are going and this year we are doing what's called a partnership open day where the public again will have the opportunity to input to us their views. It is being held in the park it is a big fun day but it is also the opportunity for people to come along and give us their view on how they think it has gone so far, suggestions for what we could do better……"So at every opportunity we will ask people for whatever reason to give us some feedback because feedback is crucial." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"..we tried lots of different ways ands we have kept reinventing ourselves in this way …" **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

The interviews show that consultation is an ongoing process within regeneration. Partnerships do not view consultation as a one off event rather it is viewed as an ongoing way of evaluating the needs of specific groups and the wider community. Consultation such as community based research is an appropriate tool for partnerships to use within regeneration settings, because such approaches are frequently used.

"We do research all of the time of course. It is necessary. This year is our partnership impact survey. We are now mid-term so we now look at what impacts did we say we were going to achieve which we will be asking the general public, do you think we are making a difference?" **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 18)**

Furthermore most partnerships, workers and volunteers engaged in community based research were confident with the approach they used in practice. This was a common theme irrespective of which types were actually employed. When participants were asked about repeating the consultation process, most felt that the approach they had adopted was the most appropriate and therefore justifiable.

"I think what we did was quite good…"**Vicar, type 1, area a (interview 25)**

"But really I would do it again in the same way and involve volunteers..I think it is good for people to learn." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"I don't see no other way to do it. .." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 2)**

"Yeah, they (consultants) were very good…..they did cost a lot of money…but if we didn't get that money for the consultants then another area would have so why not?" **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 17)**

"….really I wouldn't make any changes in the way we did the consultation…I think we would buy in expertise for large consultation exercises in the future." **Worker, type 4, area a (interview 18)**

Partnerships may not have been able to change these approaches because the type of research adopted was related to the existing dynamics within the area and the time

period when the consultation actually occurred. This was recognised by some of the actors involved in the processes of research,

> "...so I don't think you can say we would have done it differently because at the time it was the only way we could have done it because we weren't that established as an organisation and we didn't know......" **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

This recognition of a lack of experience in carrying out research is related to the embryonic stage at which some partnerships were at when carrying out their research. If partnerships had been at a more developed stage then even if their approaches did not differ, their attitudes might have.

> "I think if we ever had the chance to go back and I think we do in many respects I think we would be a lot stronger in terms of not jumping through the funding hoops." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Irrespective of any changes that partnerships would make to their community based research, it is interesting that, many of these same partnerships used their research as part of their development strategies. Participants recognised how employing community based research help to develop their organisations in a number of ways.

> "Well, the partnership gets stronger, its part of the process, partnership members acquire skills." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

> "The involvement in doing the consultation and the research has just had a dramatic impact upon the community partnerships themselves. Not only on their skills as individuals and as an organisation and also in giving them a clear strategy and a plan for where they want to get to .....So it has given them a focus that maybe they didn't have before and I think that is one of the most important, significant outcomes we have from the research on the partnership side." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

The research process was important in developing partnerships that were newly formed. Well established partnerships potentially have skills and funding that newer partnerships are achieving through employing community based research. The process of implementing and carrying out community based research can be a learning curve for those involved.

> "Well any research really is the same and expands knowledge and basically if you want to progress something you can do just that, there is a need to demonstrate things than research can help because it is about a process." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

"I suppose the best way to really look at it is about progress, it is about the distance travelled throughout the process so you can measure it in that way." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 15)**

However, for people to be capable of engaging in community based research, irrespective of its purpose, some skills are necessary at least to get people to the beginning of the process. Many skills can be learned throughout the process and through the provision of specialist training. However, there was a common understanding amongst participants in this study that some skills were fundamentally important in beginning to apply such approaches.

".....between us, because we had got the different skills from different backgrounds and things... "**Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

"Well, it does help if they are literate and numerate basic skills.....you know.....but do you need to be literate to ask questions? No, if you have an IT programme that will do the collation for you do you need numeracy? Obviously it helps, obviously it helps if you have a degree of communication skills so yes there are core skills that help but ...everybody is capable no matter what the starting point is. You can acquire the skills to do." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

"I mean really the basic requirement was for people to be willing, willingness and to be literate." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

"Well they...I think they need some theoretical skills. They do need to have an understanding of research up to a point. They need to be, they need to know the basic principles..... So some of it is about local knowledge and knowing what methods will engage people. And it is local people who usually know...who actually get people interested. I think they do need to have some sort of analytical skills....conflict management....There are technical skills around analysing information and writing reports, that sort of side of it but the other side of it is to do with relationship handling and conflict handling." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

The skills required to develop community based research within development work settings do not have to be from regeneration experience. They can be transferred from other areas of expertise and applied to regeneration. However, awareness of the skill enhancement through community based research was common throughout the interviews.

"Oh, there are loads! Well for the individual there are benefits in terms of increased confidence, increases in knowledge, often skills that employers are looking for as well. .... And the networking and the sharing of good practice that goes on in between different organisations so you are building capacity for individual groups and organisations so that they can participate in wider regeneration.......I think you do see a lot of examples of progress. I mean I know people who used to sit in meetings and never speak and you see them at meetings now and they are articulate, they make decisions for their organisations, now they are community leaders, a lot of them have

·gone into employment, they are different people...." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

"And the skills involved in being a researcher, in writing the questions in learning how to talk to people, the way they answer you know, in the courtesies you need to observe and the way you need to think about your safety and the ethics of it and then the techy bit when you analyse it and when you write it up. All that, to be involved in the whole process, the bag of skills involved is massive...." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

"But in itself that was a capacity building exercise because.....when you look at the process somebody actually did the questionnaires, somebody actually prepared the questionnaire on the computer, someone then printed them off, then we had to go through a, we employed 4 people actually...so there was all the necessary work that goes into that application forms, recruitment. All those things you require, induction...and then when all the forms came back in someone had to sit down and mathematically add the ticks up and that, and then somebody had got to analyse it and then somebody had got to write the report. So there were lots of people involved in that and for that exercise there were probably 15 people involved, which was good because it also, it enabled people with different skills to put together." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

These skills developed from community based research fulfil the axiological purpose of such approaches, create capacity building in regeneration terms of develop human capital amongst participants. Different skills result from different community based approaches however, it must be recognised that different types of community based research are more appropriate to some areas than others, given the stage at which the partnership is at and the existing skills available. The stage of development that the partnership is at is an influential factor in determining the type of research adopted in practice.

"..it depends on the circumstances, some community partnerships yes..... it reflected where they were at the time so the action plan stated this and stated the need for capacity building.... very different partnerships." **Worker, supporting all areas (interview 11)**

Whatever stage partnerships are at and irrespective of the range of skills brought by volunteers and workers, specific support is required to enhance development. Such support can be in several forms such as through mentoring for specific purposes or it can simply be given through funding and guidelines.

".....I mean somebody at the end of the phone to just ask ..as in all of this community regeneration this mentoring way is very very important and I think it is one of the factors in success. Someone needs the requisite skills to deliver, the practical but

there has to be a system of mentoring ..." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

"So it is about giving them the tools to do it whether that be money, if they want to, some communities might actually want to bring someone in to help them to do it so we can help pay for that or it might be in terms of giving them the tools and skills to do it so it might be providing training or providing the people who can go in and facilitate that kind of activity. We have done it by producing frameworks, so we have produced guidelines for people about what we expect." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

Divergent support will be required within different areas due to the nature of the area, variations in skills and the types of research used. There was recognition of different types of research by one worker.

".....two and a hybrid. One the community controls the research process.....the second one is that they employ a consultant who takes responsibility for that process. The hybrid is that they employ the consultant to assist...but basically there is two models....if they decide to have a consultant they have to think about what questions they should be asking, if they decide to do it themselves, it is different......" **Worker, supporting all areas (interview 11)**

These different approaches to research, viewed through the eyes of participants reflect the importance of attitudes and values in research. Many participants perceived that grass roots research added more value in development terms in comparison to employing consultants. There was a belief that using grass roots community based research encouraged growth and development.

".....consultants are only there in role, some do a good job but basically recycle what they want...there is also the ownership aspect between them that it is part of the process, it is a growth, enabling." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

"And I think a community based approach from the point of the people doing the research can be extremely empowering, you know, a real learning experience, but also for the people who are you know participants. I just think you get better results because people are more likely to talk to somebody that they can relate to, that lives in the area than maybe a consultant in a grey suit and a briefcase who has just parachuted in." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 15)**

Participants also understood how consultation raised issues around inclusion. Many community members may not want to be included or voice opinions about the local area. Furthermore, how can those developing community based research evaluate how successful their approach is in terms of inclusion?

"It is a strange old road community consultation because you only ever consult with a group don't you. You never get everybody." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"It is very hard to do though because how do you know that you are actually reaching the people that are excluded from those processes? How do you know in terms of.......part of what we are trying to do is to support community organisations to find ways of making those voices heard." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

"What a local community based approach can do is really reach the people we are trying to reach, the people that are most excluded that are not involved and not engaged. ... " **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

Much of the community based research literature suggests that all stakeholders should be included (see Israel et al 1998) and community partnerships often attempt to include as many voices as possible. However, in the Objective 1 context there was recognition that ultimately not everyone can be included or wants to be. Therefore, inclusion will remain an issue in other regeneration contexts where community based research is applied. Furthermore, inclusion has implications for the development of social capital, previously discussed in Chapter Six.

In summary, within development work settings consultation is an ongoing process and partnerships tend to use a variety of different methods to consult with their audience. Consultation is seen as a fundamental part of development work. In terms of the development of community based research for local action plans many participants felt that their approach to consultation was the most appropriate, which is interesting given the different types of approaches used. A number of different skills are perceived as important in developing community based research approaches and a number of different skills are seen to be the outcome of employing such research. The research approaches used for the development of the action plans were also entwined with the development of partnerships as organisations and used as a process to develop partnership structures. The research approaches used within communities are recognised as differing and a common understanding held amongst participants was that grass roots research adds more value in terms of empowerment, ownership and skills enhancement. Finally, there is also an understanding amongst participants that community based research raises issues of inclusion as it is not possible to consult with everyone, irrespective of the type of research applied in practice.

Social regeneration context

This study confirms the suitability of community based research approaches to social regeneration settings. Many of those interviewed who had participated within the processes of community based research did feel that these methods were appropriate for social regeneration settings and purposes.

> "I think if you are going to be serious about regenerating communities and taking community development approach to that I think that this is one of the best tools you can use to get people involved in that....... I can't think of anything else apart from community research that will get people involved in that way cos you have to give something of yourself to participate in any way you know, even if it is saying I am worried about drugs on our street you have still got to give something of yourself...and I just think that is really really important.." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

> "Well, the partnership gets stronger, its part of the process, partnership members acquire skills......I know NAME community partnership were walking around with their chests sticking out and saying we did this, the Mayor came, you know, they were all coming out of the woodwork saying can we have a copy of your research, Oh yeah, it was brilliant, wonderful, sense of achievement. .... it is positive strokes, positive strokes..." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

> "I think consultation can work especially when you are looking at the whole community and trying to achieve sustainability and you are not just doing elaster plast jobs.... " **Worker, type 4 area b (interview 18)**

Given that community based research was a useful tool for developing skills, capacity, partnerships and action plans leading to development projects, its applicability within regeneration is clearly demonstrated. However individuals faced difficulties when applying these approaches in practice. This implies that although social regeneration settings facilitate the opportunity for the development of different types of community based research, the necessary support and involvement is not always in place. This confirms the findings discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Four in relation to the existing barriers faced by participants. However, despite the problems described with these approaches, all of the areas carrying out community based research within this study successfully applied research and developed a community action plan as a result. If the research employed within these areas actually met its desired aims, despite the difficulties then surely it must be viewed as successful? The research also fitted with other development goals such as the development of local area based partnerships therefore, such approaches are undeniably appropriate within regeneration.

Furthermore, many participants who had been involved with developing and carrying out community based research within the Objective 1 context, expressed the view that there was much potential for future similar research to be applied. Thus, one area that had applied a type 1 approach in practice was actually reapplying the same approach at a later date, again with local people controlling and carrying out the entire process. However, some changes were being made in an attempt to refine the research process. For example, gaining specialist advice about appropriate survey questions in specific areas such as health.

"Yeah. Yes definitely, we are looking at the next one being in a couple of, well starting in January, hopefully getting it out and having the results in March or April. We're looking at making some differences, we are getting people in to give advice about specific areas and the questions that would be useful in specific areas so the things like health, police and the young people, we are actually getting people with some knowledge although ultimately it is going to be the trustees and members who put the questionnaire together and ultimately decide what questions go in. We are taking advice from professionals in relevant areas because to do a survey what we don't want is lots of little surveys going out for example, people from the health authority being interested in that particular piece of information and saying now we will go and do our own survey and enlarging on that piece of information because people do get survey overkill and then they lose interest in things. So we are trying to make sure it is all incorporated into one survey." **Volunteer, type 1, area a, (interview 23)**

Other stakeholders also believed that space for further community based research existed.

"Yeah, there is more potential for this and for people engaging in this way. For example, there is lots of research potential and people could get involved.........." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 15)**

Given that some areas applied a specific community based approach and then reused it again at a later date, this confirms the suitability of community based research within regeneration. Indeed, one type 2 area had in fact used their approach prior to Objective 1's existence. Thus, work undertaken historically resulting in the success of a type 2 approach led to its reapplication at a later date. The partnership reapplying the type 2 approach had sustained links with the consultant who had previously directed the process with a view to carrying out similar future research if the opportunity presented itself.

"I think really they had confidence in me because of my work history.....because I had been chatting to them over a long time and really then I looked at the development of the research.....how to do the research, how to overcome problems and the planning." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

Again this confirms the applicability of the use of community based research to development work contexts. The same types of research can be reapplied in practice within the same geographical area for different purposes. The four types of research applied in practice could be interchanged within the parameters of the same partnerships for different purposes if the support and funding is available for such approaches.

> "......and just because it has been done once doesn't mean it can't be done again but it has to be done properly.....I would love to be able to make that a more solid process and love money to be diverted into coming up with some more creative ways of doing community research. I think people because it is easy rely on questionnaires......and we need to develop other things... It would be fantastic to think that a partnership could do a feasibility study for another partnership and they could do a household survey and they could swap their skills. I mean they wouldn't even need to exchange money, it would be so good." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

Partnerships often carry out different research therefore, just because an area has applied a type 4 approach for the development of the action plan does not mean that the very same area cannot apply a type 1 approach for a different purpose. This study demonstrates that research approaches are not exclusively used within each geographical location. However, some approaches used in this relate to pre-existing partnerships as they had been applied historically and so were reused again for the Objective 1 action planning requirements.

Furthermore, in developing and applying different types of research individuals within partnerships develop research skills. Arguably this creates an element of skills sustainability within regeneration. This could be developed further for the benefit of other partnerships in terms of the exchange of research services especially as there is perceived potential for future work.

> "Oh yeah, yes, it is part of how community partnerships themselves can become sustainable, and generate income.....When Objective 1, SRB, Coalfield Regeneration Trust, Community Fund etc stop giving us brass, how is this process going to be sustained? It is certainly part of it for community partnerships to set up businesses that will generate funds to sustain the partnership and part of that might be community research, I am sure it can be." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

The exchange of research services between partnerships is one way in which sustainability can be enhanced. For partnerships to be genuinely sustainable they need to operate in the same way as companies and therefore find ways to generate incomes. The contracting out of research skills is one potential source of income.

However, in practice there were a number of problems and these would require resolution prior to further research. Although the Objective 1 context and specifically the community action plan remit provided the opportunity for community based research as well as some resources and support, the Objective 1 model could still be improved in practice. Within the Objective 1 model support was delivered at a later stage than most participants needed it because of the establishment of Objective 1 as an organisation and the necessary development of protocols and guidelines. For example, the Academy of Community Leadership established to provide specialist training in regeneration, determined by partnerships was launched after the deadline for submission of community action plans. Therefore the community based research had been completed and the specialist training some required had been overlooked during the process. Speaking after the submission date for all community action plans about the newly introduced Academy, one staff member when asked if Objective 1 could support community based research in practice answered,

> "Yes ....now that we have got the academy as well. The academy has got, I don't know how many they have got now, but last count they have got 30 to 40 providers on their books. They are all specialist providers who can provide that kind of training so the idea is that it is tailor made to meet the needs of any particular group or individual" **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

However, such specialist training needs to be in place when community based research is taking place so although the context of Objective 1 provided the opportunity for community based research some barriers existed including the development of specialist training support too late for those developing research and action plans. Such barriers require tackling in order for regeneration contexts to provide not only the opportunities but also the resources and support necessary to facilitate the development of fuller community involvement and participation within community based research. Barriers also include perceptions about community based approaches as well as practical support.

> "I think this whole process should be seen as part of community development and should be acknowledged as that rather than seen as, you know a piece of work that should have been done before, do you know what I mean? Cos it does take time and if you are going to do it properly then it does need time......."**Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

One of the problems with using community based research that emerges in practice within social regeneration is that it is seen as secondary to community development

work rather than as integral to it. Projects and outcomes are given more emphasis but to identify these, research is often used as a tool.

Objective 1

The specific context of a programme such as Objective 1, has not been explored in previous research and therefore is not discussed within the literature. This study reveals some insights into how community based research worked when encapsulated under an Objective 1 umbrella.

Many participants engaged within the processes of community based research described similarities in their relationship with Objective 1; this was irrespective of the research applied in practice. The process was described by some as a learning curve for all involved including Objective 1.

> "Well I think it was really a learning curve for everybody involved.....for the funding teams as well.. I think they have developed more effective ways of supporting groups now but at the time it was a really difficult journey and we had lots of disagreements and this has lead to more support being available out there now is much more support out there.....I think they really weren't aware of how much need it would create."
> **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

> "...there was a development worker from Objective 1 but she was new and was still learning, they were new and not skilled up at that time." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Given that Objective 1 was a new organisation it is hardly surprising that there were issues needing resolution within the organisation before effective support could be delivered externally to those engaging in community based research within communities. Perhaps the lack of an agreed agenda within the organisation itself caused more confusion for those attempting to develop community action plans. A common theme described by participants is the moving of the goal posts by Objective 1.

> "...was a template from Objective 1 but the problem was that they kept changing it so we would send a draft and it would come back saying this bits not right and that bits not right so it was like that for nearly 18 months really. Yeah it took us 18 months to actually get it to a position where it was actually acceptable to them." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"With Objective 1 there was a new worker in post and then the money should have been ring fenced and then it changed....the goalposts changed and I don't think the new worker helped....inexperienced." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

"Objective 1 shall we say they were moving the goalposts but once we all got around the table with senior (local authority) officials, it was just a case of have a meeting here and then we would get feedback, oh you haven't done this and that and then this so I was getting really frustrated with it to be honest." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

These problems of changing priorities related to Objective 1's own organisation of capacity and development. One of the factors influencing participants' relationships with Objective 1 was the point in time at which communities began working with them. The establishment of both Objective 1 as an organisation and the initiation of the action plan process at specific points in time impacted differently across partnerships according to the timing of their involvement.

"In terms of Objective 1 it was a real bumpy road to begin with because we were the first organisation coming up to having a local action plan, we were the first endorsed partnership in Barnsley so all of the others hadn't completed theirs when we had so in a way we were sort of a template....They would tell us what they wanted and we wouldn't understand, well we thought we had done it you know...." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Therefore, the point in time when partnerships engaged with Objective 1 and the experience of Objective 1 and partnerships influenced the relationship between the funding agency and partnerships. However, Objective 1 were not the only participants within the process that were new to developing action plans. Many partnerships had not engaged in this type of work before and some were themselves newly formed. Therefore, the inexperience of partnerships may also have had an impact upon the developing relationships with Objective 1. As one participant said:

"But that was because of things Objective 1 were finding difficulties, we were finding difficulties and the process seemed to be a bit complicated to say the least for a group like ourselves. And I think for most people to be honest. Unless you are an expert in funding, everybody struggles. So the paperwork kept going backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards but eventually it did get completed." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

Some community members and workers felt that Objective 1 were too directive in terms of the development of the action plans.

> "It is not only for Objective 1 but because they were so powerful and because they had the purse strings I think some of the action plan is taken, we don't need it, it has just been done for funders." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

It is however common for funders within regeneration settings to have guidelines about what they will provide funding for and how this is to be accessed. Increasingly applications for funding are expected to demonstrate need and evidence in support of the bids, usually through consultation. Therefore, Objective 1 is simply operating in the same way as many other funding agencies within this setting. There may have been miscommunication between Objective 1 and the partnerships in relation to how the funding would work, leading to misunderstandings about the process. The idea of ring-fencing money for specific areas is a different approach because historically areas have tended to compete with each other for available funding. Misunderstanding may have been caused by a lack of experience of funding within such settings as well as misleading publicity.

> "I think part of Objective 1's publicity machine gave communities the impression that Objective 1 was the answer, that the money was there and that they could have it right.. without an understanding of what they were really offering, that they would match you if you could find the money. I don't think that was really clear. So what happened was Objective 1 got bandied around as being the way forward, the solution to our problems, the money would be there and I don't think it was a true." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

Any publicity and dissemination of funding information needs to be carried out with careful consideration to avoid raising the hopes of partnerships and development organisations and subsequently deflating them. The impact of 'bad' publicity could create negative social capital effects. However, not all partnerships experienced difficulties with Objective 1 or had difficult relationships. Some participants described the excellent levels of support that they received from Objective 1.

> "....the amount of support from Objective 1 has been very good and I would like you to record that as it is important. We have a grant officer, who has been immensely supportive all the way through the process and has dealt with a really difficult situation in a really professional way..." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

Other participants described changes in the way their relationship with Objective 1 worked. Participants within some areas felt that their relationship was difficult to begin with but then when these problems were eradicated, a good working relationship developed.

"......was a lot you know in the early days misunderstandings and fallings out like that. But I would say that we have a wonderful relationship with Objective 1 now we are actually funded by them. We have a lot of help and support in terms of the monitoring and evaluation. To be honest they bend over backwards to help and support us now so there is no problem at all. They are great. " **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

Hence, once guidelines and practices were established and trust was developed between partnerships and Objective 1 working relationships improved for some. In summary, different partnerships experienced Objective 1 in a number of ways. Some felt that Objective 1 were new to the process themselves and that this made it difficult with constantly changing goal posts. The element of time was a factor influencing such relationships because Objective 1 newly developed the action plan process and the associated consultation therefore; they were themselves perhaps experiencing a learning curve. However, some partnerships felt that Objective 1 provided good support and that the process would have been difficult irrespective of the organisation involved because of the learning curve involved for a new partnership engaging in both development work and community based research. Indeed, some organisations that had difficulties with Objective 1 at the beginning of the process went on to develop a good working relationship with the organisation.

Social capital

There are a number of theoretical links between community based research and social capital as Chapter Two demonstrates. So what links within the literature are evidenced empirically within this study? Firstly, community based research can enhance local relationships within social regeneration settings and can enhance trust within some geographical locations. Community based approaches can be better received than traditional research as they work to address any existing research fatigue.

"I suppose ...I was one of the more sceptical ones at the time because we had already done a survey the year before ....I thought that there would be quite, some negative feelings about the survey from people who would say that this is another survey....we have had loads of these. There are lots from other agencies but I was pleasantly surprised by the really positive response of people. That maybe because it was about developing particular projects, something a bit more concrete... People did seem to sort of engage with it and feel that it was relevant which is a problem with getting surveys.....I think real projects made a big difference to it." **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

It is not just local people undertaking community based research that has a positive impact but more specifically, it is the very nature of the research itself, which is important in developing social capital. If people believe that they will see a concrete impact from participating in such research they are, as a consequence more likely to engage with the research, irrespective of whether the research was community based or more traditional. Participants within this study discussed the impact of research as positive when results were visible.

> "The actual results because it has enabled us to get funding for different projects has obviously had a great impact, there has been quite a few projects that have come out of the results of the survey." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

Others felt that a lack of dissemination and impact were negative.

> "Am I happy with how well informed the community were about the results? No, I think the bottom line there is that it became an economic issue" **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

> "...but there are 14,000 people in the local area so how do you impact upon everyone? **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

Many participants felt that the results of the research were as important as the research process itself. Therefore, to enhance trust within social regeneration by using community based approaches, the research needs to result in a positive and visible local impact as well as the results being widely disseminated so that local people feel well informed about events within their area.

> "......and I think the fact that we had a couple of quick wins helped us to win over local people and to get them to trust us...Yeah, looking at the bigger picture......they do.....people's trust does grow but it is a slow process and you need to build relationships and word of mouth....people want quick wins so they are visible and build onto a bigger picture..they need faith." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

If people are simply consulted repeatedly with little dissemination of results or visible impact then irrespective of the type of research used, it is likely that such an approach will simply raise expectations and then deflate them.

> ...not a large impact in terms of the results..I mean there are issues about expectations being raised by consultation and then no real impact. Consultation is fine but people want results. **Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

This can result in the enhancement of mistrust of both future research and development work activity. So Fukuyama's (2001) emphasis on the importance of weak ties in expanding in-group solidarity and widening trust although relevant does not conceptualise the importance of local impact in the development of trust within regeneration. The context in which regeneration takes place is also important in the formulation and development of social capital in the form of trust. For example, within some geographical locations higher levels of trust may already exist ensuring that such research is more positively accepted than in comparative areas with lower levels of trust. Some participants within the community based research recognised that context was important.

"I think it has been positive and I think it has also been to do with the history of VILLAGE so...I think, yes the partnership has most certainly created a structure to produce and that generates some interest. ....So there has been a positive contribution to the village..."**Local Vicar, type 1, area a (interview 25)**

"....but I think because of the history people are cynical. There is apathy and cynicism due to the past promises and the history of the past partnership and what happened when it was dissolved. People are cynical about funding, would it achieve anything?" **Local Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

Therefore, the prior levels of social capital in any given location influence the community based research approach in practice. Areas in which perceived low levels of trust existed in relation to development work, opted for type 4 approaches in which external professionals were brought into the local area. Comparatively, areas with higher levels of bonding social capital at the outset applied type 1 approaches in practice. The data from this study suggests that some recognition has to be paid to how existing levels of social capital influence the type of community based research chosen.

Furthermore, there is little guarantee that using community based research will increase trust within social regeneration settings. One participant when asked if he believed that community based research could enhance trust within specific localities recognised the complexity of outcomes associated with social capital.

"Yes because...the short answer is yes because it is local people working with their communities to produce research that will identify issues of interest....it is not some professional coming in. Now there is a slight caveat to that....because people can say I won't go down that street because of whatever but they can be overcome. The balance is greatly in favour of local people doing the research themselves..." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

Despite the recognition that there can be problems associated with using community based research in an attempt to enhance trust, the opinion of the above participant is that such approaches are still more beneficial than traditional research. Other participants similarly argued for the application of community based research within social regeneration in order to tackle mistrust and consequently develop higher levels of trust.

"So I think using local people as researchers, I hate that word using, for local people to be the researchers actually might start to overcome some of that. Look give us one last chance, it is us now not them..I think this sort of suit person with a clipboard , I think is I don't know how real that ever was really so yes I do believe that people, the respondents are much more likely to trust local researchers. I think that's a generalisation and I think that sometimes the people that come forward for these researchers might not always be they might be people who have fallen out with others, sort of thing so it doesn't always follow and you have to be a bit careful about the patches that people work on and the stuff like that but I just think there is a principle involved that is really really important that if you get out and ask questions about your local area, you need to ask questions yourself. It doesn't want to be somebody else asking questions, somebody else can actually help you, yeah but you have to do it."
Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)

Therefore, community based research can enhance trust within regeneration settings but this is context dependent and related to the visible and demonstrable outcomes of research and development work. Are outcomes more likely to be realised if weak ties exist? Fukuyama (2001) argues that weak ties are essential to expand trust. These ties are visible in networks and for Bourdieu (1999) serve to constrain or enhance success. Indeed, Putnam (1993, 2000) conceptualises different types of networks as important in developing social capital, describing bonding, bridging and linking connections. So does community based research develop networks in a way that creates weak ties, lessens in-group solidarity and enhances success within regeneration settings?

Community based research can have a positive impact upon networking within regeneration settings, contributing to both the development and continuation of different associational linkages thus, fostering social capital. Within some areas bonding social capital was enhanced through people working together through the process of community based research.

"....in terms of the engagement process that was happening between groups, groups working together. " **Worker, type 1, area a (interview 22)**

"....you get that whole group of people working together." **Worker, type 2, area b (interview 8)**

"Yeah, more people know me and I know more of them and some....it got me into the community cos I was an outsider.." **Paid data collector, type 2, area a (interview 14)**

"I think it was bringing people together, groups together and all working together. I think individually we all would not have got anywhere but through the partnership we did get somewhere..." **Volunteer, type 4, area a (interview 21)**

"....and I think the fact that we had a couple of quick wins helped us to win over local people and to get them to trust us..." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

However, the production of bonding linkages alone is not necessarily a benefit to communities. Bonding social capital can serve to increase in-group solidarity. Therefore, what is needed to mitigate against this are weak ties, bridging connections alongside the bonding links (Narayan 1999). Community based research as a process had a positive impact in terms of building bridging social capital between existing groups undertaking community based research, helping people to create links with others both inside and outside of their geographical location. Thus, both purpose and process are important issues in developing social capital from community based research;

"So by that I was picking up information myself...talking to people...picking their brains to be quite honest. And having said that, going out and about in other communities talking to other groups." **Volunteer Chair, type 1, area a (interview 24)**

"Obviously it makes the groups actually in AREA aware of what we are doing and what they are doing, we know that the situation is and we know what the situation is if we want to work together. Rather than them doing one thing and us doing one thing....we are aware of what's happening." **Volunteer Chair, type 3, area a (interview 3)**

"We have done since but not at the time (visited others). In actual fact now we have seen quite a few organisations...." **Worker, type 3, area a (interview 4)**

"...all the community partners, community workers, community action plan team workers and they all work together to try and get the process forward...in the community partnership areas where it has happened there has again been significant benefits for communities." **Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)**

"I think if you looked at the successful aspects in terms of which worked best, the workshop drew in, it galvanised the health and community people..." **Consultant, type 4, area a (interview 19)**

"I think we have done a lot of partnership working especially with .....and other organisations and there are all different levels to work on local, professional, strategic..."**Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

These bridging ties are important in avoiding social exclusion (Narayan 1999). However, within the literature it is argued that communities need all three types of social capital, bonding, bridging and linking to ensure sustainable development (Stone and Hughes 2001). Some respondents also illustrated that community based research can help in creating linking social capital, that is links to people in powerful positions;

> "Yeah I mean the elected members really got involved and they were excellent."
> Worker, type 1, area b

However, this was only evidenced in limited terms. Engaging in community based research can enhance networks and so contributes to social capital on a number of levels. However, specific types of community based research do not clearly create differential associational linkages. Therefore, the causal connection between community based research and social capital creation is not clear but general linkages are evident. In general, it appears that community based research is especially useful for creating bonding and bridging social capital. It can also have an impact upon linking social capital however participants described this less frequently.

The data from this study suggest that the outcome of social capital creation in terms of the types of networks created through community based research is difficult to predict in practice. The hypothesis in Chapter Three suggests that in areas where type 1 approaches were used, it is plausible to argue that this approach is more likely to create bonding social capital because of the close ties being created within this approach. Comparatively, the areas employing type 4 approaches would again be expected to create more linking networks to people in more powerful positions because of their use of external professionals in their research approach, who would potentially already have existing networks outside of these areas which may be useful for partnerships to tap into. However, the following table demonstrates the types of social capital evidenced within all of the areas and demonstrates that there is not an obvious relationship between the type of research employed in practice and the outcome in relation to networks formed.

Table 9: Community based research and the creation of networks

Fieldwork Area	Bonding	Bridging	Linking
Type 1, area a	Local groups working together.	Working with agencies outside areas. LA Support.	None evidenced
Type 1, area b	Local groups working together	LA support.	Elected members got involved at the end of the process.
Model 2, area a	Increased local knowledge. Integration into community for local researchers	LA Support.	None evidenced.
Type 2, area b	Local groups working together	Difficulties in area about which organisation was taking forward CAP – detrimental to bridging capital.	None evidenced.
Type 3, area a	Groups working together, becoming aware of each others practice	Visiting/looking around other organisations. Own organisation as a model of good practice, open for visitors.	None evidenced.
Type 3, area b	Working with other local group (geographically close).	Input from workers/professionals into development of plan.	None evidenced.
Type 4, area a	Local groups working together.	Process galvanised particular professionals such as health workers. LA support.	None evidenced.
Type 4, area b	Local networking	Partnership working with other areas, with other professionals. LA support.	Strategic development involving funding agencies/regional level working.

This table demonstrates that community based research had the most impact in terms of getting local groups to work together. So the most obvious form of social

capital development is bonding however, this is not always positive, as it is the most inclusive and insular form of social capital. Most areas did manage to foster some form of bridging capital to other organisations outside their own partnership, for example, the local authority. Some areas did successfully draw upon others knowledge and practice and so arguably built more bridging connections. For example, type 1, area a and type 3, area a. In this case bridging capital negates the problems associated with creating high levels of bonding capital as insular connections are lessened. Linking capital also functions to prevent strong ties becoming dominant however, most partnerships failed to demonstrate the development of linking social capital and where it was created the links were at best tenuous. For example, type 1, area b gaining local elected member involvement at the end of the process at a time of publicity begs questions about the continuity of such links.

In summary, the interview data from this study demonstrates that social capital can be produced by engaging in community based research. Social capital is evidenced in relation to increased trust and networking practices. Overall community based research can enhance social capital production especially bonding capital via networking, when such research is applied in the same way as Objective 1 used it in South Yorkshire. Social capital creation is clearer in some areas than others but it is impossible to say what levels actually existed before the community based research was used. A shortcoming of this study is that there is no baseline to work from and so it is impossible to say to what extent social capital was actually enhanced through community based research. The most likely aspect of community development work practice to positively influence social capital creation is the use of concrete projects rather than research with many participants in this study discussing the need for visible impacts within these settings.

Attitudes and Values

A further area that is under explored within the literature relates to attitudes and values, with little reference made to the attitudes and values of participants engaging with community based research. There is some discussion about the values that operate in relation to community based research, specifically in relation to the principles which underpin such approaches. For example, Chapter One highlights that community based approaches adopt postmodernist perspectives in relation to knowledge (Skinner 1996), they are based upon the maxim of partnership working

and rest upon the principle of empowerment (Israel et al 1998). Despite this discussion of an array of principles and defining characteristics associated with community based research, the literature pays little attention to the values of the participants committed to using these approaches. This study reveals that the attitudes and values of participants influenced the practice of community based research.

Throughout the interviews and discussions about community based research, it became clear that actors engaged within such processes had distinct understandings of what community based research was in terms of its definitions, what it meant to them and in terms of its use. There were clear attitudes and values underpinning research. Firstly, common understandings of what research is and perceptions about research differ. Some believe that research within community development work settings should be based upon grass roots premises.

"Community based research...for me it is about getting down to the grassroots, it is about local people, the people who are affected by issues actually getting involved, getting into it and part of that is about looking at what their needs are, what their issues are and using their own knowledge and their own skills to inform their planning. So it is about....it is not about having something done to a group, it is about a group of people actually doing it for themselves...so that is what it means to me." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

"We have always made a point, on anything, not just on this but that we don't get consultants and outside people in unless we absolutely have to .....but we made a point right from the beginning that we don't get people in unless we absolutely have to. We'd rather do it ourselves and make our own mistakes, get guidance where we can but certainly not go to the point of getting other people in to do things." **Volunteer, type 1, area a (interview 23)**

The idea of having grass roots community research was well ingrained into the consciousness of many engaged within the action plan research. There was a sense in which local people carrying out community based research enhanced the goals of development work. This is particularly well reflected through the discussions of research amongst professional workers within these settings.

"I am taking it as read that it is done properly, I am not talking about a short cut process, I am talking about real meaningful research undertaken by people who believe it is necessary and undertaken by principle community members for community principles, power and process about ownership. I think you are talking about....research they can speak with ..they can talk about the issues in their community, you know that we have found this out, we have done this research also found out what people think about this. So we can begin to address these issues in the

community. What we are trying to do is directly related to what we have found out."
Worker supporting all areas (interview 11)

"I think too often we pass you know neighbourhoods that have things done to them. It is very much about an external agency or organisation doing it to them as it were. And in general I think what community based research does is it shifts the balance of power back to the community so it is much more about community influences and having a say in what happens." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

"I don't work like traditional researchers but I can do, I have a bank of people I can tap into but mainly I work in a way for capacity building and get involved in that way." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 15)**

".....it does depend on the consultants used to be fair because if you get somebody really good who takes a community development approach can be extremely effective. What a local community based approach can do is really reach the people we are trying to reach, the people that are most excluded that are not involved and not engaged. And I think a community based approach from the point of the people doing the research can be extremely empowering, you know, a real learning experience......"
Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 15)

Some volunteers engaged in the research also held similar views about how research should be done within community development work settings.

"I just think there is a principle involved that is really really important that if you get out and ask questions about your local area, you need to ask questions yourself. It doesn't want to be somebody else asking questions, somebody else can actually help you, yeah but you have to do it." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

Despite such values underpinning community based research, there was recognition that the difficulties associated with facilitating such approaches can eclipse the values and principles driving effective community based research for development work purposes. The issue of a lack of time available to develop community approaches is described as creating a tension within such work. Such problems can ultimately lead to short cuts in the application of community based approaches.

".....it is truly difficult to find people who will drive the research with the right principles....it is time consuming stuff and all too often the tension between getting the job done and doing it properly, that is in a capacity building way, is too great..."
Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)

The nature of research carried out by some organisations and the information derived from research was also described as problematic. So engaging professionals to undertake research within community settings can mean that the resulting findings are presented in a way that is of no use to the community, in effect creating negative perceptions. In this sense research is understood as a means to communicate

relevant information. Those living within specific areas can achieve this most effectively via grass roots approaches.

> "The important thing is getting useable information and not just information for information's sake..I mean other companies give you the bare minimum of information that is useable and they tend to put statistics in a way that you can only read if you are a statistician. So I like to think it is about creating a document that is worth having and you can follow up in terms of findings, methodology. I think people get ripped off and this is why research gets a bad name, people can' understand what it says and it gets shelved and then it goes back for community consultation, which is what it should be in the first place." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

Employing a grass roots approach can raise issues about volunteers and the use of volunteers in practice. The use of volunteers is again underpinned by specific values and principles and several participants within the processes of community based research in this setting alluded to their values in relation to volunteering.

> "People were paid for the survey work. it was built into the project. I am against the use of volunteers, why should they work for nothing when I don't work for nothing? So it is better to pay people and there is no come back then, you have less problem with motivation and people just interviewing their friends when you pay them." **Consultant, type 2, area a (interview 13)**

> "Most people do it cos they really believe in it, they want to get some skills but I also think there is a disrespect in it to always keep expecting people to do something for nothing as well." **Volunteer, type 1, area b (interview 12)**

It is unsurprising that despite the support for grass roots approaches to community based research there was a counter discourse amongst those engaged with consultation, which related to notions of professionalism. For some, professionalism was the key to successful research within development work settings.

> "...we had consultants.....we wanted professional people to do it to just get the job done and get it done quicker." **Vicar, model 4, area a (interview 20)**

> "... we did everything we were asked to do in the brief and the action plan we put together was I think probably the best action plan the programme directorate saw compared to other communities that put stuff together, you know. So they got an end product that was significantly better than if we hadn't been involved." **Consultant, model 4, area a (interview 19)**

Despite the idea of professionalism being a key component of community research, there was recognition amongst those using consultants that there had to be some

sense of ownership created to enhance development. The value of ownership is demonstrated within participant's accounts. Those actors who had been involved in working with consultants especially discussed the need for capacity building and the need for projects within the community to be owned by those living and working within the locale.

> "I think it is capacity building not consultation….just projects." **Vicar, type 4, area a (interview 20)**

> "…the issue of projects…..they have to be community led and owned to really have an impact and an effect because this is what really changes a community." **Worker, type 4, area b (interview 18)**

Is this because the approach to the research is in fact non-local? This was an issue for one stakeholder,

> "I think where it doesn't work so well is where an external consultant comes in with no local knowledge and sort of clones an approach and it can be very superficial." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

However, within this context locals were still in control of the research despite not doing the empirical work themselves and the consultants employed used various approaches in collecting data, critiquing the view that they simply apply a uniform methodology in all circumstances. Furthermore, in applying an out-sourcing approach to community research there are still some advantages to be gained in terms of controlling and steering the research process.

> "And even if you know they are bringing in consultants, it is about the partnerships being in control and managing them so that the consultant works for them. So it is about having that relationship, having that relationship right in which the partnership is in control and managing the process. It is having that purchasing power you know to steer what they want out of it." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

The values underpinning community based research impact in several ways. Firstly, the values affect the route taken into community research in terms of the approach adopted. Grass roots values can lead to grass roots approaches whereas notions of professionalism can lead to the employment of consultants. However, other factors do come into play in relation to the choice of research approach such as funding and expertise. In addition the type of research adopted is likely to have different outcomes for those involved in such processes. For example, grass roots approaches are likely to build skills amongst volunteers in specific areas of research and

community development work. Comparatively, those involved in employing consultants will develop skills in relation to tendering, selecting companies and management. The question remains as to which approaches are the most useful for community development work purposes because both have value. Indeed, success within community development work can be conceptualised in a number of ways and several different aspects of success emerging from the use of the different types of research were discussed within this study. For some success was about gaining funding.

> "Precisely. That is what we were there to do, to secure that funding so success from our point of view." **Consultant, type 4, area a (interview 19)**

Thus, conceptualisations of success can be related to notions of money, whereas for others the actual research findings in terms of the quality of the product relate to success.

> "I mean I have seen some very poor examples of what consultants have done and you get the sense that they have written the report before they have arrived, before they have done the research....You know it is obviously a standard format that they use." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

For some the process is itself a route to achievement and success in that research builds skills and creates ownership.

> "..and it also gives the partnership and the community some ownership of the results if they have actually been involved in it themselves." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 16)**

The most fundamental aspect of success related to the use of community based research should be sustainability, given that development work aims to create skills and knowledge within local communities. The attainment of some form of sustainability is recognised as a potential outcome emerging from community based research within regeneration for community development work purposes,

> "And although Objective 1 might go in a few years time, those individuals will still be there, still making a difference in their community and still changing things and that is where sustainability comes in." **Objective 1 Stakeholder (interview 15)**

Thus, sustainability is not necessarily about funding within these contexts, it can be related to skills, capacity and empowerment. Given the very nature of a grass roots

approach to community based research, it is arguable that such approaches do build skills sustainability within social regeneration.

In summary, this study reveals that specific attitudes and values underpin notions of research within social regeneration settings including what research is, what it is for and how it should be carried out. Differences exist in terms of these values and such differences can have an impact upon the type of research applied in practice. For example, in some cases grass roots values can lead to grass roots research being employed in which community members carry out research and learn skills as part of the process. Comparatively, professional research may be viewed as a more appropriate tool with external consultants being employed. The different types of research result in different outcomes, with grass roots types facilitating individual research and ownership whereas outsourcing models develop management skills. Different outcomes may well be needed for different areas therefore, it is wise for areas to adopt different research approaches in relation to the outcomes they desire. However, it has to be understood that attitudes, values and understandings of research do play a part in the implementation of community based research.

Summary

In summary this chapter highlights a number of areas in which the findings of this study demonstrate emerging themes not evident within the literature. In addition the chapter begins by exploring findings which suggest that some areas of the literature are problematic and as such require re-examination.

The chapter begins by problematising the literature, unpacking concepts such as equality, trust and legitimacy, which are argued to emerge when community based approaches are applied in practice. The interview data from this study suggests that many participants did not experience equality within the research process that the wider community was distrustful in relation to the consultation. Some participants demonstrated that there are always conflicts of interest when attempting to steer research with a truly local agenda and these primarily relate to power, voice and control. The final issue highlighted when referring to the existing literature is that not all of the benefits described from other fields were demonstrated in the findings of this study.

The chapter discusses several emerging themes that are not touched upon in the literature. Firstly, the nature of community based research within social regeneration contexts was explored. Partnerships often use a variety of different methods to consult with their audience and consultation is seen as a fundamental part of development work. Many participants felt that their approach to consultation was the most appropriate, which is interesting given the different nature of the approaches employed in practice. A number of different skills are perceived as important in developing community based research and a number of different skills result from the various types of research being applied. A common understanding amongst participants was that grass roots research adds more value within the community in terms of empowerment, ownership and skills enhancement. Finally, there was also an understanding that community based research raises issues in relation to inclusion. It is not possible to consult with everyone so not all views are reflected and taken into account.

The second emerging theme is the context of social regeneration. The context of the Objective 1 Programme provided the opportunity for community based research approaches to occur. However, the barriers that exist in practice require tackling in order for such a context to provide not only the opportunities but also the resources and support necessary to facilitate the development of fuller community involvement and participation within community based research.

There is no literature directly covering a programme like Objective 1. Different partnerships experienced Objective 1 in a number of ways. Some felt that Objective 1 were new to the process as an organisation and that this made it difficult and comparatively some felt that the goal posts were constantly changed by Objective 1. The element of time was a factor influencing such relationships because Objective 1 as an organisation was newly developing, as were the partnerships. Despite this some partnerships felt that Objective 1 were supportive and that the process itself was fundamentally difficult irrespective of the organisation directing it. Finally, some organisations that had difficulties with Objective 1 at the beginning of the process went on to develop a good working relationship with the organisation.

The interview data from this study also demonstrates that social capital can be produced by engaging in community based research. Firstly, social capital in the form of trust can be increased through such research if local visible impacts result. So trust

is not just enhanced through partnership working with external agencies. However, not all development work leads to such outcomes and not all outcomes if achieved are positively viewed within host communities. Trust therefore is contextually dependent and if development work is negatively perceived it can lead to a legacy of mistrust and enhance what Fukuyama (2001) calls in-group solidarity, which serves to exclude outsiders.

Secondly, community based research also contributes to the development of networks. The analytical framework developed in this study to explore social capital clearly emphasises the role of networks in the process. Bourdieu's (1999) Marxist view discusses how networks operate to either enhance or constrain success. Putnam's (2000) politically based focus also emphasises the role of networks, distinguishing between bonding, bridging and linking. This study found that community based research can enhance bonding and bridging linkages. It may operate to create linking associations in some contexts but this is not strongly empirically supported in the Objective 1 data. In this context community based research produced bonding linkages as well as bridging connections, suggesting that it is useful for regeneration purposes but this finding should be treated with caution. Given the influence of dynamics reflected in this study, consideration must be paid to the context of community based research practice, which is likely to influence the development of networks. Despite the evidence for network enhancements, the causal connection between specific types of community based research creating identifiable network patterns is not clear. The complicated nature of social capital creates the need for further investigation within social regeneration settings.

Finally, the theme of attitudes and values was considered in this chapter. The literature makes little reference to the attitudes and values of participants who engage with community based approaches rather focusing upon the principles underpinning such approaches. However, the Objective 1 data reveals that specific attitudes and values underpin research and differences exist in terms of these values. Some participants support grass-roots approaches believing it should reflect local involvement and local ownership. Local people should 'do' rather than have research 'done' to them. Participants hold similar views about grass-roots approaches, different value systems affect the way in which volunteers are engaged. For example, some believe volunteers should be paid rather than 'used'. Furthermore, tensions within regeneration such as lack of time and funding can serve to eclipse grass-roots values and result in more short-cut approaches. There was also a counter discourse

of values where grass-roots approaches were valued less than professional research. Professional research was seen as the key to success as long as it was used for development work purposes and 'owned' by the community. These values affect the community based approaches choices in practice. However, values are not the only factors that influence the type of research approach chosen because practical issues have an impact. However, it has to be understood that attitudes and values play a part in the implementation of community based research in practice.

In conclusion, this chapter examines a number of differences between the findings of this study as well and problematised the literature in a number of areas. This chapter asks if community based research can ever allow for full equality in participation, full voice, power and the true local agenda to be heard. The chapter also considers some areas of the literature that the findings of this study did not support for example; not all of the benefits emerge as described in the literature. The chapter examines a number of emerging themes found in this study including the nature of community based research, the context of a social regeneration programme, the Objective 1 programme itself, social capital impacts and attitudes and values. The next chapter turns to drawing together conclusions from this study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY BASED
RESEARCH WITHIN SOCIAL REGENERATION

Chapter Eight – Overview of Research Findings

Summary of community based research within social regeneration

Introduction

The objective of this project was to explore the potential contribution of community-based research within social and economic regeneration programmes. It was promoted by the increasing role of social science evidence informing policy in recent years (see Davies 2001) and the growing interest in more participative ways of producing data. This led to a need to examine the specific role of community based research, and to assess the potential for using lessons from one area within another. Drawing upon the literature in health, social welfare and evaluation to highlight areas for empirical investigation, this study examined the pitfalls and benefits of applying community based research within regeneration. This study was developed in partnership with Objective 1, South Yorkshire, which is a major social and economic regeneration programme providing European Structural funds to achieve a range of development work targets. This study focused upon the Priority Four remit of the programme in which Objective 1 worked with communities as key agents in rebuilding the economy, enhancing people, skills and communities. A qualitative case study of eight partnerships in which community members conducted community based research was carried out to address the research objective. This chapter outlines the findings of this study to address the research questions in the order that they were initially posed.

The first research question asks what are the theoretical, methodological and practical issues in promoting community based research within social and economic regeneration programmes? To address the theoretical aspect of this question, literature from the health, social welfare and evaluation fields was critically explored. This literature was also used to highlight methodological and practical issues cited from other fields to assess if these occurred within regeneration.

The second research question asks whether the context of a social regeneration programme provides the necessary opportunities, resources and support required to facilitate the development of full community involvement and participation within both research and evaluation? This question was addressed through an examination of the South Yorkshire, Objective 1 context and the community based research carried out within this arena for development work purposes.

The third research question focused upon the negative aspects of community based approaches within regeneration. This study established what obstacles existed on what levels and more importantly how these might be overcome. This question was addressed through the interview data by asking participants involved in community based research about the difficulties they experienced. These difficulties were compared to those highlighted in the literature to establish similarities and differences.

More positively, the study examined the benefits of using community based research. The fourth research question asked, do the benefits of community based research as described in the literature apply to individuals involved in social regeneration programmes and how can these benefits be maximized? The literature suggests that the benefits of community based research include skill development (Green et al 2002), the development of social relationships (Schloves et al 1998), positive local outcomes, increased local knowledge (Ayers 1987) as well as strengthened local networks and empowerment at the individual level (Greve 1975). Community based research can also provide accurate and reliable information for decision making (Ritchie 1996). Finally, such approaches can bring together people of diverse skills and knowledge, contribute locally grounded and empirically sound information and increase the likelihood that the community will use the results (Cockerill et al 1998). Again this question was addressed by asking participants to cite positive aspects of their involvement in community based research on both an individual and community level, with the responses compared to the literature.

The final research question examined the links between social capital, community based research and regeneration. Chapter Two demonstrated several links between the concept of social capital and community based research as an approach, arguing that community based research can increase social capital in a number of ways. For example, through enhancing participation and involvement, through developing local associational networks and by increasing trust amongst participants. However, given the ambiguity of the concept and the different definitions, aspects of various authors' work were drawn upon and used as a lens through which to view social capital in relation to community based research. Bourdieu's (1999) structural Marxist emphasis led to a focus upon networks. Putnam's (2000) conceptualisation of networks as bonding, bridging and linking associations further refined the focus of the empirical investigation into networks. Then given the similarity to Putnam's types of networks, Fukuyama's (2001) types of trust, based upon a radius were also used to explore

community based research. Drawing upon the work of these different social capital theorists allowed community based research to be explored empirically in relation to social capital, clarifying the ambiguity of the concept by tracing its community and economic foci to the level of networks of associations and trust. Chapter Three hypothesized about how different types of community based research may affect the development of social capital, arguing that where local people have higher levels of control and participation, bonding linkages are likely to emerge. Comparatively, where the least control and participation exists, linking social capital is more likely to be the expected outcome. This hypothesis was empirically tested during this study to establish the links between social capital and community based research.

Policy implications are also explored, demonstrating lessons to be drawn from using community based research within regeneration and making recommendations. The chapter moves on to discuss the limitations of this study and finally highlights areas where future empirical work can contribute to the knowledge base within this field.

Addressing the Research Questions

Question 1: The theoretical, methodological and practical issues in promoting community based research models within social and economic regeneration programmes.

Theoretical issues in promoting community based research.

The literature in Chapter One demonstrates a number of issues that may impact upon promoting community based research within regeneration on a theoretical level. Power imbalances are frequently discussed within the literature (see Greve 1975, Cockerill et al 1998, Israel et al 1998, Nichols 2002, Taylor 2000) in relation to community based research. For example, professional researchers can be slow to relinquish control (Greve 1975, Cockerill et al 1998). Therefore, power differences should ideally be neutralized (Stringer 1996) to facilitate more effective community based research. Can power differences be neutralised? Who really has control within the process of community based research? Can grass roots, bottom up research really occur?

Given this issue, this study in examining a number of community based research approaches provides evidence that grassroots, bottom up research can occur within regeneration settings. For example, type 1, grassroots volunteer approaches to

community based research were completely controlled by local volunteers, who fully participated in the empirical work. However, other types of research identified within this study reflected less control and participation from non-professionals. Therefore, the issues of collaboration and participation in relation to power and control raised within the literature need consideration because they did influence the practice of community based research in this context. Where professional researchers were employed to carry out the research on behalf of community members, in the out-sourced contract approach (type 4), power differences played a role. Local people, despite employing the professional researchers had limited control over the research and no participation in the empirical work. Theoretically power imbalances are likely to impact in other regeneration contexts because of the types of community based research practiced and the varying levels of control and participation which accompany these. The consequences of which mean that grass-roots research, where community members have full control and participation will not always happen.

Establishing trust between partners developing community based research can also be an issue. The literature discusses the lack of trust that can exist between researchers and non-professionals. Trust can be established in practice according to the literature. Although not impossible, establishing trust is difficult (Israel et al 1998). This is echoed by participants in this study who talked about the problems they experienced when working in partnership with organisations such as Objective 1 and the local authority.

A further question cited in Chapter One asks will community based research findings be accepted by everyone as a legitimate form of inquiry (Stringer 1996)? How can concerns about scientific integrity, reliability and validity (Telfair and Mulvihill 2000) within theses studies be addressed? In the case of this study, accepting the form of research as reliable and valid was not a concern because Objective 1 as a funding agency had commissioned the research process as part of their action plan initiative. Therefore, in cases where funding agencies commission community based research, it is unlikely that the acceptability of either the form or the findings of such research will be questioned. However, funding bodies adopt different approaches in practice, so the acceptability of such research theoretically remains a problem.

Furthermore, a number of issues may theoretically arise as a result of current regeneration discourse. Ultimately, community based research can not be examined without reference to current sociological and political discourse. Within all four types

of community based research identified in this study, participants in the process were seen as community representatives by themselves and by Objective 1 staff. Such representation requires examination. Community representation is an area where problems may arise. A question, which requires addressing, includes who actually represents the community and in some cases how the community is defined (Israel et al 1998)? Gaining representation and managing representatives' views is a complex area. This study demonstrates that only a small number of people were involved in each case study area in both the community based research and the partnerships, irrespective of area differences. Representatives consisted of retired professionals and employed professionals, some with development work knowledge and experience and others without. Some representatives were unemployed, using community based research to gain skills and experience whilst others were employed in local businesses and keen to encourage further investment in their local community. Irrespective of the range of community members working across the partnership areas, representation and voice remain problematic because some sections of the community were excluded.

Secondly, community is another discourse employed within policymaking often without recognition that communities are diverse (Taylor 2000). Community is often considered positive and used to evoke ideas of co-operation, lack of conflict and democratic decision-making (Robson 2000). However, communities fracture and are sites of exclusion as well as inclusion (Crow and Allen 1994). Communities included in this study were divided in a number of ways. For example, racially, across social classes and through geographical divisions within the partnership areas. Therefore, 'community' based research may not be about homogenous ideals. Such research could be used to support a single section of a community, whilst marginalising and excluding others. Community based research is often positively viewed as uniting communities however, such an approach could function to fracture communities by emphasizing existing divisions. Negative consequences of community based research are likely to occur when community groups operate as closed structures. In this study there were limited numbers of people involved despite the suggested 'open' nature of the partnerships examined. Within regeneration such organisations can and do operate as closed shops and this remains a threat, both theoretically and practically. Gaining involvement can be challenging, for example finding the stakeholders and convincing them of the benefits of participation (Lincoln 1998). Participation can be a problem within any research project and in any social regeneration setting. Most community based research and evaluation approaches

assume that active participation will be achieved from community members and other stakeholders. However, this may not always be the case. Therefore, participation requires critical scrutiny as this chapter later suggests.

Given the theoretical problems with participation, the partnerships in which participation occurs also require investigation. Partnerships are the current medium for regeneration and are often described in unproblematic terms. Theoretically partnerships have the capacity to support tyrannical decision making and the reproduction of inequalities (Jones 2003). Although no evidence of such practice was found in this study, these issues should not be ignored as they occur in other contexts.

A further theoretical issue is the context in which community based research and regeneration occurs. Research and development operate within a wider political climate. Therefore, understanding political context is necessary to give clues about the acceptance and support of specific programmes (Nichols 2002). Objective 1, South Yorkshire is an organisation that gave credence to community based research and active community involvement within this process. However, other regeneration initiatives may adopt different development work strategies that do not provide the space for such approaches.

Finally, sustainability remains a theoretical concern. Without a clear link between research evidence and the effective communication of the findings, the sustainable impacts of any community research project are questionable. Is the production of research findings the end of the process? What about impact? The findings of this study illustrate that community based research can contribute to skill sustainability and therefore have an impact at the level of the individual. If participants are left with increased skills in a number of areas then community based research has left a sustainable imprint these skills can be applied elsewhere for example, in further development work. However, research alone was not enough for many participants who wished to see an impact in the community in terms of projects, jobs and buildings and felt that this is what defines sustainability. The partnerships examined in this study all completed community based research and used the findings to develop action plans with agreed targets. These targets included projects, job creation and the acquisition of premises. However, not all targets idenitifed could be funded by Objective 1 but the research evidence demonstrated within the action plans allowed partnerships to search elsewhere for further funding. Hence, there was

some evidence of sustainability following on from the community based research conducted within this context. However, the extent to which projects and jobs will continue after Objective 1 as a funding agency ceases to exist was not established.

Methodological issues in promoting community based research

Methodologically a number of issues are likely to influence the practice of community based research and evaluation. There may be a lack of research skills within partnerships and the community. People need research skills in order to carry out projects. Generally it can be argued that community members do not have the required level of skill. People can be taught some skills however, other issues may arise during the course of the research process if adequate support is not available for novice researchers. Do community members possess the necessary analytical skills to undertake research? This study found that although participants possessed a range of transferable skills, these often did not include research skills. However, participants were able to learn from both training and participation in research. Lack of experience is also a methodological issue. Participants in community based research may be lacking experience in terms of applying research in practice, even if they have a range of appropriate skills to undertake such work. Hence, in undertaking community based research they may encounter difficulties and this was evidenced within this study. For example, the lack of research experience meant pilot studies were overlooked in some areas and that time management of community based approaches was problematic in others.

Secondly, the literature discusses the complexity of measurement associated with the evaluation of development work initiatives. Community change initiatives are complex and aim to achieve developments in several areas including the social, economic and political. No evaluation design with finite time, money and human resources can examine all of the possible relationships between activities, outcomes and contexts within a community (Gambone 1998). This issue is relevant to the evaluation of any regeneration initiative. However, this study cannot offer analytical insight into this methodological barrier to evaluation because the community based research examined was carried out for different purposes. However, methodological complexity needs consideration when evaluating regeneration initiatives and therefore should not be ignored.

Finally, there is a lack of both literature and empirical evidence about community based approaches being applied within social regeneration contexts and therefore a corresponding lack of successful research examples and models of good practice. This can hinder the development of community based research as an approach because of the lack of evidence for new users to interpret and follow. However, this study provides some insight into community based research within regeneration and therefore, may in part remedy this problem.

Practical issues in promoting community based research

There are several practical issues that impact upon community based research. The issues touched upon in the literature are borne out in the research evidence here. Time limitations are a practical problem in all research but perhaps more so in community based research because of the establishment of trust and good working relationships amongst participants (Israel et al 1998). This study found that time was a problem for many participants both in terms of volunteering and for achieving deadlines. For example, some volunteers were employed in full time work not associated with the partnership, leaving less time for their participation within community based research. Furthermore, Objective 1 as a funding agency created a deadline for the submission of the community action plans in the middle of the process, which created problems for partnerships suddenly faced with a deadline. Despite this change in the timetable, all of the areas in this study completed their community based research and community action plans on time. They did however take different lengths of time to finish their research with more experienced partnerships completing sooner. Not all areas met the deadline, although these areas were not examined within this study.

So leaving enough time for community based research and setting clear and unchanging deadlines is a practical problem. Objective 1 did initially allow community partnerships an unspecified amount of time to develop their research but later introduced a deadline because of the time restrictions imposed upon them as an organisation. Hence, deadlines and time limitations are likely to influence community based research in other social regeneration contexts due to the way that funding regimes are managed. Furthermore, any agency dedicating money and resources into community based research will demand a visible outcome such as a report by a specific point in time. This will affect community members involved in the research by decreasing the time available for them to access training, plan, deliver and analyse

research findings. Timing is difficult and a particular issue might be the starting point of the group undertaking research because some will require more time than others.

Space can also be an issue in terms of regeneration initiatives being able to accommodate community based research as an approach. On a practical level, social regeneration initiatives have multiple and competing demands on both their time and resources. Institutional demands can make it difficult for people in organisations to devote time and energy to community based research (Israel et al 1998). In the context of this research Objective 1 as an organisation did create space for community based research by allowing communities to embrace different approaches and through supporting partnerships engaged with the process. However, this space was difficult to carve out when Objective 1 were newly established as an organisation because of the other demands they were facing. For example, employing and training new staff whilst establishing policy and procedures. Although this issue was resolved once Objective 1 was running more efficiently, it still may influence community based research in other contexts.

A further practical problem relates to funding and not just in terms of the lack of money often described within regeneration contexts. It is common within regeneration initiatives to have time limited funding therefore any allocated money has to be spent by a specific point in time or it is clawed back. So if community based research is funded but time restrictions are applied, the research may not get off the ground. Community based research may also face barriers in obtaining funding as well as meeting the expectations of funding institutions (Israel et al 1998). In this study some participants felt that Objective 1 had high expectations of partnerships. Many were at embryonic stages of development, with little knowledge or experience and so found understanding the rules of funding as well as regeneration 'speak' difficult. Furthermore, the funding available to support the process of community based research varied considerably across different areas. Some areas carried out community based research with little or no budget whilst others were able to access funding in large amounts. For example, both type 4 areas, employed consultants after gaining over twenty thousand pounds each from their local authority to pay for their consultation. Other local authorities unsurprisingly were less generous. Funding remains an issue because community based approaches like all research, require resourcing. Indeed, resources more generally may be problematic. This study found that some community partnerships, especially

newly established and developing partnerships were lacking in many basic resources including buildings and staff.

Furthermore, for participants to effectively engage within community based research and evaluation, specialist training and support should be provided yet practically this may not always be possible. Local people require a high level of training and support from the organisation facilitating the process. Objective 1 did provide some support in terms of signposting participants to relevant training providers and funders as well as specific action plan support staff. Objective 1 also established the Academy for Community Leadership to deliver specialized training provision as requested by local partnerships. However, the Academy was launched post community action plan submission and therefore post community based research. Ideally such provision should be available at the time of the research but given the demands upon regeneration organizations this is not always possible.

Finally involvement is another area in which practical problems arise. Participants across all of the types of research examined within this study cited both involvement and a lack of interest from the wider community as problematic. Indeed, all of the types of research were directed and driven forward by a key number of people within each area suggesting that involvement can be problematic when applying community based approaches to research within social regeneration. Involvement is cited as problematic within other fields therefore, it is a practical problem within all community based research projects.

In summary the key findings in relation to this research question are as follows. In theoretical terms a number of areas require caution and critical scrutiny. For example, power imbalances can affect the practice of community based research and affect the likelihood of true grassroots research taking place. Grassroots research can occur within regeneration but power relations may still affect the process. Furthermore, not all funding agencies will adopt the approach taken by Objective 1 in this study. Where this is the case, the acceptability of community based research findings may well be questioned. Both representation and participation remain theoretically important. If a small group of people represents the community the question remains as to who is excluded. Such research can exclude some sections of the community by overlooking their participation, representation and views. Finally, the context in which community based research and regeneration are situated must also be given

attention. Theoretically the possibility is always present that such approaches will not be adopted and supported within certain political climates.

Methodological consideration also needs to be paid to a number of issues. Firstly, any evaluation of regeneration initiatives will have to resolve the complexity of measurement associated with such a project. Secondly, community members carrying out such research require research skills. Many volunteers will not begin the process with research training or knowledge. Training will often be necessary, which requires both time and funding. There is also a lack of literature in regeneration meaning that there is a gap in evidence for new users of community based approaches to follow. The findings of this study will create some lessons for practice, whilst the literature in health, social welfare and evaluation can also offer insights.

Finally, a number of practical issues were highlighted in this study. Time limitations can have an impact upon community based research therefore, participants need a clear and unchanging framework in which to work; to restrict the problems associated with suddenly imposed deadlines. In addition, funding agencies even when supportive of such approaches may find the space to support them an issue because of the multiple and competing demands they have to deal with. Another practical issue relates to the money available for community based research. Even if sufficient monetary resources are available, then the time limits imposed upon spending this may create problems for participants. The needs of participants can often be underestimated. For example, the need for practical training should not be overlooked and this needs to be available at the time of the research to help those involved. Finally, the practical problems associated with involvement should not be ignored, with a lack of involvement and interest cited across all of the areas involved in this study.

Question 2: Can the context of a social regeneration programme provide the necessary opportunities, resources and support required to facilitate the development of full community involvement and participation within both research and evaluation?
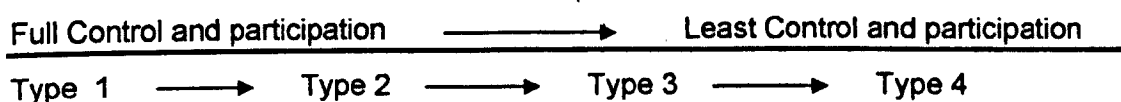
The Objective 1, South Yorkshire context did provide the opportunity for the development of community based research specifically within the remit of the community action plan process. All of the areas involved in producing local action

plans had to carry out some form of consultation within their local area to establish community need and to prioritise projects for developing their local area. The use of the local action plan as a strategy for engaging the community gave individual areas some degree of choice in terms of how they decided to consult with the community. As a result there were four broad types of consultation used in this context. The table below illustrates the different community based approaches empirically investigated within this study.

Type of Research	Characteristics
Grassroots Volunteer Approach	Complete control over process by local volunteers who design research, carry it out, analyse data, write a report and disseminate findings. Full participation in empirical work by volunteers.
Grassroots Contract Approach	Local people do only the data collection aspect of the research, in either a voluntary capacity or as paid workers. Paid workers and consultants design the process, analyse the information, write reports and retain control. Participation in some aspects of the empirical work such as the data collection and limited data analysis by volunteers.
In–House Contract Approach	Paid workers employed within the local area carry out the consultation and control it with limited volunteer input. No participation in the empirical work by volunteers.
Out-Sourced Contract Approach	External professional help is brought into the area to undertake the consultation. Local people pay the consultants and are in effect their employer but they have limited control in terms of the actual research. No participation in the empirical work by volunteers.

These types of research are based upon a continuum of control and participation held by volunteers and lay researchers involved in the approaches. Some types of research had higher levels of volunteer control and participation in the empirical work undertaken within the community partnerships.

Figure 1. The continuum of control and participation

Full Control and participation	⟶	Least Control and participation

Type 1 ⟶ Type 2 ⟶ Type 3 ⟶ Type 4

Thus, those in type 1 areas had full control over the entire research process from its inception to its completion and participated in the whole research process. Type 2 participants had less control because they only carried out the data collection aspect of the research but did not organise or design the strategy. A number of participants had some involvement with the data analysis but this involvement was limited. Type 3 participants again had less control because they were stakeholders in the process, which was actually carried out by professionals on the behalf of the community. Finally, type 4 participants had the least control because although they contracted and managed consultants and as such were stakeholders, the consultants were external to the area. So type 4 volunteers were not involved with the data gathering, analysis or any practical aspect of the research process.

The South Yorkshire Objective 1 context, with the use of action planning allowed individuals involved in such processes to apply a range of community based research strategies. Indeed, many of those interviewed who had participated within community based research felt that these methods were appropriate for social regeneration settings and purposes. There was also a range of support introduced by Objective 1 as an organisation. For example, support workers to help in developing the action plans, a template for advice on how to approach developing the plans, links into specialist advice and training services and signposting to relevant agencies for funding.

However individuals faced many difficulties when applying these approaches in practice. This implies that although social regeneration settings can facilitate the opportunity for individuals and groups to develop and engage in different types of community based research, full support and involvement is not always necessarily in place. This confirms the findings discussed in the evaluation literature in which community based approaches to research are more frequently applied and widely reported (see Schroes et al 2000, Lincoln 1998, Ayers 1987). Involvement was conceptualised in a number of different ways by participants interviewed in this study. For example, involvement can be attendance at meetings or practical involvement in regeneration projects. It can be engagement in the running of the partnership, such as a position on the Management Group or sub-group. Involvement can also take the

form of volunteer work experience and training. So there are a variety of types of involvement in regeneration as well as in community based research. Despite this all participants felt that there could have been more involvement in both the research and the development of the action plans. This study demonstrates that within each area there was a core group of dedicated people who drove the process of community based research, leaving the concept of full involvement open to interpretation. The different conceptualisations of involvement demonstrate that community members may not wish to become involved in all of the processes associated with regeneration including community based research.

In addressing this research question, the context of a social regeneration programme can, despite the issues and barriers that exist provide the necessary opportunities, resources and support required to develop community based research. Hence models of community based research applied in other fields can be used within regeneration. However, participation and involvement may vary across contexts especially given the range of ways in which they are conceptualised.

Question 3: How do the negative aspects of community based research impact within social regeneration fields? What obstacles exist, on what levels? Can these be potentially overcome?

Within the literature discussed in Chapter One, it is recognised that there are no recipes for such approaches, just techniques and tools and even the best tools do not ensure a worthy product (Berk & Rossi 1990). As a result community based research is not a magic solution within local settings because in adopting it as an approach, problems can occur. The interview data from this study reveals a number of problems faced by individuals implementing and adapting community based research within social regeneration. These have been touched upon in answering the question of theoretical, methodological and practical issues which impact within settings when community based research is promoted as an approach and are now discussed in more detail.

In many cases individuals engaged with community based research felt that they were lacking in control and that their own lack of experience in terms of using research also compounded the situation. In many areas the partnerships engaging in

the community development work were newly established and at embryonic stages of development. This clearly had an impact upon how they approached and experienced community based research because in many cases they had not undertaken previous consultation work for funding applications or for any other purposes. In comparison the more developed partnerships had often carried out consultation for funding applications and to add to their own local knowledge and were also well versed with funders expectations. This lack of experience in both community development work and carrying out community based research led to technical difficulties in terms of the research. For example, question formation was one difficulty described by those new partnerships using a survey method. Although research experience is not thought of as part of successful community development, it often is necessary because funders require evidence of need for applications and this is generally achieved through consultation in some form. The new partnerships in this context were only just beginning to apply for funding and therefore were only just beginning to employ community consultation and community based research approaches within their localities. Thus, the lack of research experience within these partnerships created a number of problems. Many areas were also faced with practical difficulties in terms of organising the research especially as the partnerships were still at an early stage of development. This meant that they often did not have the most basic facilities such as a building in which to work. Given the organisation and time that many individuals invested into developing local research, some were disappointed by a lack of interest from the more general community. Low response rates for example were highlighted as a problem in some areas.

The lack of time available was well cited in the interviews as one of the main problems faced by those carrying out community based research within social regeneration. Overall the interview data revealed that alongside the lack of time available to develop and carry out community based research, the main difficulties faced by those involved in the processes of community based research related to funding. Thus, individuals discussed a lack of money available to support community based research as a barrier to the process. The issue of value for money when external professional consultants were employed was also highlighted.

Participants discussed the expectations held by funders, the complexity of their relationship with funders and the difficulties inherent in this. In addition to the issues associated with funding, practical difficulties and the lack of experience and control, participants cited a lack of involvement in the process of community based research

as one of the main barriers to its success. An assumption of community based research is that individuals will become interested and involved and this is not always the case within social regeneration as the interview data reveals. Clearly, this has implications for such approaches in terms of representation and voice. If local people do not become involved in such processes then whose voice is being projected towards funding bodies? Community member's views can often be marginalised in such circumstances (Schroes et al 2000, Simpson et al 2003). Issues of representation and voice relate to the way in which partnerships work in practice. Partnerships are said to be the most effective way of working and developing good regeneration practice and this overlooks the problems associated with their practice (Taylor 2000). Partnership working was highlighted as problematic by some of those engaged in community based research in this study. For example, getting partners together and distributing power to community representatives were both problematic. Some organisations simply did not want to work in partnership with community groups. Furthermore, many people involved in community based research felt that there was a lack of impact following such research in terms of the wider community and this was a barrier to success because individuals need to see results. Participants discussed the level of planning required to deliver visible projects and the lack of understanding of this within the wider community. Finally, one respondent raised the question of sustainability. Many areas had successfully used community based research to develop their local action plans and had begun to access funding to achieve some of the goals of the plans. However, the funding is time limited and will eventually run out. The question of what happens to partnerships once this happens is left unanswered.

So in summary, the main barriers highlighted in this study were the lack of control held by participants and their own lack of experience. The time available was also discussed alongside the complexities inherent in the relationship between the participants and the representatives of funding agencies.

Overcoming problematic aspects of community based research

So how can these problems be overcome? Firstly, a clearer and unchanging time structure is needed to allow communities the space to develop their research. Thus, deadlines need to be articulated at the beginning of the process and where possible should not be changed. Initially Objective 1 allowed partnerships to develop their research and action plans at their own pace. However, a deadline was then imposed.

If this deadline had been set at the outset of the process rather than being imposed during the process, then community groups would at least have been clear about the time available and the funders expectations. This may well have improved the process for both funders and partnerships, with partnership members being less likely to argue that funders where continually changing the rules and moving the goal posts.

Furthermore, the establishment of appropriate support mechanisms is a prerequisite to enhance community based research in practice. Thus, relevant training providers and experienced researchers should be available for communities so that they can gain more control over the process and develop their experience in a supported environment. Support should ideally encompass funding, training, signposting and dedicated workers available to provide advice and guidance.

Funders also need to lower their expectations in terms of the potential achievements of communities who may well have no regeneration experience and a limited understanding of the jargon and processes associated with community development. For example, they need to allow adequate time for partnerships to become established and operational. Volunteers often require training and experience of employment practices, funding agencies and projects. Participants also require basic facilities such as a comfortable and appropriate place to meet, access to telephones, computers and photocopying facilities. Such basic needs are assumed to be in place by funders, however if partnerships are beginning to develop then they may not have such basic facilities. Consequently, funders should be more discriminating about how they work with some areas because what is applicable to some areas will not be to others. As this study has highlighted many of the areas involved in conducting community based research were at different stages. Therefore, a 'one approach suits all' attitude to both funding and development will clearly be more problematic for some partnerships than others because they have further to travel in the first instance. Objective 1 did attempt to deliver tailored provision to the different communities with varying perceptions of the success of this approach held by participants.

Communities should also be able to access funding whilst engaging in research. Firstly, to assist with the cost of the research. Secondly, to allow them to disseminate their findings to the wider community, keeping them informed about the progress of development work in order to increase local knowledge and increase potential involvement. In this study some communities did successfully access funding but this varied according to area. Irrespective of the amounts of funding partnerships

harnessed, at the end of the research process all were struggling to pay for dissemination associated costs such as photocopying and postal charges. Ideally more equally distributed financial provision should be the norm to support community based research as a process and to allow more active dissemination to take place. Funding agencies could also adopt a more active role in the dissemination process. For example, by using their web pages and newsletters to illustrate successful research.

Funding was not however the only difficulty faced by partnerships doing community based research. A range of technical research problems were described by participants, so how can these be overcome? Technical problems such as the wording of questions, lack of knowledge in terms of carrying out pilot studies and writing reports can be addressed through appropriate training and support being made available to those undertaking community based research, especially those with no previous experience.

Many of the difficulties associated with community based research could have been ironed out, if more time had been available for those carrying out the research. This would have allowed partnerships to access more relevant training, to search out support, both financial and technical and to overcome technical issues through practice. However, this lack of time is likely to remain a problem in practice because social regeneration organisations work in time limited ways due to the organisation of funding.

Therefore to overcome these barriers, the following measures should be applied when conducting community based research in all settings. Adequate time should be allowed so that participants can complete the process and deadlines should be overtly introduced at the beginning of the process. Tailored support is necessary because of both the varying capabilities and experience of participants. The process of community based research should also be funded and participants require basic provisions in terms of the necessary prerequisites for conducting research in terms of facilities.

Question 4: Do the benefits of this approach, as described in the literature apply to individuals involved in social regeneration programmes? How can these benefits be maximized?

The literature describes a range of benefits resulting from the use of community based research. So do these benefits apply to social regeneration settings? Some participants describe empowerment as a result of participating in community based research. Indeed, empowerment was just one benefit described at the level of the individual. Other benefits highlighted by participants in the research process included learning, a sense of pride and a range of transferable skills. For example, increased confidence, getting to know people in the local area and specific skills developed through training.

However, the benefits resulting from community based research practices were not just at the level of the individual. Many participants described the positive aspects of such processes at the level of the community. For example, they talked about increased local knowledge and the resulting investment in the local community. Indeed, the processes of community based research were entwined with and described as fundamental to the development of local partnerships, which are key organisations within social regeneration in terms of employment practices, obtaining funding and establishing community development practice. The process of carrying out community based research also had an impact upon the development of community work in relation to creating goals and targets as well as giving those individuals involved in such work a sense of ownership. Given the social capital framework adopted to investigate community based research, this finding that human capital in the form of skills is developed through community based research fits with Coleman's (1998) understanding that human capital production broadly enhances social capital production.

Furthermore, within current regeneration, partnership working is fundamental to success and is a key objective of much funding and government policy. The interview data from this study highlights how community based research as an approach within social regeneration can assist with the development of networks. Although networking is important within current regeneration practice, partnerships still require volunteers and local involvement to be truly grass roots in their approach to development work. The values held by partnership members will also influence the extent to which grass-roots approaches are realised. Although some participants

support grass-roots approaches, others favour professional research and this may influence levels of involvement. Despite different values in several areas, developing community based research as a community development tool had resulted in a perceived increase in involvement from local people as well as a higher degree of commitment from some of the volunteers who had been engaged with the research work.

Maximising benefits

So how can these benefits be maximised? The main way in which benefits can be maximised is through reducing any existing barriers. Planning for community based research is crucial to allow for enough time for the process and any difficulties emerging can then be ironed out. The provision of specialist support, training and financial assistance is also the key in maximising the benefits at both the level of the individual and the community. If barriers to community based research are reduced, such approaches could be used more often and so be further developed as a tool for social regeneration purposes and development work practice.

Question 5: What, if any are the links between social capital, community based research and regeneration?

There are a number of theoretical links between community based research and social capital described in Chapter Two. Chapter Two demonstrates that social capital has much to offer regeneration initiatives. The role of social capital is seen to be important in achieving success within regeneration contexts (see MacGillivray and Walker 2000) in terms of creating increased trust, building different networks and building capacity for change. An examination of four authors who discuss the concept of social capital allowed for the development of a social capital framework adapting aspects of their approaches through which to view social capital in relation to community based research. Interpreting the literature in Chapter Two highlights how the processes associated with engaging in community based research can theoretically enhance local associational relationships and networks. Bourdieu's (1999) use of networks as a resource and Putnam's (200) bonding, bridging and linking conceptualisation allowed community based research to be explored in terms of these networks. Community based research theoretically can create bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Bonding capital, related to common identity, can be created through the use of community based research to address shared problems such as how to drive forward local development work. Bridging capital,

weak connections between associates and acquaintances can be enhanced through community based research, which draws upon local contacts, professionals and researchers to assist with the process. Linking capital, connections to those in power, can be achieved when community based research engages funding agencies and local authorities in support of such work.

Furthermore, trust can potentially be enhanced by carrying out community based research, allowing people to voice opinions whilst informing them about development plans. Transparency and information exchanges are both important in building local trust (Begum 2003). Fukuyama's (2001) discussion of in-group solidarity and narrow radius of trust create understanding of deprived areas, which are unable to connect to external resources because of distrust. Community based research as a regeneration mechanism can serve to enhance trust within such contexts when the research has clearly visible and positive outcomes. This suggests that such approaches can be an effective tool through which to broaden trust. These factors are all important in creating successful local regeneration. So are the links within the literature evidenced empirically within this study?

Firstly, community based research can enhance both local relationships and trust within some geographical locations. Community based approaches can be better received than traditional research and tend to work to address any existing research fatigue. The increased role of local participants is central to this process. It is simply not just local people undertaking community based research that has a positive impact but more specifically, the nature of the research is important. If people believe they will see a concrete impact from participating in such research they are more likely to engage with the research. This study found that many participants felt that the results from the research were as important as the process itself. This was because the research in this context was instrumental in getting funding into partnerships and the community more generally. Theoretically this means that external agencies could carry out research on behalf of community partnerships rather than using community based approaches. However, this would not have the same effect as community based research upon skill development and capacity building. To enhance trust within social regeneration by using community based approaches, the research whatever approach it embodies needs to result in a positive and visible local impact. The results also need to be clearly and strongly disseminated so that local people feel well informed about events within their area. If

people are consulted with repeatedly with little dissemination of results and no visible impact then irrespective of the type of research used, it is likely that such an approach will raise expectations and then deflate them. The partnership areas in the Objective 1 context with a history of failed development work exhibited higher levels of mistrust and more in-group solidarity as a result of their experience. Research therefore if associated with failed development work can also produce negative effects. This could result in higher levels of mistrust towards further research and development work activity and so have a negative impact upon stocks of social capital.

This study also suggests that the context in which the research occurs is relevant to the development of specific aspects of social capital. For example, within some geographical locations higher levels of trust already exist ensuring that any type of community based research will be more positively accepted when compared to areas with lower levels of trust. Some participants within this study recognised the importance of context. Thus, it is likely that pre-existing levels of social capital within the areas undertaking research influenced the type of community based approach adopted in practice. For example, some areas had higher levels of mistrust which may have influenced the type of research approach adopted. However, given that a baseline of existing social capital levels was not established within this study, the extent of this influence remains unknown. Irrespective of this, the findings of this study suggest that context can not be overlooked. Therefore, there is little guarantee that using community based research will increase trust within social regeneration settings. Finally, it is important to note that although social capital as a concept is theoretically well grounded, it has a number of definitions and poses several problems in measurement terms.

Secondly, community based research can have a positive impact upon networking within social regeneration and therefore contributes to both the development and continuation of different associational linkages thus, fostering social capital. Within some areas bonding social capital was enhanced through people actually working together as part of the processes of community based research. The processes also had a positive impact in terms of bridging social capital between existing groups and existing areas undertaking community based research and community development, helping people to create links with others both inside and outside of their geographical location. Indeed, some respondents also illustrated that community

based research can help in creating linking social capital, that is links to people in powerful positions. Engaging in community based research can enhance the practice of networking and so contribute to social capital on a number of levels.

However, the hypothesis illustrated in Chapter Three suggesting that different types of community based research would lead to differential social capital outcomes in terms of networking, was not demonstrated empirically within this study. Therefore, the suggestion that type 1, grassroots research is more likely to produce bonding networks whilst type 4, external contract research will least to linking social capital is not evidenced. So what can this study tell us about the links between community based research and networking? Community based research contributes to social capital development through the enhancement of networks. Yet the links between specific types of community based research and the development of networks are not causally clear. As a result these links can only be discussed on a general level. In general, it appears that community based research is especially useful for creating bonding and bridging social capital. It can have an impact upon linking social capital however this was described less often. The creation of high levels of bonding social capital does not always bring socially good benefits. For example, some values held in deprived areas may hold people back as they feel content with the familiarity and support they find locally (Atkinson and Kintrea 2004). Strong ties also facilitate exclusion (Portes and Landolt 1996). So caution is advisable when attempting to enhance social capital stocks. Many participants in this study created bonding links but correspondingly achieved bridging links, which mitigate against the more negative aspects of bonding connections. Whether this would be the case in all regeneration contexts using community based research remains open to question.

In terms of social capital development the findings of this study suggest that community based research can enhance levels of social capital but this depends upon both the nature of the research and the context in which it is applied. For example, some areas have higher levels of trust than others at the outset of the process therefore, it is easier to extend trust in such circumstances. Furthermore, some research approaches gain higher levels of involvement that others and engagement is important in social capital formation according to Putnam (1003). Limited engagement can lead to the development of exclusive forms of social capital. Trust can also be enhanced through the process of community based research, if the outcome of the research is highly visible and positive in impact. However, community based research can have a negative effect upon trust, if expectations are raised and

subsequently not met. Finally, the strongest empirical links in evidence within this study between community based research and social capital relate to networking. Community based research can create bonding, bridging and linking networks and so can contribute to successful community development work practice. However, specific types of community based research do not clearly lead to the development of different networks. Finally, existing levels of social capital in partnership areas can influence the type of research approach adopted. Areas with higher levels of trust may be more likely to use grass-roots approaches, whilst those with lower levels may apply professional research in an attempt to increase trust.

Policy Implications

What are the policy implications of these findings? The findings of this study can be used to inform policy in a number of areas. Firstly, in relation to social regeneration, community based research does fit with community development work goals and is applicable for use in social regeneration contexts. Thus, the literature from other fields can be used to inform community based research practice within regeneration.

Secondly, community based research can also contribute to skill sustainability. There are several types of community based research that can be used in practice, which affect the skills developed during the process. Therefore, if the development of certain skills is the goal of employing community based research then specific approaches should be applied in practice. For example, individual skills such as research expertise are more likely to emerge from applying type 1 and 2 approaches.

Thirdly, a number of benefits emerge from the use of community based research irrespective of the approach applied in practice so if partnership working, increased local knowledge, the creation of goals and targets, the collation of information to support decision making are required, then all approaches potentially create such benefits. However, this study found a common understanding amongst participants that grass roots types of research add more value in relation to development work practice. Recognition needs to be given to the attitudes and values of participants carrying out community based research. Some hold preferences for grass-roots approaches whilst others believe that professionalism is a good quality. Consequently, policy-makers should not encourage and use professional approaches in areas where grass-roots values are clear because this may negate any positive outcomes emerging from the research by creating a culture of mistrust. Therefore,

people with some responsibility for policy need to be clear as to why they want community based research, the values that underpin it in different contexts as well as the desired outcome of using such an approach within regeneration settings.

In terms of the Objective 1 South Yorkshire context, the purpose of community based research made a difference as to whether or not it played a role in developing social capital. This suggests that doing research alone is not enough to enhance social capital. However, community based research can assist in developing social capital by informing the development of practical projects as a result of local data gathered. The process of doing community based research can create different types of social capital. The contribution of different types of community based research was not causally clear in this study. However, in general bonding and bridging networks were often created and on occasion linking. This took place within the Objective 1 context because there were forty areas across South Yorkshire, often neighbouring each other carrying out research for the same purposes of developing a community action plan at similar points in time. However, this may not be the case in other areas and if community based research is employed locally in isolation then the social capital benefits that emerge may be different to those described here.

The need for further empirical work is clear from this study with context being important in terms of the suitability of community based research in developing social capital. Some areas are at different starting points in terms of their levels of trust and the dynamics operating in the area to either enhance or constrain social capital development. Therefore, different starting points mean that positive outcomes can not always be guaranteed, although some level of pre-research training could be used to tackle the issue of different starting points in areas without development work experience. Finally, existing levels of social capital stocks also influence the process of community based research in relation to the type of approach used in practice. For example, in areas where distrust existed, following on from previous failed development work, partnerships opted for type 4 research, in which professionals were employed in an attempt to reduce such opinions.

Finally, within this study involvement in community based research came primarily from volunteer type individuals. Volunteers were made up of a variety of types of people including both retired and employed professionals, with no development work experience, unemployed community members and local business owners. Incentives and rewards were often used as part of attempts to encourage

involvement by a number of partnerships but all areas reported problems both gaining and sustaining involvement. The measurement of involvement also depended upon how it was conceptualised because it can be viewed in a number of different ways. For example, attendance at meetings, membership numbers and active volunteers were all interpreted as involvement. These perceptions of involvement are likely to emerge in other development settings. The question of whether full involvement is possible remains unanswered because consultation and research by its very nature often only takes place with a specific set of people. Furthermore, as this study demonstrates community based research tends to be driven by a core group of local people and this can raise questions about inclusion. Despite the different understandings of involvement, if policy makers want to deliver bottom up regeneration, gain local people's trust and active participation, community based research is one mechanism that can be applied in practice to achieve this aim.

Doing community based research is worthy within regeneration contexts despite the problems that can be associated with the approach. This is because community based research fits with the very ethos and the basic goals of community development work. Community based research can assist in the development of local skills, relationships and knowledge whilst providing evidence to facilitate both action and change within deprived communities. Research findings can demonstrate need and allow individuals to campaign for what they want, which is key to successful local regeneration. Community based research can also assist local individuals and groups such as partnerships to achieve social justice and self-determination. The approach encourages community members to both work and learn together. Community based research requires and facilitates at least to a certain extent, active participation.

Finally, the approach may create more sustainable communities, through building local skill levels, assisting in the achievement of more concrete impacts such as development work projects and creating social capital. Indeed, this approach to carrying out research also fits neatly into current ideas being discussed around citizenship. The Advisory Group on Citizenship's 1998 report states that one of the main aims of Citizenship education is "for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life" (Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools, paragraph 1.5, page 7). Therefore, community based research encourages active citizenship through gaining involvement, raising interest and allowing research for development work purposes to

be driven actively by community members. Community based research in relation to citizenship can be used in an attempt to tackle apathy, to stimulate debate, to promote awareness and to support education as well as ultimately creating space for active citizens to participate in community life. Community based research can also contribute to social quality. Social quality is 'the extent to which citizens are able to participate in the social and economic life of their communities under conditions which enhance their well-being and individual potential' (Beck at al 2001: 7). Community based research can act as a vehicle for individual participation in the life of the community and allow for participants to build their skills and knowledge, therefore increasing their potential. Thus, community based research is a mechanism by which human capital can be enhanced and so contributes to social capital development. Finally, there is something intrinsically good about using community based research in terms of adding more value within communities. Fundamentally the process allows people to actively do regeneration rather than being the passive recipients of development work interventions. Hence, for all of these reasons community based research should be enocuraged within regeneration.

Recommendations for Policy-Makers and Funding Agencies Supporting Community based Research Within Regeneration

- ◆ Community based research an as approach theoretically links to development work goals and practice and the approach can assist in the achievement of specific targets. These include changing the focus of evaluation results, providing local data to shape need, meeting targets and contributing to sustainability in terms of skill development.

- ◆ Literature from health, social welfare and evaluation fields in which community based research is more often described can be used within regeneration contexts to highlight lessons of good practice and to develop different models of research.

- ◆ Commissioners of such approaches need to be clear as to what outcomes they wish to gain from using community based research. For example, specific types of research create certain skills so the type of research fostered needs consideration in relation to the desired outcome. The table below demonstrates the different skill outcomes.

Type of Research	Skill Outcome
Type 1 – Grassroots Volunteer Approach	Amongst volunteers: Research expertise Analytical skills Time management skills Leadership and negotiation skills
Type 2 – Grassroots Contract Approach	Amongst volunteers: Research experience Time management skills Some data inputting skills (depending upon the level of involvement in the empirical work)
Type 3 – In-House Contract Approach	Amongst staff: Research expertise Analytical skills Time management skills
Type 4 – Out Sourced Contract Approach	Amongst volunteers: Contracting skills Management skills

◆ If commissioners of community based research simply aim to create a number of generic benefits such as partnership working, increased local knowledge, the creation of goals and targets and the collation of information to support decision making then all approaches create such benefits. However, the grass roots approaches are likely to add more value in relation to development work practice.

◆ A number of barriers exist when applying community based research in practice. To overcome these commissioners of such approaches need to adopt several measures. Adequate time should be given to allow participants to complete the process without deadlines being imposed during the research. Any deadlines should be overtly introduced at the beginning of the process and made clear. Tailored support is necessary because of both the varying capabilities and experience of participants. Some areas may require more input at the outset to bring them to a point where they can carry out research; pre-research training may be necessary. Research training should also be made available as well as dedicated specialist workers who are able to mentor participants and guide them through the process. The process of community based research should be funded and participants require basic provisions in terms of facilities.

◆ Attention needs to be paid to the context in which research is being planned because area dynamics effectively encourage some forms of community based research over others. A factor often unrecognised in this process is the attitudes and values of participants themselves. The values held by participants influence

research with grass-roots beliefs leading to grass-roots research and notions of professionalism resulting in externally contracted research. Policy-makers should foster community based research types that match the values of participants as this is more likely to achieve benefits and positive outcomes.

♦ If commissioners of research are aiming to create increased social capital through using community based research, there must be a clear purpose to the research such as creating an action plan and some form of visible outcome such as development work projects.

♦ Community based research can also be used to enhance networking practice, with the most notable impacts being on bonding and bridging linkages.

Limitations

This study discusses community based research within the Objective 1, South Yorkshire context and some of the findings may well be relevant to other regeneration contexts. However, these findings need to be treated with critical scrutiny. For example, only a limited amount of qualitative data was gathered because of the resource implications influencing this study in terms of both time and money with the findings based upon twenty-five interviews. The study was also retrospectively carried out and examined community based research that had already been completed so time slippage may have influenced the findings. Indeed, some additional data collection such as more interviews, observation across all of the areas sampled and the expansion of the study's focus to include other several other areas undertaking community based research may have yielded further insights.

There are also limitations in the way that achievements resulting from the application of the types of research in practice were examined. The positive benefits emerging from community based research within the Objective 1 setting were only examined in the short term, because of the nature of this project. It would have been interesting to carry out a more longitudinal study to assess the impact that the process of community based research had after the life span of Objective 1 funding came to an end, which is scheduled for some time in 2008.

The remit of this study also did not include establishing a baseline in any form. For example, an evaluation of before and after the application of community based research did not take place, thus this study effectively assessed the success of community based research without reference to any baseline measure. This has specific ramifications when the social capital impact of community based research is discussed because it is impossible to say what levels of social capital existed before community based research was applied. Therefore although the findings demonstrate that community based research can contribute to the development of social capital in a number of ways, it is difficult to assess the actual levels of social capital created or extended through such processes.

Finally, the issue of generalization needs attention. This study was small-scale in nature with only a small number of participants, which has implications in relation to generalising the results to a wider context. However, despite the small focus of this study, it was carried out in some depth. The research design covered telephone interviews with all action plan areas, documentary analysis, action plan investigation, overt participant observation as well as semi-structured interviews. So the findings of this study can be confidently articulated.

Future Research Possibilities

This study raised further areas of research.

- Longitudinal research could be done to establish the sustainable impact of community based research in more depth. Does skill development improve future regeneration practice? Are there other ways in which sustainability arises from the use of community based research? What really happens when the funding ceases to exist?

- Research could be carried out to further investigate involvement in community based approaches. Who is likely to get involved and how does this affect the process? What can be done to increase and widen involvement? Finally, given the varied conceptualisations of involvement, how is involvement best understood and measured?

- Research could be carried out to examine the interaction of existing levels of social capital and how these influence community based research in a range of contexts. Does the context in which some types of research are carried out, lead to a less significant or more ambivalent outcome?

- Chapter Two highlighted several areas in which social capital can be linked to both regeneration and community based research. Some of these areas were not explored empirically within this study. Further research could establish the relationship between community based research and collective action, community based research and social cohesion, community based approaches and increased economic benefits and finally how such approaches might contribute to quality of life.

- Social capital is often viewed in a positive manner but what happens if too much social capital operates within an area in a negative way? How does this affect community based research? Are there any caveats to the range of positive outcomes highlighted in this study? Given that social capital is not always a positive in terms of its outcomes, further research is needed to ensure that community based research does not create more insular communities rather than well connected and well linked partnerships.

- A further area for empirical exploration again relates to social capital creation through community based research. Given that social capital arguably contributes to community based research as a process but then results from the actual process as well, further detailed research is required to assess the actual impact that community based research has upon social capital levels.

- This study examined a specific category of community based research for the development of action plans within the Objective 1 South Yorkshire context. The question of whether community based research for different purposes would achieve the same results remains unanswered. For example, would such research employed to develop a Sheffield wide plan, rather than a smaller community plan achieve the same outcomes? Does community based research fit best with a community action planning approach? This is an area that future research could contribute to.

Final Remarks

The research presented here has opened up scope for the exploration of the above issues by showing that community based research within regeneration can achieve development work goals. Community based research in this context creates skill sustainability and a local impact resulting from the interaction of the research and consequent development work. There are caveats to the range of benefits described therefore clear policy recommendations are outlined. A comparative examination of community based research within other regeneration contexts for different purposes would yield further insights into this approach.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

RESEARCH QUESTIONS – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1

Questions for local people involved in the research process

- **Process**

Tell me about the consultation carried out within the CAP process – give me a general overview

Prompts:
1. organisation
2. design
3. payment
4. flexibility
5. pilot study
6. delivery
7. format
8. sampling
9. response rates
10. analysis
11. reporting findings
12. Writing of CAP

- **Involvement**

Tell me about your involvement within the research process

Prompts:
13. recruitment
14. difficulties - concerns
15. increasing involvement
16. benefits and successes
17. personal impact
18. reactions from others

- **Community Spirit**

Do you think that being involved in such a research project had any affect on your community spirit?

Prompts:

19. local decision making

20. increased involvement in local groups or other local activities

21. making a difference

22. personal empowerment

- **Support**

Tell me about how you were supported through the process of the research

Prompts:

23. by who – helpfulness of this

24. did you support others? How were you supervised?

25. training and accreditation

26. any difficulties

- **Models of good practice/evidence**

Lets discuss other areas in terms of the research that they have done and how this had an affect on your area

Prompts:

27. models from other areas

28. recording of research process

29. knowledge of other areas

30. ability to guide other areas

31. potential for other community research including evaluation

- **Dissemination and Impact**

Tell me about how the research findings were disseminated

Prompts:

32. role

33. how

34. future changes

35. impact

36. recognition

- **Networking, Trust and Social Cohesion**

Impact that research has had locally

Prompts:

37. research and links to others local and in power

38. learning about others values

39. local knowledge

40. local trust

Negative Aspects/Future Improvements

Tell me about any problems that you faced within the research

Prompts:

41. barriers

42. future improvements

RESEARCH QUESTIONS – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2

Questions for paid workers/consultants involved in the research process

• **Process**

Tell me about the consultation carried out within the CAP process – give me a general overview

Prompts:
43. organisation
44. design
45. payment
46. flexibility
47. pilot study
48. delivery
49. format
50. sampling
51. response rates
52. analysis
53. reporting findings
54. Writing of CAP

• **Involvement**

Tell me about your involvement within the research process

Prompts:
55. recruitment
56. difficulties - concerns
57. increasing involvement
58. benefits and successes
59. personal impact
60. reactions from others

- **Community Spirit**

Do you think that being involved in such a research project had any affect on your community spirit?

Prompts:

61. local decision making

62. increased involvement in local groups or other local activities

63. making a difference

64. personal empowerment

- **Support**

Tell me about how you were supported through the process of the research

Prompts:

65. by who – helpfulness of this

66. did you support others. How were you supervised?

67. training and accreditation

68. any difficulties

- **Models of good practice/evidence**

Lets discuss other areas in terms of the research that they have done and how this had an affect on your area

Prompts:

69. models from other areas

70. recording of research process

71. knowledge of other areas

72. ability to guide other areas

73. potential for other community research including evaluation

- **Dissemination and Impact**

Tell me about how the research findings were disseminated

Prompts:

74. role

75. how

76. future changes

77. impact

78. recognition

- **Networking, Trust and Social Cohesion**

Impact that research has had locally

Prompts:

79. research and links to others local and in power

80. learning about others values

81. local knowledge

82. local trust

Negative Aspects/Future Improvements

Tell me about any problems that you faced within the research

Prompts:

83. barriers

84. future improvements

RESEARCH QUESTIONS – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 3

Questions for stakeholders

- **Meaning**

1. Do you know what I mean by the term community based research?
2. What does the term community based research mean to you?

- **Support and Training**

3. Has your role ever involved supporting or directing any form of community based research? If yes, how did you support people – in what ways?
4. What support do you think that people need as part of such a process?
5. What skills do you think that people need to enable them to effectively carry out community based research?

- **Benefits**

6. Do you feel that people and communities benefit from participating in community based research? In what ways and on what levels? Any examples?
7. Do you feel that community based research can contribute to skills development? On what levels? Why?

- **Barriers**

8. Do you think that there are any negative aspects to the process of community based research? Examples?
9. Do you think that there are any barriers that stand in the way of successful community based research? Examples?

- **Local Effect**

10. What do you perceive as the differences in approach between local people doing research and paid professionals in terms of success? Why?

11. When local people do research, what do you think are the implications for
    - *Dissemination?* (Acceptability of findings, local understanding?)
    - *Trust and social cohesion?* (increased trust or decreased trust of others?)
    - *The local area?* (Skills capacity building and increased social capital? Local empowerment?)
    - *Community spirit?* (Do you think that by working together, for example, on research projects, that people can influence decisions affecting their local area?)
    - *Partnerships?* (More skills, changed perception of local need, changed role in local area?

- **Applicability to Social Regeneration**

12. What is your opinion of community based research as an approach within community development settings? Why?

13. Do you think that there is potential for more community research again using local people within the project or within the CAP process – e.g. the monitoring, evaluation and review of projects? What might inhibit the process? What would facilitate more community based research?

14. Do you think that it would be useful for community members to evaluate programmes and services within Objective One? In your opinion, could it be done? What barriers do you think would be encountered as part of this process?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 4

Questions for stakeholders involved in training

- **Meaning**

1. Do you know what I mean by the term community based research?
2. What does the term community based research mean to you?

- **Support and Training**

3. Has your role ever involved supporting or directing any form of community based research? If yes, how did you support people – in what ways?
4. How do you train people to carry out community based research?
5. What do people gain from participating in training for research?
6. What skills do you think that people need to enable them to effectively carry out community based research?
7. What support do you think that people need as part of such a process other than training?

- **Benefits**

8. Do you feel that people and communities benefit from participating in community based research? In what ways and on what levels? Any examples?
9. Do you feel that community based research can contribute to skills development? On what levels? Why?

- **Barriers**

10. Do you think that there are any negative aspects to the process of community based research? Examples?
11. Do you think that there are any barriers that stand in the way of successful community based research? Examples?

- **Local Effect**

12. What do you perceive as the differences in approach between local people doing research and paid professionals in terms of success? Why?
13. When local people do research, what do you think are the implications for
    - *Dissemination?* (Acceptability of findings, local understanding?)
    - *Trust and social cohesion?* (increased trust or decreased trust of others?)
    - *The local area?* (Skills capacity building and increased social capital? Local empowerment?)
    - *Community spirit?* (Do you think that by working together, for example, on research projects, that people can influence decisions affecting their local area?)
    - *Partnerships?* (More skills, changed perception of local need, changed role in local area?

- **Applicability to Social Regeneration**

14. What is your opinion of community based research as an approach within community development settings? Why?
15. Do you think that there is potential for more community research again using local people within the project or within the CAP process – e.g. the monitoring, evaluation and review of projects? What might inhibit the process? What would . facilitate more community based research?
16. Do you think that it would be useful for community members to evaluate programmes and services within Objective One? In your opinion, could it be done? What barriers do you think would be encountered as part of this process?