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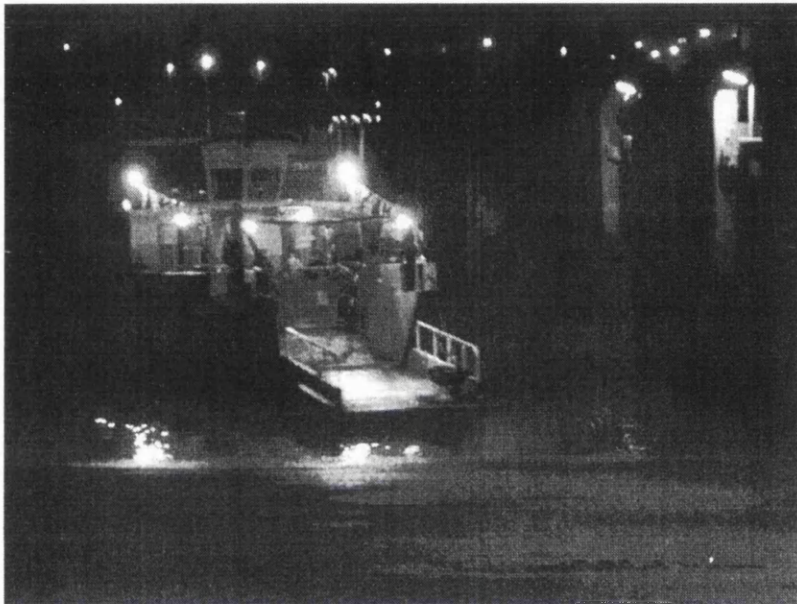
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# **YOUR PLACE OR MINE?**

## **Issues of Power, Participation and Partnership in an Urban Regeneration Area**



**Frontispiece: Making connections – The Yoker Ferry  
arriving at Renfrew.**

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD  
Department of Geography and Geomatics  
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**March 2004**

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## ABSTRACT

This study sets out to explore what is characterised as the partnership process in an urban regeneration area. Rather than examine formal processes or policy, the intention was to explore the interaction between the active residents in the study area and the agents of some of the organizations with whom they came into contact. The area (Yoker) is at the western periphery of the city, but is neither a 'peripheral estate' nor until recently an area of formal policy intervention. It is typical of similar small areas in its industrial history and its difficulty in adjusting to changed economic circumstances. Its response has, however, been vigorous and based significantly on its own endogenous resources.

In understanding the processes involved, the study has taken two broad approaches: the theoretical and the empirical, and is an attempt to relate the two as they can be seen to 'interact' on the ground. The theoretical approach has three strands (1) to understand the local working of power, (2) to examine the notions of social capital and collaboration and (3) to understand the local partnership process. Power, explored in terms of capacity and legitimacy and developed through consideration of 'circuits of power and 'hidden discourses', is seen not as a discrete entity but as providing the base on which social capital and partnership working might be constructed and as a signifier of other social and economic relationships. Social capital is seen as grounded in local power relations and as providing a matrix within which local networks might be activated, and trust developed; the cognate notion of collaborative planning is seen as a mechanism for bringing 'government' and 'community' into a process of active cooperation. Finally, partnership working is seen as the ideal outcome of the interaction between local power and social capital, dependant not on formal processes or discourses but on the harnessing of local skills founded on capacity and *need*.

The three Yoker case-studies are intended broadly to illustrate (rather than 'prove') some of these theoretical concerns in the field, but principally to allow local voices to articulate their perceptions of the issues within a semi-structured series of interviews. A brief comparative study in Drumchapel is intended to explore some of the differences between an area with a long history of policy intervention and an area like Yoker with no such history. The study concludes that a structured partnership approach will succeed best if founded firmly on local strengths and perceptions.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I began this study as a mature – but naïve – student. It was reassuring, or worrying, that the first person I met when I visited the Department of Geography and Topographical Science (as it then was) to meet my prospective supervisor was a lecturer I had known thirty years earlier! However, much *had* changed and I have over the course of this study learned to adapt, to my benefit. Thanks are therefore due to the Department for welcoming and tolerating me over the period and providing much help, encouragement and knowledge.

The first person to whom I am eternally grateful is my supervisor, Professor Ronan Paddison, who has listened to me, advised me, chided me (when necessary) and been endlessly patient and encouraging. I hope I have acquired some of his enthusiasm for geography, and urban geography in particular. My monitors, Professor Chris Philo and Dr Paul Routledge, were equally helpful and encouraging and helped me to sustain my interest in the topic through some trying times. (I must record my gratitude and appreciation of the Scottish geography postgraduate courses at Kindrogan; the time and effort put into these is well worthwhile and certainly encouraged me to persevere.)

On a less formal, but equally important, level I must thank colleagues from the early days: (Dr) Iain Docherty and Andrea for continual encouragement, (Dr) Stephen Herbert and (Dr) Richie Young – all have now achieved their goal, but it was not all serious and we shared many laughs and discussions. More recently, (Dr) Gesa Helms has kept me sane and offered help and solace when necessary; equally, Marilyn Keenan, Allan Lafferty and Sadiq Mir have done the same.

The study is not confined to the academy, however. How can I begin to thank the people at Yoker? I am constantly amazed at their energy, commitment and knowledge. Particular thanks must go to Sandy Busby (for inspiration to do the study at all), to Tam Munro, Lizzie Prentice and Frank MacMaster and to many others too numerous to mention by name. In Drumchapel, thanks to Jim Gray for his help and to John Oliver and Liz Atkinson for recalling past times. (I must mention in particular the late Cllr Madge O'Neill, whose loss it is still difficult to believe.)

On a personal level, thanks to Sam for his constant affection and help – along with the odd teacherly admonition, without which the whole task would have been much more difficult. My late mother, Edith, always took an interest and I am sure that

she is glad it's now finished! On a different level, thanks also to the late Toby cat – a constant and amusing companion who thankfully did not understand any of it.

## DECLARATION

This thesis embodies the results of original research carried out by the author between October 1996 and January 2004. References to existing works are made as appropriate. Any remaining errors or omissions are the responsibility of the author.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Crotty', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

John Crotty

Glasgow, March 2004

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### *An Overview of the Study Area and the Issues*



**Plate 1.1: Typical tenement street-scene of the 1950s; today only the shopfronts have changed, although many shops are closed.**

Cities are the focus of much of our national life. They are ... cradles of creativity - economically, socially, culturally and politically. They are also, of course, the focus of many of our most-rehearsed national problems. And ... they also pose some of the toughest challenges to (and perhaps best hopes for) democracy.

*Cities for the many not the few* (Amin, Massey and Thrift 2000, *Preface*, p. v)

#### **Introduction – Background**

The origins of this study spring from both a practical and professional interest in urban regeneration and the need to reflect more deeply on the underlying issues that affect the participation of the communities concerned in the process of regeneration itself. It is concerned in part with ownership – Your Place or Mine? – ownership not over territory so much as over process, although the spatial, in the sense of community being identified with one place and acting on one principal terrain, is fundamental. The focus

of the study is on people; formal structures are considered not in themselves, but principally as the matrix within which actors interact<sup>1</sup>. The focus is on the urban, in part because it is familiar terrain<sup>2</sup>, but also because cities are, arguably, the *forum* (an urban term) where solutions to many current problems are devised, negotiated, implemented, and challenged. The concentration on one location (Yoker, on the west side of Glasgow, see Map 1.1) is intended to demonstrate the complexity of the interaction even within a relatively restricted area. Although the study area is small, in many ways it is ‘typical’ of many other similar areas which have experienced the cycle of industrial decline, economic restructuring and the redundancy of previously-acquired skills, with concomitant efforts (formal and informal) at ‘regeneration’, understood as (Roberts and Sykes 2000: 17):

[a] comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change.

Comprehensive as it is, even this definition can be challenged (e.g. it begs the question of whose ‘vision and action’), but it is a useful starting point. However, it is not intended that the study should be seen as some kind of typology, that the experiences of Yoker can simply be replicated elsewhere and that similar internal and external stimuli will produce the same range of responses in other areas; it is, nevertheless, typical of many other such urban areas in West Central Scotland and as such is a reasonable subject for study. The study of one place can still take us ‘into wider realms of social and political debate and politics’ and ‘debates about localities, their meanings and what should be their futures, are one of the geographical arenas in which such social and political issues are condensed’ (both Massey 1993: 149). The uniqueness of the area is produced by the actions, reactions and interactions of its residents (and those they encounter) as they deal with changing circumstances, both internally and externally.

---

<sup>1</sup> See the discussion in Johnston *et al.* (2000: 349-52) on human agency; in this study, agency is regarded ‘as a relational effect generated by a network of heterogeneous interacting components ... constituted by the networks of which they form a part’ (p. 350, quoting Whatmore). Thus people *and* context are important.

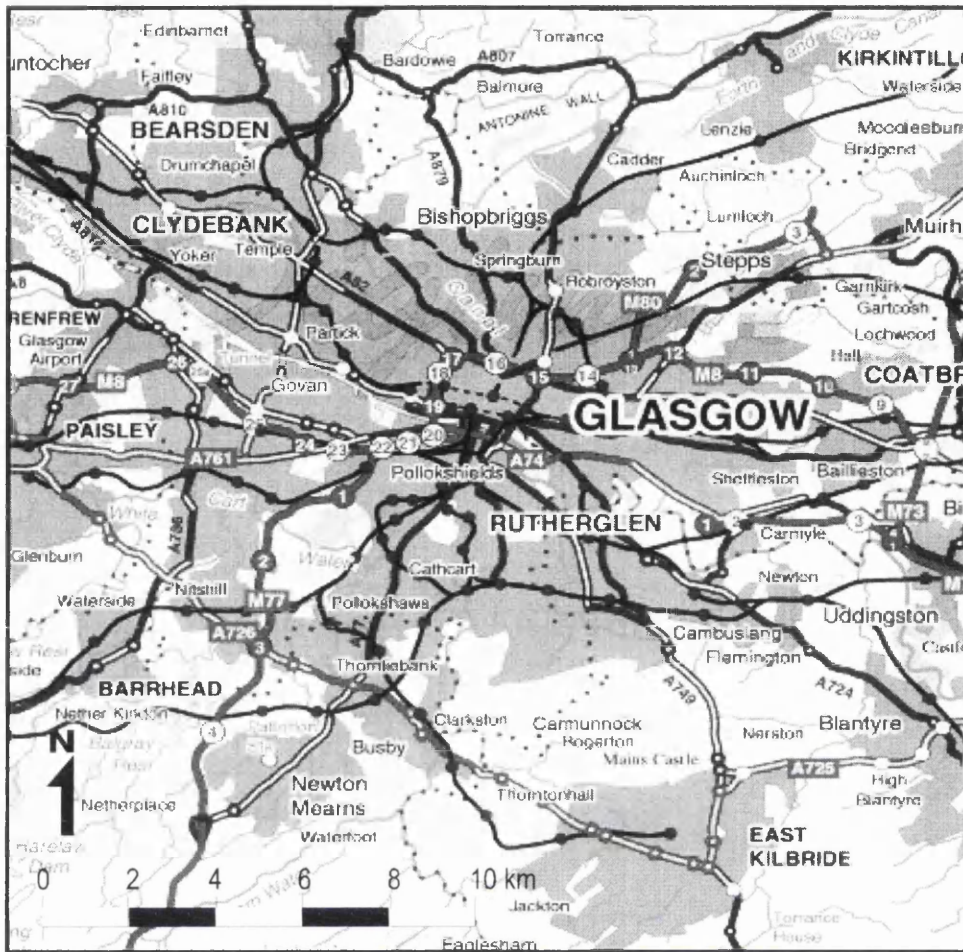
<sup>2</sup> There are other terrains: the rural, smaller villages and towns and indeed the national. The study focuses on one area – an urban village in some sense – so the anonymity of ‘the city’ is ameliorated by the close personal encounters with residents and those whom *they* encounter. Far from being faceless or abstract, the study is firmly grounded on real people and their experience.

However, a cautionary view of the role of both place and community in local (economic) initiatives is necessary (Eisenschitz and Gough 1993: 140-1):

Both capital and labour have ambivalent attitudes to community ties, using them here, undermining them there. Sometimes capital accumulation breaks up community and is opposed in its name; sometimes it benefits from the collaborative social relations and good quality labour power produced by community. Red Clydeside and the Scottish community businesses both arise out of a strong sense of community, yet have opposite political content: a collective resistance to capital versus populist self-help.

The sense of both contradiction and of movement – of dynamism – is inherent in a regeneration process which is not in equilibrium; moreover, the matrix within which responses to change occur is itself constantly changing. The intention of the thesis is to attempt to understand some of these processes.





MAP 1.1: General location plan

General location plan Glasgow – Yoker is to the northwest, immediately north of the river, south of CLYDEBANK; Drumchapel is immediately to the north.

### The study area – The historical perspective

Again echoing Massey (1993: 144), the intention of the study is not to be parochial, in the sense that it ‘focusses exclusively on the place itself, which tries to define a unique identity for that place and where the notion of “a sense of place” resonates with romanticism and nostalgia’. There is both nostalgia and romance in any area but a non-parochial and realistic approach which can only be ‘satisfactorily understood or explained [in] the wider context, both national and international, in which [it is] set’ (*ibid.*) is a strong characteristic of practice in the area. The principal study area – Yoker – lies about five miles (seven kilometres) west of the City centre on the north bank of the river Clyde, and is currently included within the Dumbarton Road Corridor (DRC) Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) area, which is rather more extensive than Yoker

proper and includes parts of Scotstoun and Whiteinch. Although the thesis has concentrated on Yoker (or on what has now come to be called South Yoker), there is an important historical and developmental connection between these three component areas.



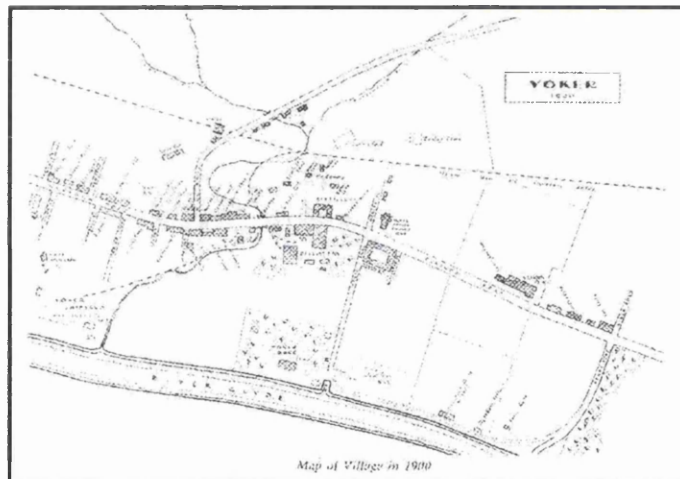
**Plate 1.2: Aerial photograph of Whiteinch during construction of the Clyde Tunnel in the 1960s; the rectilinear street-blocks are typical of the Dumbarton Road corridor.**

Whiteinch, like Yoker, has a history of shipbuilding and marine engineering and was developed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by utilising reclaimed but undeveloped flat land alongside the river as it flowed west towards its estuary in the Firth of Clyde, with easy access from existing and long-established east-west transport links, both road and rail and, later, tram. According to Williamson (1990), the ground had been reclaimed by 1837 and the first shipyard (Barclay Curle) opened in 1855<sup>3</sup>, with associated workers' housing south of Dumbarton Road. A development of middle-class housing (Gordon Park) was begun by 1885, followed by tenements south of Victoria Park by 1900. Until then part of the burgh of Partick, the area was absorbed (along with the eastern part of Scotstoun) into Glasgow in 1912 (see the map in the *Third Statistical Account: Glasgow* 1958: endpaper). By the 1960s, the housing associated with these developments (except for Gordon Park and some of the later tenements) was sub-standard and Whiteinch was designated as a Comprehensive Development Area (CDA); subsequent redevelopment

<sup>3</sup> Pacione (1995: 131, Fig. 6.1) shows six major shipyards and engineering works between Whiteinch and Yoker by 1914: Barclay Curle (two yards), North British Diesel Engine Works, Connel, Blythswood and Yarrow (now BAE) – only the last remains.

devastated what was by then an established community and although there has been extensive rebuilding, population has declined and there are few social amenities<sup>4</sup>.

Like Whiteinch, Scotstoun was developed early as a centre for shipbuilding – the earliest yard (Connell's) was opened in 1861 – but it is usually regarded as an area of solid middle-class housing, again built towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (as part of an 'estate' development by the proprietors), except for a narrow band one or two streetblocks wide on either side of Dumbarton Road, where the housing is working-class municipal housing built in the 1920s. Although this later housing is of reasonable quality (built in red sandstone) and has all standard amenities, its population is regarded as 'deprived' and there are problems of high turnover and unemployment. It is interesting to note that Yarrow's shipyard (now BAE) was 'attracted from the Thames to Scotstoun in 1906' (Williamson 1990: 384).



**Map 1.2: Yoker in about 1900; note the lack of development – by 1914 the area along Dumbarton Road had its present form (see Plate 1.2)**

Yoker – from the Gaelic *iochdair*, *iocar*, 'the bottom, low-lying ground' (Johnston 1892/1970: 326) – shares both characteristics: a history of shipbuilding and engineering in a long-established built-up area (like Whiteinch) and substantial municipal housing intervention from the late 1920s (with the same problems as in

<sup>4</sup> See also Putnam (1995: 75-6): '... we need to explore creatively how public policy impinges on (or might impinge on) social-capital formation. In some well-known instances, public policy has destroyed highly effective social networks and norms. American slum-clearance policy of the 1950s and 1960s, for example, renovated physical capital, but at a very high cost to existing social capital.' (See Chapter 3: the process in Whiteinch and elsewhere reflects this experience; 'renovated' is a very elastic term.)

Scotstoun). Yoker, along with the western part of Scotstoun, was not absorbed into Glasgow until 1926 and until then had been part of Renfrew civil parish (until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Clyde between Renfrew and Yoker was shallow and easily fordable on foot). It is first mentioned as a settlement on a map of 1734 (Williamson 1990), straddling both sides of the Yoker Burn; it had a large distillery and it was not until 1877 that the first shipyard was established, followed by the main railway line in 1882 and the construction of Rothesay Dock (in present-day Clydebank) in 1898. It had grown in population very rapidly at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> and:

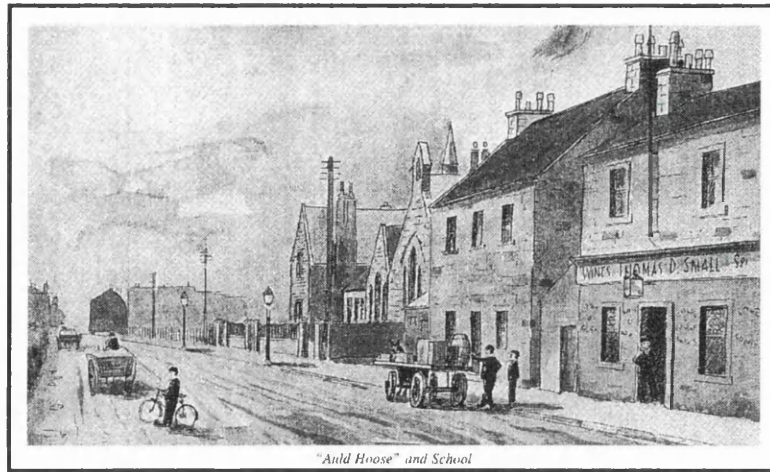
... so extensive was the industrialisation of the north bank of the river that in that same decade [*the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*] the population of the “landward” portion of the county (Scotstoun-Yoker) rose by 150 per cent. Indeed in 1911 there were more people in Scotstoun and Yoker than in the burgh [*Renfrew*]. (Quoted from *Both Sides of the Burn*, no author given, pp. 81-2, a local history compiled ostensibly by pupils of Yoker Secondary School, first published in 1966 and reprinted by Yoker Resource Group in 2001.)

Yoker has not been subject to any great degree of redevelopment, but there have been many social changes particularly since the end of the Second World War, exacerbated by a long process of industrial decline and by local governmental changes which have resulted both in increased intervention (for example, the expanded role of social work services) and latterly constraints in funding. In spite of all three areas’ topographical and historical links with the river, it cannot be seen from Dumbarton Road because of the existence of a railway embankment (now disused and converted crudely to a cycleway); the area between the embankment and the river, about a quarter of a mile (400 metres) wide, is almost entirely industrialised although much of it is now derelict and underused.

The outstanding characteristic of Yoker is the way that the local community has responded to changing social and economic circumstances over at least the last twenty years. Conversation with local activists has established that one of the principal origins of that response was the community’s reaction in the late 1970s to the existence and anti-social activities of a slum landlord (characterised in contemporary language as *Rachmanism*<sup>5</sup>), resistance to whom raised awareness of the power of community

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<sup>5</sup> *Rachmanism*: extortion or exploitation by a landlord of tenants of ... slum property, esp. when involving intimidation ... to drive out tenants whose rent is fixed at a low rate. [Collins Dictionary 1979: 1203]



**Plate 1.3: Idealised view of Yoker in c.1900; the Old School is in the centre of the picture and the successor to the pub on the right is part of a new tenement built <1914.**

action. Direct action against the landlord and in support of the tenants later transformed that resistance (*resisting-power* as discussed in Sharp *et al.* 2000) into structured involvement in the housing association movement and the formation of Yoker Housing Association (a community-based voluntary group under the umbrella of Communities Scotland), which has now refurbished most of the historic formerly private-sector housing stock in the area (1280 houses by 2002). This was followed by the formation of Spiers Housing Cooperative which became responsible for the upgrading and management of over 200 local-authority houses in Langholm Street (a severely-stigmatised location); these houses remain in the ownership of the local authority but are managed on a collective basis by the residents themselves as a housing-management co-op. Arising out of the experience in the housing movement (see Keating and Boyle 1986) came the formation in 1983 of the Yoker Resource Group, a prosaic name for the dynamic focus of most creative activity in the area ever since (see Table 1.1 for representation). Representation consists of delegates from active voluntary community service projects in the area (13 currently), co-opted members (2 currently), principal employees of the group (3), a representative of the ‘supervising department’ of the City Council (the project’s only direct funding is £57,000 a year from the Social Work department) and the local City Council ward member. Membership is informal, there is no distinction in practice between employees and delegates at monthly meetings (normal attendance c.12/13) and the agenda is based on minutes of previous meetings.

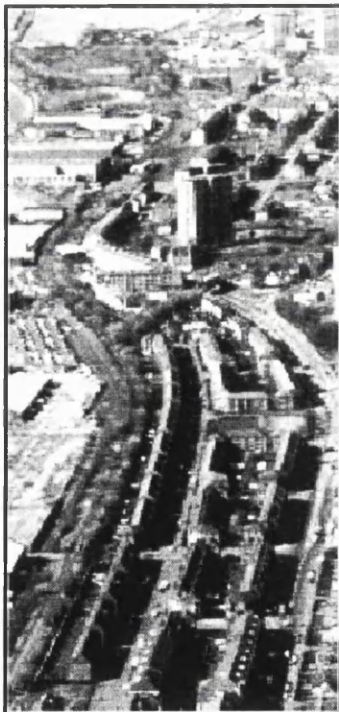
**Table 1.1: Representation on Yoker Resource Group**

Organisation	Representation
Project group	13
YRG Employee	3
GCC Department	1
Co-opted	2
Other	1
Total	20

**Key:** *Project Group* – Delegate of voluntary community service project in Yoker  
*YRG employee* – The project officer, the finance officer and a project support worker  
*GCC department* – Social Work (supervising department)  
*Co-opted* – One local resident and one project support worker  
*Other* – The local ward member (GCC)

[Author's compilation]

### The study area – The statistical perspective



The most recent statistics concerning Yoker and adjacent areas relate to what is now known as the Dumbarton Road Corridor (DRC) Smaller Areas Social Inclusion Partnership (generally abbreviated to 'the SIP area' in the thesis)<sup>6</sup>. (See **Plate 1.4** opposite, showing the linear nature of the 'corridor'.) Figures are taken from either the *Annual Reports* of the Partnership or from the *Baseline Study* (2003); although the SIP area is divided into four notional neighbourhoods (North Yoker, Scotstoun, South Yoker and Whiteinch), the statistics have generally not been disaggregated to reflect this division. However, the basic social background of these neighbourhoods will be broadly similar (since all must conform to the criteria for

<sup>6</sup> This title illustrates the rather artificial nature of the union of these three areas each with its own separate identity (in spite of a shared history) but no overall unity; equally, it emphasises the common factor of historic access along the narrow 'corridor' of Dumbarton Road.

deprivation set by the Scottish Executive) variations within them may not be significant; so the figures are useful as a snapshot of current social conditions, as measured by objective standards. Although produced in January 2003, the study takes 2000 as its base – year of the establishment of the SIP – based on the Scottish Executive’s 33 mandatory or optional core indicators (CCIs). Surveys undertaken as part of the baseline study were:

1. Residents’ survey (900 respondents 16+);
2. Asylum seekers’ survey (100);
3. Business and retail survey (98);
4. Voluntary organisations survey (6); and
5. Statutory organisations (e.g. Greater Glasgow Health Board, Glasgow City Council, Scottish Executive).

It is particularly interesting that the views of the area’s asylum seekers were sought; the results provide a valuable insight into a disparate group of people by now firmly established in the area.

### *Population*

The total population of the SIP area in 2000 was 17,592, of whom 8281 were male and 9311 female (47% male, 53% female), grouped by age as in Table 1.2.

**Table 1.2: DRC SIP Area – Age Distribution of Population (2000)**

<b>0-4</b>	<b>5-14</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-9/64</b>	<b>60/65+</b>
1042 (5.9%) City: (5.6%)	2235 (12.7%) (13.3%)	2236 (12.7%) (13.0%)	9015 (51.2%) (49.0%)	3064 (17.4%) (19.1%)

*Source:* Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services (*DRC SIP Annual Report*) 2000/01

The population profile broadly resembles that of the city as a whole, with the main differences being slightly fewer people of working age and slightly more beyond retirement age. By 2001, the total population had declined by 367 to 17,225 (*DRC SIP Annual Report* 2001/02). Within the wider SIP area, the population (2000) of the various neighbourhoods was:

- South Yoker<sup>7</sup>: 4699
- North Yoker: 6302
- Scotstoun: 4637
- Whiteinch: 1954
  - 17,592

In terms of age distribution, South Yoker had more people aged 0-4 (7.3%) than the SIP average, about average numbers aged 5-14 (12.8%) and 15-24 (13.0%), more aged 25-59/64 (54.4%) and significantly fewer aged 60/65+ (12.4%). The core area of the study had, therefore, more pre-school children, about average numbers of school-age children and young adults, more people of working age and significantly fewer elderly people than the SIP area average.

The population is almost 99% white (95% white Scottish), with all others only 1%. There are significant numbers of ‘asylum seekers’ (not regarded as ‘resident’ until granted leave to remain in the country)<sup>8</sup> – c. 1000 in the area – who are mainly Albanian, Iraqi, Iranian, Afghani and Somali, of whom 84% are under 45 (a graphic illustration of the ‘global’ impacting on the ‘local’).

*Length of residence (CCI 7) and satisfaction with area (CCI 8)*

There is no attempt at a longitudinal assessment of population rise or decline (CCI 7), but in terms of respondents’ length of residence:

<1 year:	9%
1-3 years:	13%
3-5 years:	9%
5-10 years:	12%
> 10 years:	57%

Generally, older people are more settled, younger more mobile and the population is in

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<sup>7</sup> South Yoker represents both the principal focus of the operations of the Yoker Resource Group and the heart of ‘old’ Yoker, the original 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement and the 1920s infill. North Yoker is lower density and mainly post-Second World War housing; North and South together comprise Yoker municipal ward.

<sup>8</sup> There is a problem in distinguishing between the ‘settled’ community and asylum seekers; from a statistical perspective, it is useful that there has been some attempt to ascertain the views of an important and more or less distinct element of the local community. But they *are* a part of that community and their very presence raises issues and presents opportunities that would not exist without them.



general stable; 35% of asylum seekers are there for less than 1 year, 64% 1-3 years. Overall, 58% of SIP residents preferred to remain in their current accommodation, while 22% wished to move outside the area (highest in 16-24 age group, lowest in North Yoker); in South Yoker 31% wanted to move out, while another 4% were not sure; 64% of asylum seekers wanted to move out. In terms of satisfaction with the *area*: 62% of residents were fairly or very satisfied (Glasgow 80%, Scotland 91%); only 25% of asylum seekers were in the same category. Figures *exclude* 'don't knows': high in relation to education and training (42%), the provision of nurseries for under-3s (57%), the provision of nurseries for 3-5s (58%) and especially for out-of-school care (70%). 'Don't knows' must indicate some level of dissatisfaction with the service provided, focusing round education and childcare. On being questioned about the 'range of problems' affecting the area, 29% cited drug activity as the most serious, 16% vandalism and 15% unemployment. For asylum seekers, assaults and muggings (at 22%, compared to 8% for residents), drug activity (19% compared to 29%) and unemployment (18% compared to 15%) are most serious. As their top priorities for improving the area, residents rated dealing with issues around facilities for children and young people (30% and 22%), better policing (20%), improvement to housing and the tackling of litter and graffiti (both 14%) as most important.

### *Household Composition*

Data for the year 2000 (Council Tax returns) suggests there are 8370 houses in the SIP area, 47% of which have three rooms or fewer (44% in Glasgow, 25% in Scotland). House types (CCI 10) are as follows:

**Table 1. 3: House Type**

House Type	SIP Area	Glasgow	Scotland
<b>Detached</b>	1% (9)	4%	19%
<b>Semi-detached</b>	9% (85)	15%	22%
<b>Terraced</b>	24% (219)	11%	22%
<b>Flat/maisonette</b>	66% (587)	71%	36%
<b>Other</b>	none	none	1%

*Source:* DRC SIP Baseline Study (2003), p. 22.

Given that the SIP boundaries are drawn to include areas with a degree of deprivation, the scarcity of both detached and semi-detached housing (by comparison with the wider

city and Scotland as a whole) is unsurprising; there is, however, a higher than average proportion of terraced housing (particularly inter-war council houses in North Yoker) and a slightly-below average number of flats compared to the city. Most of the ‘flats’ are houses in good-quality and refurbished Edwardian red-sandstone tenements fronting Dumbarton Road (in South Yoker), or in inter-war red-sandstone tenements built by the council (in Scotstoun). Refining the housing statistics further, the study found the following household types:

**Table 1. 4: Household Type**

Households	Total	Single Pensioner	Single Adult	Two Adults	Three+ Adults	Single Parent	Two+ Adults with Children
<b>SIP Area</b>	8185	1237 (15%)	2152 (26%)	1893 (23%)	872 (11%)	700 (9%)	1331 (16%)
<b>Glasgow City</b>	274,779	42,895 (16%)	69,966 (25%)	66,350 (24%)	32,125 (12%)	18,974 (7%)	45,269 (16%)

*Source:* DRC SIP Baseline Study (2003), p. 22 (based on Glasgow City Council Voluntary Population Survey 2000).

The table shows a remarkably close correlation between household type in the SIP area and Glasgow as a whole (with a slightly smaller number of single-parent households); to that extent the area is ‘typical’ of the city.

**Table 1. 5: Housing Tenure**

Tenure	SIP Area	Glasgow %	Scotland %
<b>Owner-occupied</b>	3121 (37%)	44	61
<b>Local Authority</b>	3720 (39%)	33	26
<b>Scottish Homes*</b>	None	2	1
<b>Housing Association</b>	1280 (15%)	13	5
<b>Privately-rented</b>	249 (3%)	4	4
<b>Other</b>	None	3	3

*Source:* DRC SIP Baseline Study (2003), p. 23 (from a residents’ survey in 2002)

\*Now *Communities Scotland*: figures relate to direct ownership.

The area has fewer owner-occupied houses than Glasgow City and significantly fewer than Scotland; the proportion of local authority-owned houses (to be transferred to the Glasgow Housing Association) is higher than the city average and 50% higher than in Scotland. Slightly more than the city average are owned by housing associations, but

almost three times the Scottish average (representing the success of the local housing association); privately-rented numbers are lower than in either the city or Scotland as a whole. Asked about their satisfaction with their accommodation (CCI 9), 33% were either ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ dissatisfied with local-authority rented housing; the corresponding figure for both housing association tenants and private renters was 12%. Alternatively, 45% were either ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ satisfied with the local authority, 76% with the housing association and 47% with the private sector.

### *Employment (CCI 23)*

There are few statistics on employment quoted in the annual report or baseline study; only those relating to ‘claimant unemployment’ (Table 1.6), various education statistics (Table 1.8) and ‘benefits receipts’ (Table 1.7, the sole indicator of formal poverty).

**Table 1. 6 Claimant Unemployment**

Postcode Area	Male	Female	Totals
G13	127 (6,6%)	18 (1%)	145 (3.9%)
G14	264 (10.8%)	61 (2.4%)	325 (6.5%)
<b>Total</b>	391 (10%)	79 (1.8%)	470 (5.4%)

*Source:* Glasgow City Council DRC SIP Annual Report 2001/02.

**NB** The table indicates the number of adults of working age claiming Job-seekers Allowance (JSA) or unemployment benefits.

Of those respondents between the ages of 16 and 65 surveyed, 45% gave paid work (full-time, part-time or self-employed) as their main role (well below the Glasgow figure of 55% and the Scotland total of 71%) – the survey recognises that ‘non-working residents were more accessible’ for interview (p. 29) and that the figure quoted may understate the total in employment of some kind. Paid work was highest (at 57%) for those aged 25-34 and higher for males (43%) than for females (28%). Only 5% of asylum seekers were in employment, with 22% unemployed and seeking work; 44% unemployed and not seeking work, ‘asylum seeker status preventing them’ (p. 29). Of all respondents in work, 82% were full-time (90% on a permanent contract), with one job (94%) and paid over £5 an hour (76%); women were more likely to work part-time, have temporary contracts and be paid less than £5 an hour. Male workers had an unemployment rate of 10% and females 2%, with an overall total for the area of 5%. A

majority of households (52%) was workless (the figure will include retired householders), with a further 37% having at least one person in work; of those households with at least one person of working age, 43% had no-one doing paid work.

The figures as presented show a marked difference between the rates for G13 (Scotstoun/Whiteinch) and G14 (Yoker North and South): the data has been calculated within the SIP boundary as defined by post code unit, and therefore the crude difference between the two areas is quite marked – male unemployment is about a third higher in G14, while female unemployment is almost two-and-a-half times as great.

**Table 1.7: Benefits Receipt (CCI 37)**

Area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>G13</b>	441	63	182	196	301	82	1265	3806	33.2%
<b>G14</b>	510	85	235	268	405	112	1614	5574	28.9%
<b>Total</b>	950	148	417	464	706	194	2879	9380	30.7%

Source: Glasgow City Council DRC SIP Annual Report 2001/02

**Key:** 1 Incapacity Benefit (nett of Income Support)      6 Other Income Support for <60  
 2 Severe Disability Allowance      7 1999 Total  
 3 Jobseekers' Allowance      8 Working Age Population  
 4 Income Support Lone-parent Premium      9 Percentage Rate (of Working Age  
 5 Income Support Disability Premium      Population) 1999

The above figures distinguish between postcodes, which the baseline study does not; according to the study, the figures reflect 'a very similar pattern' to Glasgow as a whole (p. 25). About 50% of people regard their household income as 'adequate', 25% as 'inadequate'; people without paid work or unemployed unsurprisingly are more likely to regard their income as inadequate (pp. 25/6, baseline study). Only 9% of asylum seekers see their income as adequate, 68% as inadequate. Thirty-five percent of households receive all their income from benefits, with almost a further third receiving some of their income from this source (which is almost 70% in total). Access to financial services (CCI 39) is unavailable to 17% of respondents, although 62% have an account with a bank or building society (p. 28), but still below the city and national average (71% for Glasgow and 87% for Scotland). Only 7% of respondents state they would go for advice on debt/money matters to Glasgow West Money Advice (a local voluntary money advice service); for borrowing, 41% (48% of asylum seekers) would access

friends or family, 36% a bank or building society and only 5% a credit union; again, there is no record of the likely activities of illegal moneylenders. For bill-paying, the most common methods were through the Post Office (49%) or by direct debit (42%) but only 24% in a bank (there is no local bank in Yoker for example); however, these are all conventional locations for payment and there is little hint of the extent of defection or of the existence of a 'black economy'.

### *The Private Sector*

One of the key concerns of government-led regeneration initiatives, at least since *New Life for Urban Scotland* (Scottish Office 1988), has been to stress the involvement of the 'private sector'; the baseline study researched responses from 48 businesses through a City Council database, and undertook face-to-face interviews with 50 retail businesses on Dumbarton Road. The survey found that most businesses were either manufacturing or in the finance/business sector. Three-quarters had their headquarters in the SIP corridor, while 86% of retailers were also 'headquartered' there (presumably as owner-run enterprises). Most had been in the area for more than seven years (suggesting stability); reasons for businesses being in the area were suitable premises (31%) or good location (23%), while retailers cited a good/busy customer base (28%) or having taken over an existing business (also 28%). For businesses, 56% derived 20% or less of their income locally, while half the retailers derived over 60% locally. In expenditure terms (including staff costs), 48% of businesses spent 20% or less locally, while 20% of retailers spent over 60% locally. In employment terms, 32% of businesses employed fewer than 10 staff, while three-quarters of the retailers employed between 1 and 4 people; however, 27% of businesses and 42% of retailers employed *no-one* from the SIP area. Two-thirds of businesses and half of retailers stated they would like more information on the SIP, while 31% and 28% would be interested in joining a local business network. There was a high degree of satisfaction (90% of businesses and 64% of retailers) with being located in the area. Over 88% of businesses and 64% of retailers were not aware of the SIP or of its function. Significantly, there were no private sector representatives (CCI 22) on the SIP board or sub-groups (p. 34).

Many residents have had to seek employment in (for them) non-traditional ways outside the area and the low figure of only 42% of the population in work (even allowing for the survey's own caveat) suggests that many have opted out of the labour

market altogether. The area does not give the impression of economic prosperity; the one more vigorous shopping area at the extreme eastern edge of Yoker serves the industrial area at South Street and in particular the BAE shipyard, still a relatively large volume employer<sup>9</sup>. The figures suggest that there is a disjunction between businesses and shops located in the area and the extent to which they can be considered to be part of a vigorous local community network, either in terms of providing direct local employment (and particularly in encouraging entry and training for young people and others) or engaging actively within the partnership structures of the SIP.

### *Community Capacity-building*

Central to this study is the issue of community capacity-building (see Chapter 2). When asked about sources of information, respondents cited them principally as:

Family and friends	47%
Newsletters	19%
Newspapers	11%
Local meetings	8%
Notice/posters	5%
'Don't know what's going on'	26%

All these sources may be regarded as fairly traditional and not dependant on the SIP; the figure of 26% is high if the objective of the partnership is to inform as many as possible of its activities. For social/leisure participation (CCI 17), 13% of respondents attended a local social event on a regular basis and 16% a sports facility or club, compared to 28% for Glasgow as a whole and 25% for Scotland. There is clearly some overlap between the two local figures, but this does suggest a rather lower rate of participation than the city or national average, particularly when combined with the rate of 3% of time spent as a volunteer or organiser of social events (CCI 18), compared to the city figure of 14% and the national average of 19%.

In terms of representation, 10% of resident respondents regularly attend local community/representative groups (CCI 19), such as housing associations or tenants' or

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<sup>9</sup> This shopping area must be one of the few places in the city where large numbers of boiler-suited *men* (still!) can be seen in the street at lunch and knocking-off times, a sight once very characteristic of shipyard and engineering communities.

residents' groups but only 4% of residents act in an active voluntary capacity with these groups. (It is extremely difficult to interpret these figures, but the low rate of general participation cited above leads to a conclusion that the figures probably suggest a significant lack of interest and involvement.) Barriers to involvement are lack of information (33%), other commitments (e.g. family, 27%) or 'there is nothing interesting to do' (23%, p. 36); only 8% say there are no barriers. The survey made little attempt to gauge the capacity, confidence or ability of local representative groups, although it noted that 7 out of 15 SIP board members are voluntary sector representatives; reference is made elsewhere in this study to the capacity of Yoker Resource Group, but some kind of 'independent' analysis would have been interesting. The survey did confirm that 'nearly all' businesses and three-quarters of retailers had no involvement with any community projects or groups and 'the vast majority stated that they had no future plans' (p. 37) to do so.

#### *Education and training*

The most comprehensive set of statistics relates to education, with four indicators (attainment of Standard Grade, achievement of 3Rs (*sic*), attendance rates and school intakes). Only selected figures are quoted in Table 1.8. The SIP area has about 2700 children between 5 and 17 and about a quarter of respondent households have children of school age (higher in Scotstoun and South Yoker than in Whiteinch or North Yoker).

**Table 1. 8: Educational Statistics (selected) – Standard Grade levels (%)**

School (Secondary, with Roll in 2001-02)	School Leavers without Standard Grade Maths (%)		School Leavers without Standard Grade English (%)		School Leavers With 5+ Standard Grades at Level 1-4 (%)	
	1999- 2000	2000-01	1999- 2000	2000-01	1999-00	2000-01
<i>Term</i>						
<b>Knightswood (1258)</b>	16	20	14	17	69	59
<b>St Thomas Aquinas (809)</b>	14	8	14	6	67	80
<b>Hyndland (936)</b>	8	4	5	5	76	85

*Source: Glasgow City Council DRC SIP Annual Report 2001/02.*

All schools are located outside the SIP area but attended by SIP residents. Other educational statistics quoted relate to the achievement of the 3Rs (Reading, Writing, Maths) at primary level, which are difficult to interpret without external comparison, attendance rates: the level of unauthorised absence is shown as low (1% or less at secondary school level), while the level of authorised absence are between 14% and

18% at secondary level and between 4% and 8% at primary level. Respondents from 81% of households say they feel fairly or very involved with their children's schooling (a constant figure throughout all the areas, true for all ages and genders as the report notes, p. 38).

On training, the survey assessed issues relating to employment: 111 16-17 year-olds are registered with the Careers Service; barriers to employment are cited as principally lack of jobs in the area (64%), loss of benefit (40%), travel costs (24%), lack of experience (22%) and lack of qualifications/skills (20%); for asylum seekers, barriers are lack of work permit or asylum status (59%) or language difficulties (41%). The survey found that 58% of working-age residents had recognised qualifications (CCI 25), compared to 69% for Glasgow and 76% for Scotland. Among asylum seekers, 64% had qualifications, while 85% said they wanted more training. Questioned on their view of the workforce, employers claim to have a generally positive view, although they consider that there is a difficulty in recruiting managerial/professional staff locally. In spite of this, two-thirds of businesses and 92% of retailers had no training budget. The principal methods of recruitment are word-of-mouth, through job centres and by advertising in newspapers (between 70 and 80% for each category), although turnover of staff is considered low at under 10% per year.

#### *Fear of crime*

The survey found that the perceived fear of crime (CCI 16) was higher in the SIP area than in Scotland generally; for example, 24% of respondents said they 'felt either a bit unsafe or very unsafe' (p. 48), while 20% claimed they would not go out at night – a combined total of 44%, compared to the national figure of 28%. Unsurprisingly, older people felt less safe than younger and females less safe than males, with no difference across all four neighbourhoods. Among asylum seekers, 86% said they would not feel safe at night.

#### *Health and well-being*

Compared to 35% for Glasgow and 30% for Scotland, 42% of households in the study area have at least one member with a long-standing illness, health problem or disability (CCI 34) that 'limited daily activity or the kind of work that people could do' (p. 51); a majority of households with someone over 45 report the same statistic. On access to



various health services (CCI 35), the report suggests that there is good access for women's and general health services, but relatively poor access (and presumably 'treatment') for family conflict, support for carers, mental health services and addiction services – all aspects of medical care which have a strong communal or societal dimension rather than a mere personal one. (There is also a striking absence of any notion of health services specifically for men.) In terms of the respondents' own perceptions of their physical and mental health, there are slight variations from the Glasgow norm, with 70% of SIP residents (75% in Glasgow) having a positive view of their physical health and 17% a negative one (15%), while 79% (82% in Glasgow) had a positive and 12% (11%) a negative view of their mental health. In terms of 'health-related behaviour', only 9% of respondents ate the recommended amount of fruit and vegetables (23% in Glasgow), while 47% smoked (41% in Glasgow); encouragingly, only 32% of SIP residents failed to do at least 30 minutes of exercise a week, compared to 43% of Glaswegians as a whole!

#### *Comparative statistics*

The statistics as presented give to some degree only a very superficial perspective on the area. However, they are largely self-referential in terms of the SIP and the mandatory content is determined by the Scottish Executive. Nevertheless, it is useful to have some grasp of the numbers; through time, the SIP should attempt to gather more quantitative and qualitative information about the area to be used in the preparation of a *needs-based* strategy.

The census of 2001 provides the most recent source of comparative statistics of material deprivation (CIMD) for the SIP area. The figures are compiled on a ward basis (hence not comparable to the SIP area), but they give a good snapshot of material conditions over a wider area. For convenience and comparison, the table includes figures for the two Drumchapel wards (see Chapter 9).

**Table 1.9: Comparative deprivation statistics (rankings)**

<b>Ward</b>	<b>General Score</b>	<b>Income Score</b>	<b>Employment Score</b>	<b>Education Score</b>	<b>Health Score</b>
<b>Yoker</b>	73	65	138	77	46
<b>Victoria Park*</b>	346	275	314	632	240
<b>Scotstoun</b>	123	89	144	389	61
<b>Drumry **</b>	2	2	6	1	5
<b>Summerhill **</b>	20	10	55	7	26

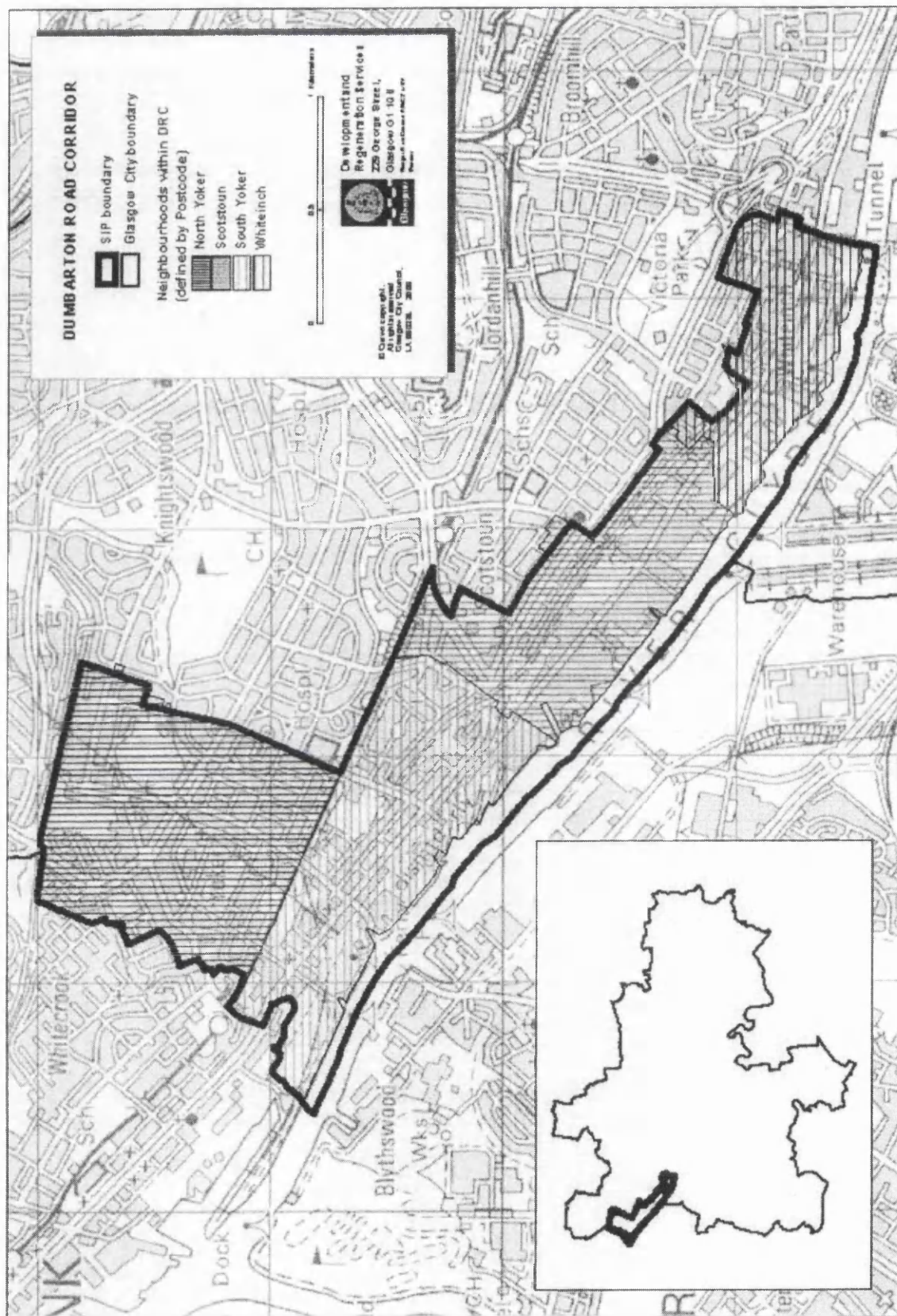
Source: 2001 Census

**Key:** \*Includes Whiteinch part of SIP. [NB Yoker, Victoria Park and Scotstoun Wards include areas outside the SIP.]

\*\* Drumchapel Wards

Rankings show *worst* scores from all wards

The figures show rankings from 1 (the worst) to 1222 (the best) for all electoral wards in Scotland, based on Scottish Executive criteria; Victoria Park and Scotstoun rank best overall, largely because both wards include substantial areas of middle-class housing, while Yoker – even outside the SIP area – is historically largely a municipal housing area. It is striking to note that both Drumchapel wards consistently rank among the worst in Scotland, in spite of over 20 years of interventionary policies. It is difficult to extrapolate from the figures to the general situation in the SIP, but allowing for their more affluent areas, it is reasonable to assume that the parts of both Victoria Park and Scotstoun wards inside the SIP area correspond to the Yoker rankings, i.e. in general score terms within the worst decile of deprivation in Scotland (Glasgow City itself ranks 1 in general score terms among Scottish local authority areas). A useful illustration of the spatial distribution of poverty in Glasgow may be seen in Knox and Pinch 2000: 124-5; most of the Dumbarton Road corridor and large parts of Drumchapel are confirmed as ranking in the worst 10% of deprivation.



Map 1.3: Dumbarton Road Corridor SIP showing four sub-areas

### The study area – The policy perspective

Important as both the historical and statistical perspectives of the study area are, it is equally important to understand the policy context within which they currently exist. The designation of the Dumbarton Road Corridor SIP area in 2000/01 represents only the most recent policy intervention by central and local government in what may broadly be termed the process of urban regeneration. Current urban policy at both national and sub-national level<sup>10</sup> has its origins in changing economic circumstances since at least the early 1970s (Lawless 1996); inner cities were characterised by increasing unemployment (for example, 30% of manufacturing jobs in the UK had been lost since that period), the operation of the welfare state had failed to eliminate poverty (partly as a concomitant effect of the loss of manufacturing and traditional employment and consequent labour market uncertainties for many people) and, in England, increasing ‘racial’ tensions<sup>11</sup>. However, the current state of communities in many urban areas in Britain cannot be explained by the instance of poverty (or lack of income) alone (Eisenschitz 1997: 150, quoting Donnison, my emphasis):

... the poor cannot be defined by income alone: equally important is their command over resources in kind such as education, the way they are treated by those on whom they depend, such as landlords or bureaucrats, their power over their environment and their life, and, of course, the security of these conditions. Although a wider view of deprivation may deprive us of easy indicators, it does illustrate *the complexity of processes that produce it*.

In 1968, the Urban Programme (UP) was introduced as a recognition by central government that some of these problems of deprivation were concentrated spatially and that interventionist policies required to be focused on certain areas. Central to this approach was the belief that ‘economic decline [was] the most acute constraint affecting the cities’ (Lawless 1996: 12). It is worth noting that in the late 1950s and 1960s, the most ‘acute restraint’ was deemed to be *physical* – poor housing, outdated infrastructure and ‘poor’ planning – the solution for which was ‘comprehensive redevelopment’,

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<sup>10</sup> In general discourse ‘national’ represents the UK, sub-national Scotland or some other ‘region’; Scotland is, however, a historic nation now with its own parliament and the study recognises that status.

<sup>11</sup> This has not been an overt factor in the study area, which has a very small ‘ethnic minority’ population; however, sectarian (Blue/Green) animosity certainly does exist. It can be argued that the very process of economic restructuring in the 1960s and 1970s disturbed existing patterns of patronage on sectarian lines and blurred advantageous divisions that may have existed. These divisions pre-existed the economic turn and have not figured in any policy intervention; housing in Glasgow is not overtly segregated along denominational lines, unlike Belfast, with which it shares many sectarian characteristics in a muted form (see Pacione 1995: 246-8 on the same points).

involving site clearance, relocation and new-build (cf. Whiteinch). However, as Amin *et al.* observe in a comment on the 1999 Rogers Report *Towards an urban renaissance* (Amin, Massey and Thrift 2000: 3):

Putting the design of the physical fabric first is reminiscent of the urban environmental determinism of the 1960s, when local coalitions of architects, planners and local government officials – in good faith – plastered roads, housing estates and concrete in general over the cracks of working-class urban deprivation.

It can be argued that the judgement is rather harsh (the economic collapse and restructuring of the 1970s and 80s was not generally foreseen), but the metaphor is a powerful one and its implications cannot lightly be ignored. Equally, it is important to remember the apparently altruistic and disinterested nature of the planning process at the time (see Blackman 2000: 129): ‘for much of the history of British planning it was presented by practitioners and academics as a neutral process of rational decision-making.’ (Much as partnership is presented as a rational and logical – and non-political – approach today.)

The discourse of what might constitute the solution to the problems of the inner city has changed from a rhetoric of simplistic if progressive physical renewal to a realisation that solutions are complex and holistic and grounded in the changing socio-economic nature both of the city and city living and indeed the wider world and society. Adapting Beauregard’s account of the framing of postwar discourses of (American) urban decline allows us to see current approaches to regeneration in a wider context (see Table 1.10).

Table 1.10: The Urban Discourse through Time (*after Beauregard*)

Discourse and period	Problems	Solutions
<b>Prelude to postwar decline: the progressive era</b>  c. 1880-1930	Overly fast growth leads to the development of slums. Moral corruption seen as making the city sinful and dangerous and a threat to bourgeois society. Coexistence of the extremes of wealth and poverty and 'boom and slump'. Both philanthropic and municipal 'solutions'.	Modernist faith in the capacity of the (local) state and private enterprise to control and channel growth. Scientific and organisational advances of corporate capital help the engineering of 'better cities'. Beginnings of large-scale municipal housing.
<b>Prelude to postwar decline: a 'temporary problem'</b>  c. 1920-1950	Urban growth had been temporarily restrained by the effects of the depression and the Second World War.	Post-depression and post-war recovery (and the establishment of the welfare state) would ensure the continuation of healthy urban growth and a better society.
<b>Escalating downwards: potentially irreversible problems</b>  c. 1945-1960	Rapidly suburbanising city affected by out-migration of the middle class and exile of working class to peripheral schemes. Little in-migration to inner-city, deemed ripe for 'redevelopment'.	National debate centred on the rebuilding of the inner city to a modernist paradigm, together with the building of 'new towns' and peripheral schemes, and the development of middle-class suburbs. Utopian visions of the city.
<b>From one crisis to another: the structural roots of urban decline</b>  c. 1960-mid- 1970s	Combined and deep-seated physical, economic and social problems masked by pre-oil crisis prosperity and the vision generated by redevelopment and technological advance.	Large-scale comprehensive redevelopment programmes in the inner city; export of skills and employment to the new towns and the growth of the consumer society presaged a fundamental change in attitudes to the city following the crises of the early 1980s.
<b>Rising from the ashes: glimmer of a future?</b>  c. late-1970s – present	Fundamental economic restructuring in the late 1970s-early 1980s necessitating the 'reimagining' of the city: its leisure and cultural amenities seen as essential to quality of life. The city seen as being in competition with others to attract work and people. Disillusionment with earlier utopian public sector solutions.	City marketing exercises to present the city as a focus of consumption and entertainment, as a counterpoint both to the suburbs and the attractions of other cities. The increasing vogue of 'partnership' as solution. The public sector seen as merely one player among others. Late 1990s – the 'rediscovery' of the city centre.

*Source:* Freely adapted from a table illustrating Beauregard's discourses of urban decline in Chapter 26 (by Boyle and Rogerson) of Paddison (2001: 408); it is striking to note the extent to which race issues figure in his analysis – these are obviously not so significant in the Scottish context (although not absent) and the text has been adapted accordingly.

The details in this time-analysis of the urban discourse can be argued, but it shows in a simple graphic way the correlation between the more ‘global’ aspects of urban change and the more local, how these ‘global patterns’ generate ‘problems’ within the local context of the city (some others of which, for example decay in the urban fabric, are endogenous) and how these are reflected in the changing character of what are regarded as appropriate solutions, the nature of which will be determined in turn both by national and local policies and the respective availability of resources, financial and human. Table 1.11 sets out in a more detailed and specific way the various urban policies which have been defined and implemented in Britain since the late 1960s to the present. This more synoptic view of the relationship between urban policy as it affects both national policies and locally-based efforts at regeneration needs to be refined so as to give some idea of the practical implementation (or lack of it) of these various *initiatives* (a vogue word, especially in the 1990s) on the ground; it is the intention of this study to focus on the Scottish situation, whilst not ignoring the wider social and policy context.

Even if one does not accept Paterson’s contention about the unique antecedents of Scottish local government, arising from the Enlightenment, where (Paterson 2000: 53):

[c]oncepts such as moral obligation, a common culture, a unifying social ethic, and the active creation of social trust [were] at the core [of social capital] and can be found ... in thinkers such as Ferguson, Hume, Smith and Reid.

it does have many unique features; but the *implementation* of Scottish urban policy closely resembles that of the UK as a whole, with individual distinguishing characteristics. Post-war the emphasis was similarly on physical renewal and modernisation, but the ‘disquieting’ realisation grew that (Keating and Boyle 1986: 1):

... the best efforts of well-intentioned public policy was having a regressive effect on parts of cities. Instead of solving or eradicating urban problems as promised ... [the solutions] were merely shifting the locus of the malaise and not confronting the socio-economic roots of urban decline.

Much of public urban policy stemmed from the inadequate provision and poor management of housing and the changes introduced there influenced wider policy (including wider community involvement). In Scotland, the introduction of the Urban Programme in 1968, however limited in scope, was a ‘tangible expression of government policy’ (*ibid.*: 3). A Community Development Project in Ferguslie Park

Table 1.11: Policy Definition and Implementation in the UK 1968-present (*after Miller*)

Phase	Timescale	Focus of Policies	Policies Implemented	Comments
<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>1968-77</b> Changes of government in 1970 and 1974.	Urban regeneration; community development; Public participation.	<i>Urban Programme</i> (UP); City Development Programmes (CDPs); Inner-Area Studies.	Notion of 'areas of special need'.
<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>1978-87</b> 1979: General election and change of government.	Reassertion of the marketplace.	Policy for the Inner-City (DoE); Urban Development Corporations (UDCs); <i>Enterprise Zones</i> (Ezs).	Focus on <i>partnerships</i> ; more economic regeneration; conflict central/local government.
<b>Phase 3</b>	<b>1987-90</b> 1987: General election.	'Continuity and change'; Need 'to do something about those inner cities' (Thatcher). The private sector seen as investing in employment/training and providing safer, more attractive environments. Focus on strategic problem-solving (SPAs).	Action for Cities (1988); Urban Programme (>1987/88) focus on Special Priority Areas (SPAs); Training/Enterprise Councils (TECs); Scotland – <i>New Life for Urban Scotland</i> (1988); designation of four pilot Partnership Areas by Scottish Office.	'The particular problems of Britain's inner cities have their roots in a shift in the nature of Britain's industrial base'. Audit Commission (1989). Centrality of coordination and management; role of quangos (e.g. TECs) and private sector.
<b>Phase 4</b>	<b>1990-97</b> 1992: General election.	'Competition and collaboration'. Emphasis on a 'coordinated and collaborative approach, focused on specific areas and disadvantaged groups'.	City Challenge (1991); Single Regeneration Budget (SRBs – 1994)	Intoduction of the notion of bidding on a competitive basis (SRBs). Involvement of both local government and the non-profit sector as potential lead partners.
<b>Phase 5</b>	<b>1997- present</b> 1997: General election and change of government.	'Labour and the New Deal for communities'. 'To reduce social exclusion'. Objective of policy: 'Bringing neighbourhoods up to the national average'.	New Deal for Communities; Pathfinder districts;  In Scotland – <i>Social Inclusion Partnerships</i> (SIPs).	Three strands of policy: Local partnerships; Competitive funding; Citizen engagement. Approach: Comprehensive; Long-term; 'Founded on what works'.

Source: Adapted from the account by Miller in pp. 142-151 of Pierson and Smith (2001).



(Paisley) was founded on (1) neighbourhood self-help, (2) improved local services and (3) community action, setting a template for the future.

In 1976, the establishment of the Glasgow East Area Renewal initiative (GEAR) focused on the area's physical, social *and* economic regeneration, again an early integrated or holistic approach. (In Glasgow, concern was growing at severe population loss: between 1961 and 1981, the city lost 375,000 people; Keating and Boyle 1986: 5). In 1961 the Toothill Report took the stark view that it was best 'to concentrate on areas that have a potential for economic growth rather than on districts having long running problems of high unemployment' (quoted in Parsons 1986: 149); fortunately, this advice has not ostensibly influenced public policy. In 1975, local government was reorganised and the Urban Renewal Unit was established within the Scottish Office, thus combining a genuinely regional approach (at least in Strathclyde) with some central direction of policy. The Scottish Office combined the functions of several UK ministries, avoiding too sectoral an approach. In Strathclyde, Areas of Priority Treatment (APTs) were established to tackle the most deprived areas (including Yoker and most of Drumchapel). The Scottish Development Agency was concerned to encourage industrial and economic development. However, the Regional Studies Association observed that 'spatial economic policy has degenerated into an uncoordinated morass of disparate, often ad hoc, and potentially wasteful initiatives' (quoted in Keating and Boyle 1986: 11).

The publication of *New Life for Urban Scotland* in 1988 and of *Progress in Partnership* in 1993 were attempts at a more integrated approach, the latter establishing Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs). In 1996, local government was reorganised again, abolishing the regions, and in 1999 the Scottish Parliament was restored. Scottish smaller scale and 'closeness' has not 'solved' the country's problems and as late as 2003, Turok *et al.* were advocating social cohesion *and* economic success as the way forward. The Scottish Executive *Cities Review* (2002) has allocated £90 million for urban renewal, to be accessed via the production of 'City Visions' *and Better communities in Scotland* (The Scottish Executive 2002) sets out a new vision for regeneration (somewhat obsessed with indicators and targets).

The ostensibly more holistic partnership-determinism of the SIPs may still be characterised as 'plastering over' what remain as fundamental structural deficiencies in the economy and the delivery of social services. The economic crises of the mid-1970s

began at a time when some of the earlier physical redevelopment processes had still not been completed, and many areas have never fully recovered. This has resulted in what has developed as a very negative perception both of the city as a whole and of these areas within it. In spite of recent ‘imagineering’ of the city, Boyle and Rogerson’s observation still remains true (2001: 405):

The Glasgow of the 1970s and the early 1980s has been ubiquitously portrayed as a city in decline. With the decline of the traditional pillars of shipbuilding on the Clyde, the steel industry and associated works inland, and a demographic decline ... Glasgow was ... one of the least healthy cities of Europe. As such, Glasgow had many of the features of a city located towards the margins of the new global economy – a location all the more poignant, given that its former role as ‘The Second City’ of the Empire remained part of the not too distant memories of many of its citizens.

The synopsis of urban policy in the UK since the late 1960s (in Table 1.11) is useful both as a chronology (showing the longitudinal nature of what may be called ‘contemporary’ approaches to renewal and regeneration) and as an indicator of the different stresses of official policy within the broad theme of urban renewal. These trends have coalesced (partly in recognition of the ‘failure’ or inadequacy of preceding policies) towards the contemporary view of the holistic nature of regeneration initiatives, focused on three main areas: social, environmental and economic. For some time there has been a stress on involving ‘the community’. It is acknowledged by policy-makers at the governmental level that current policy (Miller 2001: 139): ‘... recognises the multiplicity and the interconnected nature of issues confronting a growing and significant section of the population’. To these may be added the persistent nature of many of these issues and their continued concentration in specific areas. These ‘issues’ may be summarised as:

- Unemployment or precarious or low-waged employment;
- Poor health;
- Low educational attainment;
- Inadequate public or private services; and
- A damaged or deteriorating physical environment.

All of these collectively constitute what has come to be seen as ‘social exclusion’, but a listing of factors indicating social exclusion gives neither an explanation of what it *is*, nor of the causes. A spatial analysis of inequalities in socio-economic terms may provide *indicators* (see Badcock 1984), giving ‘facts’ or suggesting ‘patterns’. But a

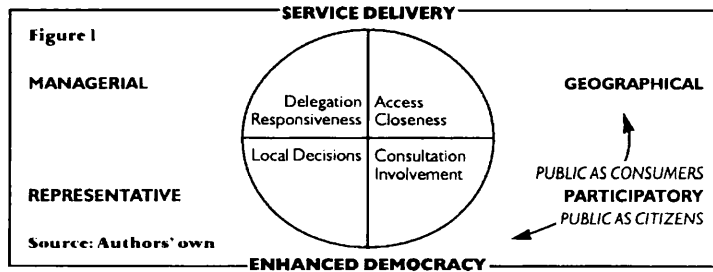
positivist approach may avoid any ethical judgements or the lived experience of real people. Even area-based programmes may avoid fundamental causes (Badcock 1984: 293, my emphasis):

Although British social planners ... developed the machinery that allowed for a more concerted approach to deprivation and housing stress by central government, in the final analysis the implementation of these policies ... fell far short of the politicians' promises and ignored *the structural bases of poverty*.

See also Modarres (2003) on the failure of area-based initiatives in tackling poverty. Given concerns about the 'entryism' of neoliberal economics into the social sciences (Fine 2002), it is clear that we should be *aware* of another world-view. Even if the poor do not constitute a Marxist 'industrial reserve army' (Byrne 1999: 45 *et seq.*), the idea of social 'exclusion' and the 'flexible' labour market may encapsulate notions of exploitation as part of labour-market policy, even if unstated (cf. Byrne 1999: 57 – 'The battle against exclusion must be a battle against exploitation.'). Exclusion is founded on a set of specific economic relations and the discussion of social policy in this study is not an uncritical acceptance of the status quo nor of a 'blame the victim' mentality (even if policy is couched in the language of inclusion). In Miller's view (Miller 2001: 39), there has been:

... failure of earlier initiatives over the last thirty years. These have been experimental, ad hoc, piecemeal, limited in time and scope, and often oriented towards single state-delivered services.

The more recent partnership approach contains an element of decentralisation involving local people more directly in managing some of their own affairs. Decentralisation as process marches with the shift in local administration from government to governance (Paddison and Jeffrey 1998/9), with an increased emphasis on restructuring to ensure '[an] emphasis on participation, greater transparency of decision-making and the tailoring of service provision with local needs' (p.55). Within the Scottish unitary authorities there has been a broad continuity of policy and practice between Conservative and Labour administrations after local government reorganisation in 1996. The emphasis has tended to be on administrative devolution often on an area basis (e.g. in Glasgow with its area management committees), but this process needs to be distinguished from the establishment of the SIPs which are more contingent in character and designed to meet very specific (perhaps extreme) needs.



**Figure 1.1: Aspects of decentralisation showing the spectrum from service delivery to enhanced democracy.**  
 [Source: Paddison and Jeffrey 1998/9: 59]

Figure 1.1 shows aspects of decentralisation linking a more sensitive delivery of local services with ‘enhanced’ democracy, combining a technocratic (service) approach with a more ‘political’ (representational) approach in area-based offices and local management committees. Although such a formal system may help true partnership working, it cannot *produce* it; equally real partnership may subsist without any such formal arrangement. The proposed task is neither simple nor easy; the purpose of study in the social sciences may be:

... not simply about understanding the reasons people give for their actions in terms of the contexts in which they act as well as analysing the relations of cause and effect in the social, political and economic spheres, but also concerns the hopes, wishes and aspirations that people, in their different cultural ways, hold. (Tim May in the foreword to Byrne 1999: ix)

The concern of the study is to balance these two approaches.

### **The structure of the thesis**

Viewing the study area from these different ‘perspectives’ raises a number of issues which require further exploration and consideration. It is not proposed at this stage to pose formal research questions (but see the three ‘themes’ below); however, there are issues which need to be explored in a systematic way. For example, how is the form of regeneration determined? Who has the *power* to do so? To what extent are local groups and communities ‘empowered’ with regard to these processes? Who else is involved in this process? Is this exploration of the notion of power a *sufficient* explanation of the processes involved? Can a useful meaning be attached to the notion of social capital? What role might trust, and the expectation that aims will be met, play? Is there a collaborative mechanism rooted in practical policies which might affect these

processes? Is the notion of partnership itself uncontested? Whose aims and objectives are really being met? Is the creation of a formal partnership sufficient to ensure success? Finally, is there a *geography* of partnership<sup>12</sup> which can illustrate the successful working of the partnership process on the ground?

Crystallising these various notions, it is possible to summarise the key concerns of the study as they have developed and group them in three broad themes (which may be regarded a surrogate questions although phrased as statements of intent):

### *Theme 1: Power and Empowerment*

(a) To explore the central notion of power in order to arrive at a view which will incorporate notions of capacity – a measure of ability to act – and legitimacy – a measure of the authority for action.

(b) Arising from this, an attempt to explore some of the mechanisms through which local power is exercised and the need to explore the nature of power (e.g. issues of sovereignty/dominance) in a non-ontological way to arrive at a view of the shape of power-in-partnership, the concern of the thesis.

(c) To consider power not as an end in itself, but as a *signifier* of other social and economic relationships and – critically – as providing a credible *base* on which other relationships may be constructed.

### *Theme 2: Social Capital and Trust*

(a) Following these issues of power, to consider the background against which social relationships at the local level are constructed in terms of relational *networks* and the operation of *trust*, both critical in any view of local partnership.

(b) To place these networks within a practical local governance context providing a framework for *collaborative working*.

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<sup>12</sup> Using perhaps the definition of geography as ‘the spatial analysis of landscape’; put simply, what would a successful partnership *look like* on the ground?

*Theme 3: Partnership Working*

- (a) On the base of both the operation of power and (in broad terms) social capital to consider critically the actual operation of formal partnerships, particularly through the lens of *governmentality* and a critical review of the formal literature of partnership in Scotland.
- (b) Finally, based on these earlier issues, to consider critically the ‘shape’ of local partnership and what might constitute it.

Following this *Introduction*, the next three Chapters are concerned to explore some of the theoretical issues relevant to the thesis. The three principal theoretical concerns of the topic relate to issues surrounding *Power* (including the notion of empowerment) in Chapter 2, *Social Capital* (including the role of trust and collaborative planning) in Chapter 3, and *Partnership* (including consideration of governmentality) in Chapter 4. It is argued that the relationship between these concepts, and the order in which they are considered, is not a casual one. A reflection on power relationships at the local level, and particularly on the salience of circuits of power theory, sees the interaction between individuals (actors and agents) and groups as dynamic and constantly changing; in turn, this interaction leads (or can lead) to the development of local networks and the establishment of reciprocal norms, which result in the formation of trust. The *ideal* product of these collective interactions is, through collaborative working, partnership (or, more importantly, *partnership working*), seen as the logical but not inevitable outcome of this ascending sequence of activity.

Having considered what can be seen as the more speculative or theoretical issues raised by reflection on the nature of local partnership working, Chapter 5 details the methodology adopted in the field in order to explore these concepts in a more embodied and grounded way. The positioning of this chapter, at the nodal point of the thesis, is appropriate since views of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ developed not in a strict sequential or chronological way as the chapter layout might indicate but in a more contrapuntal or binary way with each influencing and informing the other(s) through time and in the course of reflection and writing. This ‘structuration’ precludes the strict separation of theory and practice and indeed any attempt to use the case-studies to ‘prove’ the theory or suggesting that the theory should *determine* (rather than informing) what is encountered in the field. The principal methodological issues are whether to use a

broadly quantitative or qualitative approach (with the latter justified) and the manner in which the fieldwork should be undertaken. The preferred approach is a combination of some archival research, semi-structured interviews, a longitudinal participant observation in Yoker in a process of (near) 'immersion' and finally a comparative and focused study in Drumchapel.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 detail the programme of research in the field through the medium of the various research interviews and transcriptions. Chapter 6 is concerned to explore the *Youth Library Project*, regarded as a 'local exercise in power and empowerment' and exemplifying or 'shadowing' the more theoretical discussion of Power in chapter 2. Chapter 7 is concerned to reflect on social capital, trust and collaborative planning as experienced in the study area and focuses on the *Advocacy (Incinerator) Project* as an example of 'the role of transformative advocacy' in the formation of social capital locally (and beyond). Chapter 8 on the *Old School Project* (chronologically the first field study to be undertaken) – subtitled *Local Exercises in Governmentality and Partnership Working* – has developed along with the thesis, both in reflective and in actual time: what was an 'idea' in 1996 has, like the thesis, only just come to actual fruition in 2003/4.

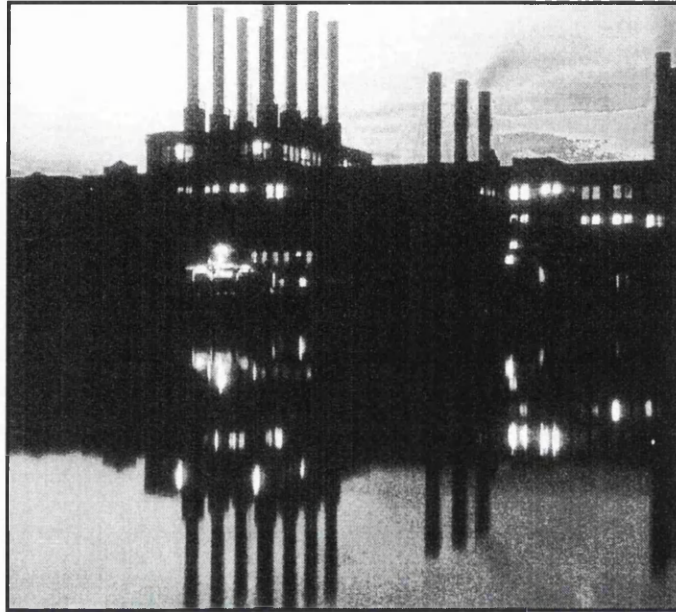
Chapter 9 is in some ways problematical; the intention to provide a comparison and contrast to Yoker by doing fieldwork in Drumchapel involved making a number of key decisions: whether or not it should be undertaken at all, the need to keep it strictly focused and the fear of not doing the area justice all combined to make the decision difficult. The final form of the chapter falls into two principal parts: a discourse analysis of the vision document of the local partnership and an extended discussion of an interview with two local activists; the intention is to assess the level of 'participatory thickness' in the area as compared to Yoker and to evaluate the 'unstructured' history of the one compared to the 'structured' history of the other.

Chapter 10 attempts a summary of the preceding chapters and concludes the study, both as a synthesis of theory and practice, and as a demonstration of the structuration between them which provides an explanation for the partnership process.

## Chapter 2

### POWER

#### *The Mechanics of Power and Empowerment in Regeneration Areas*



**Plate 2.1: The old Yoker Power Station, symbol of the industrial era and the area's 'power'; now demolished.**

To say that those who are subject to the effects of power are free is to say ... that they are themselves in a position to act on the actions of others; that is, to engage in the exercise of power on their own account.

For this reason ... relationships of power will often  
be unstable, ambiguous and reversible.

Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault (Hindess 1996: 101)

### **Introduction**

To understand the nature of urban regeneration partnerships it is useful to begin with a fundamental consideration of the social and economic matrix in which they are grounded. One approach to this is to see how people relate locally to one another in



transactional terms, in their capacity to act, in their degree of *power*<sup>1</sup>. In this context, ‘power’ has a very specific meaning and hence the concern with the ‘mechanics’ or ‘workings’ of power as they may be recognised in the local arena. The title quote (Hindess 1996) encapsulates some of the pre-eminent concerns of this chapter:

- The notion that power is exercised by – and is exercised upon – individuals who (in some degree) are ‘free agents’;
- That this interaction is central to an understanding of the exercise of power at the local level;
- That this exercise of power is dynamic – often within what will be called circuits of power – and hence changeable and negotiable; and
- That indeed these relationships are often ‘unstable, ambiguous and reversible’.

The notion of power has been a central concern of much political and sociological debate in Western thought, but the concern here is with those small-scale (but important) episodes and discourses that characterise its exercise and experience at the local level (Foucault’s ‘capillaries’). These are certainly not unaffected by more global and general discourses, nor by issues that concern society as a whole, but if the study is to have any particular merit it must have a more focused emphasis on these local transactions. There will, therefore, be only a general review of the wider theoretical views of power as they seem relevant to local partnership working; however, some understanding of this debate is necessary and will provide a firmer base for the more fine-grained analyses to follow.

Within the broad theme of power as set out in Chapter 1, principal concerns must be:

- (a) To determine what can be understood by notions of *capacity* and *legitimacy* as providing a ground-base for local action;
- (b) To discuss the *mechanisms* through which power is exercised in the realm of local regeneration partnerships; and

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<sup>1</sup> The English word *power* derives through the Anglo-French *poer* ultimately from the Latin verb *posse*, ‘to be able (to)’, with cognate words such as *potens* meaning ‘able, powerful, capable’ [See *Cassell’s New Compact Latin-English, English-Latin Dictionary* (1927; third edition 1969: 173, London: Cassell).]

(c) To locate power and its exercise within a broader social, economic and political matrix centring on *local interaction* within the study area in particular (and developed principally in the field studies).

The structure of the chapter is therefore: (a) an extended discussion of capacity and legitimacy through the historic community-power debate into notions of social power and structuration, and the centrality of consent; (b) a consideration of the role of agency and scale (the ‘human face’ of power), before discussing circuits of power and a brief review of Foucault’s notions of power; and finally (c) a brief consideration of the ‘entanglements’ of local power as a prelude to wider notions of social capital discussed in the next chapter. It is well, however, to be relatively modest in intent (Byrne 1999: 70):

Power is the most nebulous and the most important of all social concepts. Measuring it is almost impossible. We tend to use praxis in terms of the consequences of the possession of power, measured usually by means of material circumstances and influence.

### **Origins of Power: Simple Capacity**

To begin, it is useful to employ the distinction between power as either *simple* or *legitimate* (Hindess 1996: 2-9 and 10-13).

*Power as Simple Capacity* Power in Western thought is often conceived of as ‘a simple capacity to act’<sup>2</sup>, in other words as a quantitative phenomenon to be used by people either on things (e.g. their capacity to ‘control’ nature) or in their dealings with one another (e.g. their capacity to coerce). All else being equal, people with more power will be able to outdo those with less (Hindess 1996: 2, quoting Weber):

... the chance of a man [sic] or a number of men to realise their own will even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action.

This concept of power as simple coercive capacity implies that relations between people will be *unequal*; some will employ power to achieve their (selfish) objectives, while

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<sup>2</sup> Thus Russell (1938): ‘Power may be defined as the production of intended effects. It is thus a *quantitative* concept ... it is easy to say, roughly, that A has more power than B, if A achieves many intended effects and B only a few.’ (my emphasis, quoted in Lukes 1986: 19).

others will be subject to its effects; this is power as *domination*<sup>3</sup>. For many commentators, this view of power is regarded as fundamental and all notions of power can in their view ultimately be reduced to this concept. It is at the heart of Lukes's 'radical view' (Lukes 1974), written as a commentary on the debate within America at that time on 'community power'; briefly, this debate can be reduced to two opposing concepts: (a) the *pluralist* view and (b) the *elite* view. The pluralists (exemplified by Dahl) maintain that the exercise of power focuses on behaviour in decision-making, based on conflicted subjective issues 'seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation' (Lukes 1974: 15). Lukes rightly sees this rather *realpolitik* or 'liberal' view of power<sup>4</sup>, which sees the absence of a proven (and *visible*) elite (or elites) as proof of a more democratic or pluralist exercise of power as unconvincing and 'one-dimensional'.

In the *elite* view, the exercise of power is concentrated in the hands of groups (military, governmental and business), who exercise this power in an *irresponsible* way, i.e. they are not 'responsible' to the prevailing norms of American democracy, which 'we had been taught to revere' (Hunter, quoted in Hindess 1996: 3). The pluralists argue that power is neither as concentrated, nor exercised as irresponsibly, as the elite theorists maintain; in general, elites are not as unified as their protagonists imply and power is in practice much more atomised among groups and individuals. However, in Lukes's view, the elite theorists at least recognise 'two faces of power', the public and the private, where (Hindess 1996: 4):

... (it) can be seen in the covert exclusion of the interests of particular individuals or groups in legislative assemblies, council chambers and other arenas in which decisions affecting the life of the community are taken.

This more 'two-dimensional' view has at least a 'reformist' agenda, since it recognises that the 'benign public presentation of power as representing the general interest' (*ibid.*)

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<sup>3</sup> In Weber's view: 'Without exception every sphere of social action is profoundly influenced by structures of dominancy. In a great number of cases the emergence of rational association from amorphous social action is due to domination and the way it has been exercised.' (Weber 1978 in Lukes 1986: 28). There is therefore at least a *tendency* towards domination in powerful agencies.

<sup>4</sup> Dahl is memorably quoted as having concluded from his study of New Haven (Hindess 1996: 3-4): '... it is a republic of unequal citizens – but for all that a republic' [!].

possibly conceals the covert manipulation of agendas and setting of the general rules of the game by these very elite interests<sup>5</sup>.

As a refinement of the elite view of power, Lukes proposes a ‘three-dimensional’ view, suggesting that, in addition to the public and private faces of power, there is another where the ‘victims’ of the misuse of power fail even to recognise that their interests have been affected and consequently make no attempt to defend those interests, corresponding to the Marxian and Gramscian view that bourgeois domination is possible in part because the dominated are unaware of their ‘true’ interests in overthrowing their repression and manipulation by the ruling class (and may, indeed, cooperate in that repression)<sup>6</sup>. In summary, Lukes’s three dimensions are (after Stewart 1995: 11):

1. The overt resolution of conflict between two or more conflicting positions;
2. The covert dimension excluding issues from public decision-making; and
3. The ‘institutionalisation’ of interests in society where power structures are accepted and internalised without question or recognition.

Even if this view overdramatises the situation of power relationships at the local-area level, it is a useful reminder that these relations cannot be taken at face value, nor that formal ‘policy statements’ are necessarily a signifier of the real intent of the putative partners. In addition, Hindess regards even Lukes’s views, however refined, as too simplistic<sup>7</sup> (i.e. reducing power to the level of simple capacity) and too narrowly focused on the historic community-power debate.

He identifies one further refinement (from Mann 1986) of the definition of power as *social power* (compare Stone’s 1993 concept of *social production*), which combines two aspects of power: (a) that of some people over others and (b) that of collective and cooperative action, where the power of individuals can combine to achieve common goals. By Mann’s definition:

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<sup>5</sup> An equally useful overview of the community-power debate and of other historic approaches to it can be found in Sharp (2000), especially pages 3-8; the state is perceived both as ‘the legitimate site of authority’ and also as relatively neutral (or disinterested); crucially, the state is ‘both responsive and neutral, and ... individuals and groups are interpreted as *rational actors pursuing their interests*’ (p 4, my emphasis).

<sup>6</sup> What the ‘true interests’ of people may be is problematical; real (ideological) interests seen as ‘independent’ of the goals and wishes of people (a classical Marxist view) may be characterised as ‘religious mania alone speak[ing] here’ (!) rather than analysis (Geiger, quoted in Lukes 1974: 15).

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, he identifies Lukes’s one-dimensional view with liberalism, the two-dimensional with reformism and the three-dimensional with radicalism (p 12).

... social stratification is the overall creation and distribution of power in society. It is the central structure of societies because in its dual collective and distributive aspects it is the means whereby human beings achieve their goals in society. (Mann 1986: 10)

Society does therefore exist (*pace* Thatcher) and it does have power structures; moreover, the clear implication in this description of stratification is that it is not static, that it has an inherent dynamism ('creation and distribution') and that there is a process of interaction ('collective and distributive aspects') ongoing. It is possible to see this relationship in the way Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) are delineated: they are defined by a set of criteria which groups people in both a defined socio-economic 'set' or stratum (*below* the average or accepted levels) and in a spatial sense (circumscribed by the delineation of a 'partnership area'), which qualifies them for a particular governmental policy intervention. However, the *outcomes* of that intervention will depend largely on the dynamic relationship of the people involved. In his theory of structuration, Giddens (1984) sees power as having a duality of structure (see the discussion below): on the one hand it relates to the capacity of agents to 'make a difference', while on the other it inheres in society as a whole, or in the social community. This power-in-structure acts as a *resource* for agents as well as a constraint. Actions by agents, in turn, can be seen as 'not only expressing the intention of individual agents, but also serving to reproduce the structure in which such action takes place' (Hindess 1996: 9). Again, this is a dynamic and changeable relationship in which power relations are not fixed but capable of evolution.

### **Origins of Power: Legitimate Capacity**

(2) *Power as legitimate capacity* The concept of power as *simple capacity* is too simplistic as a sufficient explanation of a complex phenomenon and Hindess (1996: 10-13) develops the concept further as *legitimate capacity*, the main concern of his book. Crucially, power is seen not as an insensate force whose efficacy is dependent on mere mass, but in addition as a function of *consent*. The key text in understanding this formulation of power comes from Parsons (1969):

(Power is) the generalised capacity to secure the performance of binding obligations by units in a system of collective action when the obligations are legitimised with reference to their bearing on collective goals and where in the case of recalcitrance there is a presumption of enforcement by negative situational sanctions. (Quoted in Hindess 1996: 11)

Although this quotation may not have ‘felicity of prose’ (Hindess), it does introduce a number of key elements in understanding the operation of power at the local level in particular: it is a capacity or mechanism for ensuring *collaborative working* towards common goals, which in turn give this mechanism legitimacy. Failure to perform, however, is accompanied by a presumption of enforcement by (unspecified) negative sanctions. As will be discussed later (in Chapter 3), formal sanctions in this context may be inappropriate, but non-compliance may result for example in the breakdown of trust (an effective sanction) which would inhibit further collective working. The central notion of *consent*, implying negotiation and agreement, is crucial to an understanding of the operation of this kind of power; where consent is lacking, the ‘power’ is qualitatively different and may indeed be mere coercion<sup>8</sup>. Although in a western democracy there is no limit to the sovereign power of the state (in its legitimate concerns of government), that power is exercised with the consent of and on behalf of the people, as expressed through regular elections and an agreed constitution (written or otherwise). So there is to some extent a conflation between the ideas of government, power, consent and the people. It is not unreasonable to see this conflation as the basis for an imperative for local government; if central government is a function of consent (of the governed), the same applies locally. Consent provides government with the *right* to govern (its *legitimacy*), but obligations (on citizens) arising from that - e.g. taxation, conscription – provide it with the *capacity* to do so. However, as citizens have rights and obligations towards their government, so ‘government’ in its manifold forms equally has rights and obligations towards them. This ‘reciprocity’ is at the heart of the partnership debate and this ‘implied contract’ (and more explicit contract in the case of formal partnerships) is the normative ideal against which practice can be measured.

As well as actual capacity, power can also be understood as *latent* or *potential*, i.e. the ‘concealed’ ability to undertake some action or enterprise. In Dowding’s neat definition: ‘Power is a dispositional concept’ (Dowding 1996: 3). Thus, while this concept can to some extent be reified (as someone ‘having power’), it is very difficult to describe it exactly or to ascribe to it definite limits or parameters. It is therefore easier

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<sup>8</sup> In Russell’s terms ‘naked power’ not founded on tradition or assent (consent); historically important since ‘[c]onquest by force of arms has had more to do with the spread of civilisation than any other single agency.’ (Lukes 1986: 21).

to assess the *outcomes* of power or to describe the *consequences* of the exercise of power. Dowding's two concepts of power are useful (Dowding 1996: 5):

1. *Outcome power*: the ability of an actor to bring about or help to bring about outcomes; or
2. *Social power*: the ability of an actor deliberately to change the incentive structure of another actor or actors to bring about or help to bring about outcomes.

The 'incentive structure' of any actor may be regarded as the full set of costs and benefits inherent in behaving one way rather than another. This in turn is influenced by the actor's 'choice situation' which is (my emphasis) 'engendered by the *deliberate actions* of others or ... some non-deliberative process akin to natural selection' (Dowding 1996: 7). Clearly, the 'deliberate actions' of others may not be immediately apparent and the more remote the cause the less obvious will be its origin and the more it may seem like chance or a 'natural' phenomenon. As an example, the skill shortages now apparent in many partnership areas are the result of changing global patterns of trade and manufacturing, resulting in the closure of traditional industry, and the 'failure' of workers to retrain; 'blame' is therefore transferred from transnational capital and the failure of government to manage change to the individual actor (see Byrne 1999). Similarly, the creation of SIPs is akin to central government (in this case the Scottish Executive) changing the incentive structure for local actors; failure to engage in the choice situation (i.e. to become a partner in the SIP) presents the actor(s) with a stark choice – inclusion or exclusion. In reality, the choice may not be quite so stark; there is some opportunity to modify and develop 'the rules' as set down in the partnership agreement and in the end mutual needs require to be met (see also the discussion of structuration below).

However, within the context of this chapter, it is not intended to view the exercise of power as having the 'pervasiveness of an anonymous dominating power' (Sharp 2000: 3). Within the context of local partnerships, power is exercised ostensibly and formally *primarily at the human level* – person to person and agency to agency (where agency is identified through agents and not primarily through structures or formal texts). The concern in Sharp 'to retain a clear focus on the dominance/resistance couplet' (Sharp 2000: 1) must as a fundamental principle be 'resisted' within the

context of this thesis, not because its validity as concept is denied (whether seen in binary or more ‘entangled’ terms), but simply because it appears to deny or at least question the validity of cooperation/collaboration (‘partnership’) *as a normative principle*.

The relationship of power as action and resistance as reaction is much more subtle and interactive and is constantly modified in practice by face-to-face contact at the local level; this interplay, however, is not a signifier of resistance/dominance but supposedly of collaboration. In addition, the *stated* objective of much recent public policy in the UK, as it affects local communities, has been to modify or ameliorate the social and economic consequences of post-Fordist deindustrialisation or the local effects of globalisation (Dicken 1998, Sassen 2001) – but see Byrne’s distinction in Pacione (1997: 109-111) between policy as *creative* (improving the physical form of the city for example) or *responsive* (redressing or managing ‘the social consequences of division’) – or simply to enable communities (and more often the individuals and groups within them) to manage *adverse* change more effectively. (See also the extended discussion on regeneration policy in Chapter 1.) The stated aim of much regeneration may be to give communities or individuals in deprived areas power to function as more ‘normal’ units in general society (e.g. The Scottish Office 1988 and 1993), but this aim may in itself be a signifier of a much deeper complex of unstated power interactions in which unequal relationships are in practice reinforced or at best modified only marginally through the exercise of public policy initiatives. However, in contemporary urban regeneration policy the guiding principle of collaboration (literally ‘working together’), even although challenged must be retained as an ideal.

### **Agency/Structure and the issue of scale**

Through the earlier consideration of the concept of power either as capacity or what has been called power-in-structure (e.g. social power), we are able to arrive at the position of seeing both as dynamic interactive components of the interplay of people and organisations at the local level. Another way of conceptualising this relationship is to consider it in terms of *agency* and *structure*, neither being seen as a discrete component but as interacting with one another in what Giddens (1984) has called *structuration*. It is unsatisfactory either (a) to perceive *structure* – social, political or economic – as an absolute determinant or total constraint on human action, or (b) to see



agents (people) – their actions, ideals and cultures – as completely free and unconstrained by structure. The dilemma is to arrive at (Duncan 1985: 178):

... a working theory of action ... avoid[ing] on the one hand the determinism of the structural view, and on the other the idealism and hyper-individualism of some non-structural approaches.

In the intensely practical world of partnership working it is essential to understand (Cloke *et al.* 1991: 94) ‘how action in society is crucially “set” in time and space’. This ‘setting’ depends not simply on location but critically *at what point* it takes place, particularly in a policy continuum (see chapter 1); policies may succeed one another, but they are neither conceptually linear nor is their sequence logical. People are both knowledgeable and capable, so the art/technique of partnership is a skilful realisation of their goals by these agents but within both a local history of power, struggle and experience (and also structures) that enable or facilitate that realisation. In structuration theory, there is a binary relationship: structure enables behaviour, but behaviour can both influence and (re)constitute structure, and this relationship can transcend (Cloke *et al.* 1991: 98) ‘the dualism of deterministic views of structure and voluntaristic views of agency’. It is possible to see action as occurring in a structured context (e.g. a SIP) but also that some elements of structure are reproduced in action, e.g. the implementation of a plan or programme which is necessary to facilitate realisation, but this action in turn can help to modify practice and ultimately policy.

Just as policy is not linear, neither has been the development of the notion of structuration, which is (Cloke *et al.* 1991: 96, quoting Gregory):

... a research programme developed through a continuous dialogue between the theoretical and the empirical ... (the project) is not linear: one proposition does not succeed another in a unidimensional unidirectional sequence.

Equally, the sense in which structuration is used here is not as a critiqued theory but as a reasonable tool for making sense of the empirical (practical) relationship between agents and the structures within which they operate. Simply, structures can enable (facilitate) behaviour which in turn has the potential to influence or reconstitute structure. However, past history, the structure of society (particularly in the disposition of resources) and *purposive* human agency all have a part to play in this process. Action over time (as opposed to discrete acts) will have consequences (some ‘unintended’) which will contribute to the unacknowledged conditions influencing that action; so ‘structure’ is intimately bound up with human agency and not ‘external’ to it. Critically,

in Giddens's view *institutions* – ‘the most enduring features of social life’ (Cloke *et al.* 1991: 102) – help to give ‘solidity’ over time and space<sup>9</sup>.

Giddens has been criticised for seeing structuration at either the micro- (the individual) or macro-level (e.g. government) of human activity and not allowing for the meso-level, such as the family or the local group or the factory, ostensibly a better scale for our purpose, but he rejects this for ‘the core interconnection between social interaction and system interaction’ (Cloke *et al.* 1991: 113). However, scale is important and it can affect perceptions and hence relationships. The distinction between the ‘front’ (visible, ‘on show’, governed by rules = ‘disclosure’) and the ‘back’ (private, underdeveloped, hidden away = ‘enclosure’) is often observed at the local level. The front corresponds to notions of ‘the centre’, in control and (*ibid.*: 115) ‘employing[ing] a range of social tactics to distance [itself] from others who are treated as inferiors or outsiders’, while the back can be seen as ‘peripheral’ and subordinate. Without overstressing this view, it is possible to recognise four scales at which agency/structure operates:

1. National (or sub-national/regional – the UK, Scotland);
2. Sub-national (local authority area – Glasgow City);
3. Small-area local (SIP area or Yoker ward); and
4. Neighbourhood (but see Harris and Johnston 2003 on finer-scale).

The *focus* of agency/structure becomes important depending on the perception (position) of the agent or the observer, as in Table 2.1. The table and the various relationships are necessarily simplified and must be understood in very broad terms: an MP may be acutely conscious of his/her constituents; a local government department may be sensitive to the needs of those it serves; actors in the local area may have a highly-developed sense of their relationship with the local authority; and a local group

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<sup>9</sup> If *institutions* persist, it is not unreasonable to see communities rooted in specific areas as fulfilling the same function, hence the interaction and structuration of ‘government’ and ‘community’.

Table 2.1: Scale and focus

Scale	Structure	Agency	Relationship	Other
<b>National</b>	Important; large-grained, formalised.	Agents of organisations important; Local actors remote, indistinct.	Agents, actors both subsidiary to structure.	Focus on centre and scale immediately below.
<b>Sub-national</b>	Important; smaller-grained, still formalised	Agents important as mediators; Local actors better known.	Structure still important; role of agent as interlocutor with local more important.	Aware of intermediate position between national and local; focus on both.
<b>Change of focus</b>				
<b>Small-area</b>	Relatively unimportant; weak and informal.	Local actors all-important; key role for agents of sub-national.	Structures seen as remote; focus on actors/agents.	Abrupt change compared to above; focus on actors, advocacy and service-provision.
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	Structure even less defined (except for organised groups).	All-important; both local actors/agents and sub-national agents crucial.	Anything above small-area seen as remote, even hostile.	More inward-looking than above; can act as atomised and detached.

Source: Author's compilation

may be highly structured and focused on one area of service delivery, etc<sup>10</sup>. (All these different nuances may be observed in the interviews in the field-work chapters.)

The table shows, in broad terms, the relationship between 'the centre' and 'the local'; however, the focus will shift depending upon the standpoint of the observer. To 'the centre', whether at national or local-authority level, the respective structures are important and will act as the point of reference ('the focus') for its agents (whether MPs, MSPs, civil servants or officials); but 'the local' becomes 'the centre' for *its* actors and agents (residents, voluntary workers, local employees). The polarities, or standpoints are thus reversed and this reversal can help to explain why the centre may be seen as irrelevant to or unheeding of the concerns of the local, and vice-versa. Thus, the structures, whether perceived as strong or weak ('front' or 'back'), and the agents/actors, depending on how they relate to one another and these strong or weak

<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, at the level of personal relationships, the Yoker Resource Group has always had a close relationship with the centre in the form of the local MP and MSP (latterly Secretary of State and First Minister); this has continued with the current MSP, underlining the potential 'closeness' of the Edinburgh Parliament. Relations with the local ward member of Glasgow City Council are also very close.

structures, will interact in a complex way in a form of structuration which will be *overt* in the case of formal partnerships (although the rules are initially ‘set’, practice will often modify over time) or *covert* in areas where no partnership exists (where Hastings’s (1996) view of the relative facility of resource synergy rather than formal policy synergy will operate).

### **Circuits of power**

To counter further the static notion of capacity and to see how structuration may work in practice, it is useful to consider the notion of *circuits of power*, which can be illustrated as follows (Stewart 1995: 12):

This analogy suggests that power is not possessed but flows through circuits ... Developing this image, switches may need to be thrown to relieve blockages, or new linkages developed to allow power to flow in new ways and around new circuits.

Briefly, Clegg (1989) sees power as operating through the medium of agents<sup>11</sup>, organised within a structure and acting as a conduit through which power is transmitted from source to receiver: ‘an analysis of causal power, in agency terms, of particular episodes’ (Clegg 1989: 187); in the process of transmission, power is delegated to these agents who in turn exercise some degree of *discretion* or interpretation in their dealings or negotiations with recipients. Recipients in their turn will deal with these agents as the representatives of an ostensibly powerful agency (in the sense of having resource capacity), in the expectation that some of their perceived needs will be met. Crudely, this represents a reasonable model of how power operates at the local level. Like Hindess, Clegg compares Hobbes and Machiavelli; the former concerned with what power *is* (an ontological view), the latter with what it *does* (an epistemological or even teleological view); Hobbes is a rationalist of state power and order, Machiavelli is an outsider, separated from both power and the state – his concerns are ‘strategic, local and practical’ (Clegg 1989: 202). This notion of contingent local power operating within a constantly shifting and evolving matrix, and constrained both by the capacity of agents and the demands of structures provides a basic model within which to analyse local partnerships.

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<sup>11</sup> ‘Agency’ can be both human and non-human (machines, games, ‘constitutions’) and is essentially ‘an achievement of control produced by discipline’ (Clegg 1989: 188).

Clegg considers Lukes's approach (the 'three dimensions' of power) to be conventionalist, one which is entirely socially constructed; a more realist approach would suggest that social constructs are not fixed, but change as knowledges develop (or in our terms as policies and practices evolve). However, Lukes's 'dialectics of power and structure' – further developed by Giddens (see above) – where social structure is produced by and interacts with the 'knowledgeable agents' who are its subjects – is fundamental to the debate, much of which is concerned with the 'big issues' of ideology and hegemony, especially the focus on dominant/resistant ideologies (e.g. see Sharp *et al.* 2000), which may be seen as ideas or as sets of practices which 'foreclose' an infinite set of possibilities in determinate ways. But the 'post-structuralist' approach is exemplified by Foucault's work on disciplinary power<sup>12</sup>.

It is useful to see Clegg's discussion of power primarily as a focus for understanding (a) how power operates at the local level and, as importantly, (b) the parts that may be played by the various actors. His discussion of circuits of power is predicated on the issue of *episodic agency*, i.e. the intermittent exercise of power where agents may be seen either as (a) agents of *signification* – as intimately identified with an agency – or (b) as agents of *production* – a more radical view ascribing to them independent ('free') capacity to act<sup>13</sup>. Equally, they may in agency terms act legitimately or illegitimately; the former suggests observing the strict 'rules of the game', the latter – depending on contingency or the degree of resource allocation – implying being part of an organisation but exercising power tactically. Whether power is exercised transitively (governed by rules) or intransitively (governed by acquired skills) 'resistance ... will tend to be pervasive' (Clegg 1989:193); there is no such thing as a 'friction-free' exercise of power. However power is exercised, it raises the issue of *surveillance*, the extent to which any structure is 'aware' of the activities of its agents. Because of this, there will be a tendency for organisations (especially large or long-established ones) to develop 'strategies of discipline', based on 'sedimentary' practices founded on experience, acquired expertise and 'the files' (formal records, etc.); Clegg sees

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<sup>12</sup> Foucault is both a useful critic of conventional views on power, especially in its sovereign aspects, and also provides a historical perspective on the actual practices and techniques by which power was exercised (see below).

<sup>13</sup> It is important not to separate these two notions; most agents are both 'meaning' and 'body' in organisational terms.

organisations as ‘discursive locales of competing calculations’ (Clegg 1989:192), challenging a ‘monolithic’ discourse of power.

Within this study of partnership, analysis will often be of particular policies carried out by specific agents or groups or individuals, in relation to a particular issue or set of issues or focusing on one particular objective (see the case-studies in Chapters 6-9). Agencies often see themselves in a disinterested way, administering policies in a rational, detached manner, based on objective criteria; it is useful also to note Clegg’s observation that organisations will tend to subordinate their constituent individual parts to achieve their stated purpose, but that the relative balance between individual and organisation will be constantly variable. The character and capacity of agents will be critical to how policies are actually delivered; equally such agents can alternately exaggerate or minimise their level of discretion in order to achieve tactical advantage. Within organisations, power implies both (intra-agency) resistance and/or reciprocity, because it exists within a defined set of relationships. Therefore, although the exercise of power in agencies implies control, that control can never be absolute and will tend in practice to be eroded by the very agents they aspire to control. In practice an employer (agency) will exercise both power and trust in relation to an employee (agent), who in turn will exercise autonomy and discretion. The relations between the two may be set out in a formal contract, but they will also be dependant on the organisation as a discursive forum for informal decision and action, which will respond in an existential way to changing circumstances. Organisational action can be regarded as the substantive struggle between different agents or agencies (or different facets of the same agency), rather than as the outcome of some rational principle.

In considering strategic agency, Clegg points out that agencies wishing to increase strategicality must form a ‘necessary nodal point’<sup>14</sup> (e.g. a social inclusion partnership) with another agency on terms which privilege *it* (i.e. the putative strategic agency). In the same way, the subordinate agency will have only those interests allowed to it that the strategic agency is willing to concede. Even if this is too blunt a formulation of local power, it can be assumed that agencies will, all other things being equal, seek to operate to their own maximum advantage. However, a useful alternative is Weber’s view of ‘science as vocation’ (Clegg 1989: 197) – here discipline is the

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<sup>14</sup> Cognate with Healey’s idea of the ‘politics of influence’ *clustering* around government and quasi-government (Chapter 4).

enablement of *creative* activity exercised positively, but constrained by an ideal (e.g. of 'science' or community empowerment). Strategic agencies must reproduce their interests in others; if they are *not* reproduced, then that leads to transformation or change, regarded as negative from an agency perspective. However, since transformation is a *goal* of partnership (Wilson 1996, Hastings 1996), it is true that, in some sense, the workings of partnership will produce *mutual* change, which must be regarded positively. One clue to the difficulties often experienced in both day-to-day and strategic operations at the local level is the need (Clegg 1989: 200; quoting Barnes, my emphases):

... to retain discretion over a large number of routines requires delegation. But for the maximum retained discretion over any particular routine, the requirement is that *authority* be delegated but not *power*.

This is one of the most obvious tensions in local partnership working, especially between organisations of unequal size. Partnership in a real sense must imply the delegation of both authority *and* power and this can be realised and understood only within a 'plus-sum' context (Wilson 1996). However, the general rules of the game of power (after Clegg) can be summarised in the following way:

- Power gives rise to authority, which is exercised through delegation, which in turn implies discretion;
- Action implies rules, which in turn must be interpreted, and this act of interpretation will empower agents themselves in the exercise of their discretion;
- A strong sense of hegemonic or dominant power allows of no discretion, but in practice the exercise of local power is premised on a knowledge of the rules of the game by the relevant actors; and
- Crucially, local actors will construct (conscious) strategies and (submerged) practices which constitute and reproduce 'networks of interest'; interests in turn are empirical devices for achieving a desired outcome.

Collectively, these constitute the 'rules of the game'. When considering power as episodic (in Clegg's view the 'normal power' of social science), it is necessary to see it moving 'in *circuits* in which rules, relations and resources ... are translated, fixed and reproduced/transformed' (Clegg 1989: 211; my emphasis). One essential ingredient for understanding power is to consider the role played by rules, not to be thought of as forming part of some 'level playing field' (true only in theory or in games of pure

chance), but as ‘fragile, ambiguous, unclear’ and *open to interpretation*. In general, those who ‘possess’ most power will have greatest scope for action and for interpreting or reinterpreting the rules (presumably to retain or maximise their own power: see Russell 1938). Clegg sees intention as relating not so much to mental state as to how social behaviour is identified as social *actions*, ascribed to agents and judged (by others) as ‘vocabularies of motive’<sup>15</sup>.

Power secures outcomes and fixes/reproduces ‘substantively rational’ conditions in which the chosen strategies make contextual good sense. (The context is set by the powerful who pursue rational policies within it.) Episodic power (Clegg 1989:212-15) occurs within a reasonably well-defined framework. (a ‘conditional environment’), within an ‘arena of struggle’, where agents utilise means and control resources to achieve particular outcomes. Organisations gain control of events by *giving up* control of those in which they have no essential interest. In another sense, this can be seen as the powerful achieving their objectives by proxy or by remote control and within terms defined by them (see the discussion on governmentality in Chapter 4). As well as being episodic in this sense, power can also be dispositional (concerned with rules and regulations), or in a restricted sense facilitative<sup>16</sup> (a function of dominance). In any circuit of power, ‘rules of practice’ are at the heart of any process of stabilisation or change. Practices carry the seeds not only of innovation but also of domination (cf. Power/knowledge); however, domination is not changeless or timeless and exchanges are not under perfect conditions. Terms of reference constantly change and the powerful are required to adapt and modify, but they may also be better equipped to take a more strategic view and play a longer game, while retaining a synoptic view of context, rather than the more day-to-day and contingent view of the less powerful.

### **Foucault’s theory of power**

Central to the development of Foucault’s theory of power is his concept of power-knowledge (*pouvoir-savoir*), the self seen as a *product* of dominating power rather than

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<sup>15</sup> But see also Putnam’s view in Chapter 3 of intent as representing the *expectation* based on experience that mutual requirements will be met.

<sup>16</sup> This use of ‘facilitative’ suggests a restricted meaning: the more powerful agency *allows* something to happen in a controlled way (cf. Clegg 1989); in the sense it is used later in the chapter as a ‘non-dominant/non-sovereign’ meaning of power no such control is implied and a decidedly ‘plus-sum’ view is intended.



as an instrument of personal freedom<sup>17</sup>, but power is not *merely* coercive, it is also productive: it produces ‘domains of objects and rituals of truth’ (corresponding perhaps to the delineation of a SIP area and the setting of ‘the rules’). Foucault is concerned not only with how power is manifest - ‘... in any society there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body’ (Foucault 1976 in Lukes 1986: 229) - but also how it is *exercised*, particularly locally (see Kelly 1994: 1-16). Merquior (1991) sees a contradiction between Foucault’s view of power as a ‘total structure of actions’ (too vague and generalised) and his concern to analyse the individual or discrete exercise of power, but an understanding of the relationship between the two is crucial to an analysis of local partnership working. The following consideration of Foucault’s view of power is necessarily episodic, but see Prior (1997: 77), quoting Foucault’s own view:

[a]ll my books are little toolboxes. If people want to open them, to use a particular sentence, a particular idea, a particular analysis like a screwdriver or a spanner ... so much the better!

Although a generous view, it is intended to be less instrumental and more respectful of the whole text and to reflect on the two lectures of January 1976 (Dirks 1994 and Kelly 1994:17-46), but the issue is much more widespread in his writings, many of which were suffused with this quest to understand the nature of power (Sharp 2000: 12; my emphasis):

In any studies of madness or the prison, it seemed to me [*Foucault*] that the question at the centre of everything was: what is power? And, to be more specific: how is it exercised, *what exactly happens when someone exercises power over another?*

In the first lecture (7 January 1976), he identifies what he calls a series of ‘dispersed and discontinuous offensives’ directed mainly against ‘traditional morality and hierarchy’ (seeking to ‘repress’ local power – Kelly 1994: 19) and what impressed him was the

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<sup>17</sup> According to Sennett, who collaborated with him, ‘... Foucault imagined the human body almost choked by the knot of power in society’ (Sennett 1994: 26).

*local* criticism of established institutions. Crucially, this local criticism<sup>18</sup> does not lack intellectual rigour, but is an autonomous, non-centralised critique – the ‘insurrection of subjugated knowledges’ (Kelly 1994: 20) – whose validity is not dependent on the ‘approval of the established regimes of thought’ (*ibid.*). However, these subjugated knowledges also reveal something else: perceptions regarded as naïve or inadequate by more scientific or governmental discourse have their own *power*. These suppressed or disguised insights – what Foucault calls *le savoir des gens* – even although discounted by the dominant and powerful offer not merely a commonsense view of the world but a deep insight based on an existential understanding at the local level. Moreover, this ‘subversion’ of the existing order often occurs through the agency of the practitioners and recipients of dominant modes of power or praxis as they interact with one another in practical situations (a clear echo of Clegg’s circuits).

Thus, the existing order is upset by this local discourse, and this ‘parallel and marginal’ (Kelly 1994: 21) disturbance of the dominant practice unsettles its equilibrium – without either destroying it or intending to destroy it – and creates space for alternative understandings and praxis to develop. Foucault contrasts his ‘archaeology’ – i.e. the search for and identification of the hidden knowledges – with ‘genealogy’, the tactics employed in the field to release the subjected knowledges and use them effectively, combining both erudite and popular knowledges in their different awareness of the history of past struggles (or encounters)<sup>19</sup>. At the level of local partnerships, the ‘erudite’ is equivalent to the (relatively) coherent discourse of central and local government, while the *savoir des gens* (‘savvy’ in English) can play a part in resisting attempts to impose a world-view at variance with local embedded and embodied experience (although he recognises the danger that this local power can become as entrenched as orthodox practice unable to be challenged).

Foucault questions whether power has to be seen either as subordinate to the economy or as a commodity to be subject to exchange, even although (cf. Clegg) it may remain ‘profoundly enmeshed in and with economic relations and participate(s) with

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<sup>18</sup> References to ‘the local’ introduce a spatial component to the debate on Foucault (pre-eminently a historian and philosopher) and to that extent it is an exploration of what Sharp (2000: 12) has called ‘... a highly nuanced geography of power’. The spatial and the geographical are fundamental to this present study whose aim is to demonstrate that there are ‘nuanced geographies’ of regeneration rather than one uniform process independent of location.

<sup>19</sup> Thus archaeology in this study equates with the concern to understand the local situation in some depth and the genealogy is revealed in the case-studies.

them *in a common circuit*' (Kelly 1994: 27, my emphasis). Foucault postulates that power is neither functionally subordinate to nor formally isomorphic with economics, but that it is necessary nevertheless to identify how their interconnectedness can be determined. Hence, using Foucault and Clegg, we can identify two circuits in relation to power: (1) an *exterior* circuit – the exercise of power as part of a wider socio-economic relationship, and (2) an *interior* circuit – power exercised and mediated between and among actors and agents on the ground. Foucault maintains that 'non-economic' approaches to power – that is, repression on one hand or a form of hostilities on the other – are in fact linked; oppression as an abuse of sovereignty, repression as a consequence of war.

In the second lecture of 14 January 1976, Foucault is more concerned with the *rules* of power and the 'manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and those relations of power cannot themselves be established without ... the establishment ... of a discourse' (Kelly 1994: 31). In medieval times in the west the rule of law was salient in maintaining the rights and privileges of the *monarchy* and its absolute power; even when that royal power was overthrown (especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the discourse was that of revolution), the legal debate was always focused on the limits of 'sovereign' power. Right has to be seen, not in terms of *legitimacy*, but of subjugation; i.e. the triumph of one set of rights over another.

Foucault's concern, however, is not power at the centre, but in its 'capillaries', in its regional and local forms. 'Power must be analyzed as something which circulates ... as something which only functions in the form of a chain' [*cf. Clegg*] (Kelly 1994: 36). Individuals undergo and exercise power as its vehicles, as well as being constituted by it. He sees power as an *ascending* analysis (his emphasis); it emerges initially from the local, mediated through all its various mechanisms, but these are also affected and permeated by more general and global discourses (see Figure 2.1 from Dicken 1989; although illustrating the penetrative and rippling effect of global *economic* influence, by analogy dominant discourses can be seen to have the same effect), which are exercised to produce both political utility and economic advantage and are maintained by global and legal mechanisms concerned with *control*. Finally, he sees power, not as an ideological construct, but as a 'knowledge' or as an effective instrument (a 'technique') to be used. This other, non-sovereign more systematic power he describes as

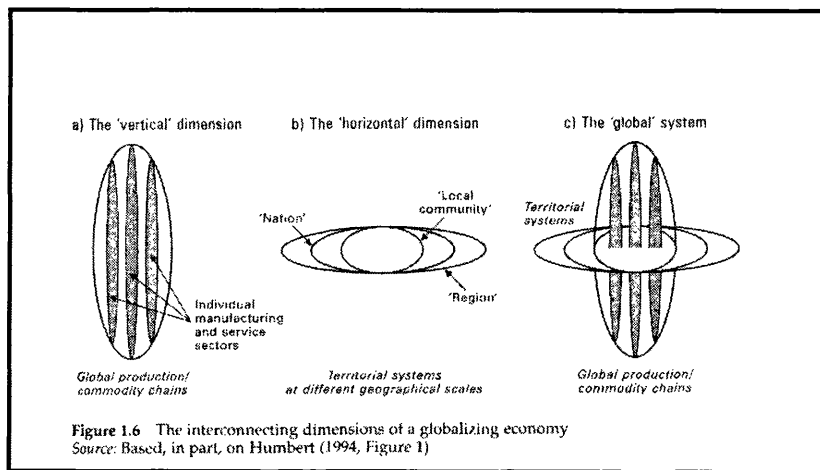
‘disciplinary’ and characteristic of industrial society. He notes that the very architecture of the (19<sup>th</sup> century) prison, for example, is intended to achieve a consistent and pervasive disciplinary regime, idealised in Jeremy Bentham’s *Panopticon* (Sharp 2000: 13):

...the architectural figure par excellence of this novel disciplinary regime, a figure that enabled him [Foucault] to play up the role of spatial arrangements internal to an institution in facilitating a constant (threat of) inspection, of surveillance, which caught inmates within an overall field of visibility...

Without in any way exaggerating the prison metaphor, there are echoes still of this approach in the way that social inclusion partnerships are constructed: they seek reform and permanent change, they focus on improvement of the individual as well as that of the group, they circumscribe the area of operation and determine its operational ‘architecture’, they aim to be (in effect) inclusive of all aspects of life (‘holistic’ in a different sense), they set out regimes of evaluation and inspection. They are *not* carceral in intent and can have beneficial outcomes, but they may over-prescribe according to a well-intentioned reformist vision and hence Foucault’s views are relevant *as an analytical tool*<sup>20</sup>. Such disciplinary power should (in his view) have led to the demise of the notion of sovereignty, but the *idea* of sovereignty has remained embedded in legal systems as an organising principle, democratised on the base of *collective* sovereignty, intended to ensure the *cohesion* of society. Power in modern society is exercised through the ‘heterogeneity between a public right of sovereignty and a polymorphous disciplinary mechanism’ (Kelly 1994: 43); i.e. between the idea or concept of collective sovereignty (‘the people’, ‘the state’) and manifold actors on the ground appealing to it as a badge of ultimate authority.

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<sup>20</sup> This point is developed further in Sharp, where the authors point out that Foucault, while focusing on the emergence of carceral institutions in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, had ‘mapped out a carceral archipelago’ of much wider application. Discipline is a type of power, a ‘set’ of techniques and procedures, even ‘an anatomy of power’; it is a function of *relationships* which do not merely prevent things happening, but can also achieve desirable outcomes (Sharp 2000: 14).



**Figure 2.1: An illustration of the impact of global *economic* power on the local; ideas and discourses can operate in the same way. [Source: Dicken 1998]**

Therefore, the heterodox (opposing) notions of right(s) and of discipline (the need to regulate these rights) are often juxtaposed, but are in fact two integral parts (the obverse and the reverse) of the exercise of power. Any appeal against discipline, therefore, cannot be phrased in terms of right; it has to be the search for a new form of power, non-disciplinary and non-sovereign. What that new form might be, certainly within the field of local partnerships, is *facilitative*: it should enable (but not merely *permit*) things *to be done*. It should increase capacity in all its dimensions and for all actors 'undergoing and exercising' it (a plus-sum view). Foucault's seemingly totalising view of power appears to allow little space for individual choice or action, but his identification of what he called 'dispersed and continuous offensives' at the local level avoids an analysis of power as a (theoretical) concept and concentrates rather on how it is exercised. Partnership is not about 'rights' or management; it is essentially about transformation and collaborative working towards mutually beneficial goals; partnership is facilitated, not imposed. In practice, the interplay of power within local partnerships is never so stark nor as dramatic as any 'philosophy of nihilism and despair' (Sharp *et al.* 2000:15, quoting Gordon) might suggest, but there are nevertheless strong parallels to the Foucauldian universe in that partnerships do operate within a perceptually negative geography of unemployment, poor health, lack of education and a poor environment: prosperous suburbs do not have regeneration partnerships. The intention is ameliorative, reformist and holistic in the contemporary sense. If the goal is genuine partnership, then power must be seen, not as the *only*

referant of local action, but as providing the base from which other realities may be constructed or, in my gloss of Foucault, facilitated.

### **The Entanglements of Power**

As its secondary title suggests, this collection of papers edited by Sharp *et al.* (2000: 1-36) is concerned to deal with issues of domination and resistance within the context of contemporary geographical debate; power must be seen, in addition to the ‘orthodox’ duality of domination and resistance, as a terrain of *entanglement* both metaphorical and spatial: the workings of power are seen as acting, reacting and interacting in a complex way, whether conceptually or within a spatial context. Although the term ‘entanglement’ is used metaphorically, the ‘knottings’ of the exercise of power are sustained in ‘spaces, places and networks’ which exist in the real world. Crucially, the historic concentration on power seen as *dominant*, as a ‘coherent oppressive force’ (p 2), has been so pervasive that true resistance is regarded as virtually impossible or only imperfectly and ineffectually achieved. However, the authors develop instead the concept of *resisting-power* (see Frame 2.1) whereby dominant power is resisted in such a way that it ‘translates into a form of social organisation which actively co-ordinates people ... in pursuit of specifiable transformative goals’ (Sharp *et al.* 2000, *Box* 1.2: 3). Resistance is seen, therefore, not merely as collapse in the face of a more dominant power, but is modified in such a way as to energise the weaker or less dominant actor. It is also essential that this transformation, in terms of community action, is not seen as the preserve or concern of leaders only, but is broadly based within the wider community. Power (following Foucault) is seen as both positive and negative and people can become empowered *in the very act of resistance*. These acts of resistance are ‘entangled’ in (Sharp *et al.* 2000: 3):

... spatialised threads along and through which power circulates, entering into the worlds of individuals and groups as they are “simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power”.

**FRAME 2.1**

**Dominating Power and Resisting Power**

In *Entanglements of Power*, Sharp et al. distinguish between *dominating-power* and *resisting-power*; the former is seen as controlling or coercive, or intended to manipulate the consent of others. Domination, exploitation and subjection can operate at many levels: material, symbolic or psychological; it may be located within the state (central or local), the economy or civil society generally. It generates inequality and asserts particular interests at the expense of others. Resisting-power, on the other hand, represents situations, groupings or actions which resist the imposition of dominating power, even in a small-scale or apparently trivial way. Crucially, it can organise (p. 3) 'social organisation which actively co-ordinates people, materials and practices in pursuit of specifiable transformative goals' (a neat definition of partnership). It may be confrontational or even lead to violence, but for it to occur power has to be exercised and realised both by 'leaders' and at the 'grass-roots' by 'everyday people finding that they have the power to do and to change things'. Although the concept as developed is useful, it needs to go beyond power to resist and be seen as power *from* resisting (transformed into another mode).

*Source:* Sharp et al. 2000, Boxes 1.1 and 1.2 on pp 2-3.

However, it will be argued that within the context of local partnerships *mere* resistance – even resisting-power – is not enough. Transformation must inhere not merely in people (who are 'transformed' by the experience of their resistance), but in the *process* as well. (See Deckha 2003 on the resistance to the King's Cross development in London.) Hence both domination and resistance are themselves mutually changed into partnership, or something very akin to it. The product is a kind of hybrid, arising from the experience of both domination and resistance, but representing the 'triumph' of neither, rather the achievement of genuinely and mutually beneficial goals.

### **Interim Summary and Conclusions**

The intention in this chapter has been to attempt a tentative view of the operation of power as it may be observed and analysed in the interaction at the level of communities in small areas. The focus has been on the partnerships, whether formal or informal, which might be formed at this level and as a result the interest has been less on the large philosophical or sociological views of power than on those more restricted approaches which might be useful at this level. In Chapter 1, three broad research questions were posed in relation to power:

- (a) To explore the central notion of power in order to arrive at a view which will incorporate notions of capacity – a measure of ability to act – and legitimacy – a measure of the authority for action;

(b) Arising from this, an attempt to explore some of the mechanisms through which power is exercised in a general sense and the need to explore the nature of power (e.g. issues of sovereignty/dominance) to arrive at a view of the shape of power-in-partnership, the concern of the thesis; and

(c) To consider power not as an end in itself, but as a signifier of other social and economic relationships and – critically – as providing a base on which other relationships may be constructed.

The historic community-power debate provides a nuanced view of power as capacity – whether seen ‘simply’ or in terms of its legitimacy – a fundamental prelude to understanding the concept of power *as exercised* in the local arena. The elite and pluralist views of power recall the apparent division between the more formal discourses of established organisations (governments, councils, service agencies) – the elites – and the more informal and contingent nature of local community groupings – the pluralists. But caution is needed to avoid creating a fundamental dichotomy between these two ‘faces’ of power in a local partnership context, although the distinction is useful as an analytical tool. The ‘third face’ of power – the institutionalisation of power interests (overlain with both ontological and ideological views of the structure of society) – provides an ossified view of society which is rejected in the study in favour of a more unstable but dynamic and interactive approach. The concept of social power is useful as an indicator of structural power both as resource and constraint for local agents.

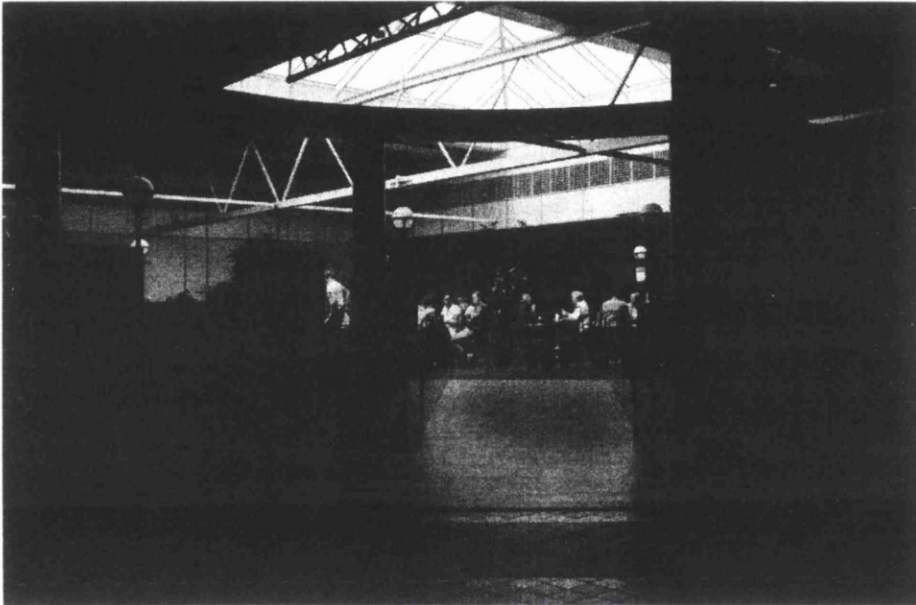
The legitimate exercise of power is founded on *consent* by which actors are mutually obligated within a system of collective action, implying reciprocal norms between government and the governed. The views of Lukes and others when combined with Foucault’s notion of the hidden power inherent in communities emphasise its salience. Power inheres not merely in individuals, but in groupings and agencies and its exercise is universal; power is not merely *in* society as an insensate force, it comes *from* social structures as well, acting both as resource and constraint. It is equally a function of consent, legitimising government on the one hand and providing capacity (the means to govern) on the other. Power should be seen not as mere dominance but as a social energiser dependent on the incentive structures and choice situations of the various actors.



## Chapter 3

### SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COLLABORATION

#### *The Function of Social Capital, Trust and Collaborative Planning in Local Area Partnerships.*



**Plate 3.1: The *Open Gate* at Drumchapel; a relaxed venue for community interaction in the area's enterprise centre.**

By analogy with notions of physical capital and human capital  
 - tools and training that enhance individual productivity -  
 "social capital" refers to features of social organisation such as networks, norms  
 and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.

(Putnam 1995: 67)

#### **Introduction**

The previous chapter considered the origins and operation of power as it occurs in the local arena and ended with a view of its 'entangled' nature – caught up in the complexities of everyday life – as a prelude to further discussion of the broad matrix or relational context in which this operation might be set. It also advanced the idea of power relations as a signifier for other social, political and economic relationships, i.e. both constructed by them and contributing towards them, and acting as 'base' on which

a further theoretical consideration might be developed. Both Clegg's 'circuits' and Foucault's 'capillaries' introduce the concept of dynamism, of movement (or energy), potentially 'flowing through' a system. However, this power is akin to *latent* energy which requires an infrastructure to animate it and through which it operates and, without straining the metaphor, we need to consider what such an operational network would look like in society, particularly at small-area level. To give some shape to this concept, it is useful to move from the notion of power as a discrete entity through to a deeper sense of an active community or 'power-in-community'. In chapter 1, the two broad considerations within the theme of social capital were:

- (a) Following the issues surrounding power, to consider the background against which social relationships at the local level are constructed in terms of relational networks and the operation of trust, both critical in any view of local partnership; and
- (b) To place these networks within a practical local governance context providing a framework for collaborative working.

The structure of the chapter is (a) to examine Wilson's views of community economic development 'from the bottom up' (Wilson 1996) and the plus-sum view of power, followed by (b) a critical review of Putnam's notions of social capital and trust and concluding with (c) a consideration of Healey's concept of collaborative planning. The intention is to move the debate from a 'static' view of power to a more dynamic view of its operation in communities, linked finally to a wider view of policy and governance; to build a structure on the base of power within or on which partnership might function.

### **Community empowerment and the plus-sum view of power**

In his description of circuits of power, Clegg (1989) maintains that, even where agents are empowered, it is necessary for the structures they represent to control both them (the agents) and the context (the structure) in which they operate and that power is measured by the extent they are able to do so. In this sense, control (and therefore power) transferred to another agency would be regarded as a loss. Where partnership is the ideal and where there is the notion of transformation and mutual benefit, such a view of power is inappropriate, even where circuits of can be seen to operate. An alternative view can be seen in Wilson (1996) in her discussion of community economic

development ‘from the bottom up’. In her view, communities are the *subjects* (in an emphatically non-sovereign sense), not the objects of economic change and as such are in themselves sources of power (cf. Foucault). This ‘plus-sum’ view is a generative concept of power where mutual energies may be harnessed and the general ‘stock’ of power thereby increased; the alternative ‘zero-sum’ view is a distributist one in which there is a ‘fixed pie’ of power and where one may advance only at another’s expense. In this context, power can be regarded as energy or capacity (actual or latent) to be transmitted and utilised, in which the larger and more powerful source energises the less powerful (although in turn energised by it) and in the process both gain and the overall ‘amount’ of power increases. This can be regarded as analogous to how the stock of social capital (see below) increases through mutual contact (and *use*), and to the absolute growth of knowledge through reflection and transmission.

It is important therefore not to set limits to, or too closely define, what power *is*; it is better to see what it does and observe the spirit in which it is exercised. Power (by analogy with electricity) can also be seen as capacity or potential which can only fully be utilised when mutual networks and circuits are activated. Development begins with individuals and small groups; agencies should be facilitators and enablers, and participation (and cooperation) should be seen as enhancing empowerment (and the general stock of power). In any case, Wilson (1996: 624) sees reality ‘as a dynamic web of interrelated self-organising networks’. In such a scenario, control is neither possible nor desirable and the goal is of transformation (ideally for both agencies) in which mutual benefits may ensue. The crucial benefit here is that this lays the foundation of cooperation built on trust, i.e. the mutual expectation that aims will be met. This in turn tends to build ‘social capital’ as a sustainable discourse of empowerment, but it must rest firmly on the base of power seen as a signifier for manifold social and economic relationships. Wilson’s key concept is that individual change manifested through collective action results in genuine empowerment: ‘focusing attention on the individual is very different from reinforcing individualism ... individual change becomes *a bridge* to community solidarity and societal change’ (Wilson 1996: 618, my emphasis). Empowerment is the synthesis of individual *and* collective change.

### Social capital and the salience of trust

Social capital may be defined as ‘broadly, those social networks, the reciprocities that arise from them, and the value of these for achieving mutual goals’ (Baron *et al.* 2000: 1). The following critical consideration of the concept is based primarily on Putnam’s extensive study in Italy on the varying outcomes after the establishment of regional government in 1970 (1993), and on his notion of *Bowling Alone* (1995), which offers an important qualitative difference to his earlier view. An initial difficulty to be overcome in society is the *dilemma of collective action*: why *should* people cooperate? Hume (see also Paterson 2000) expressed the classic dilemma underlying the need to cooperate for mutual benefit: two farmers should help one another to harvest their corn, which will ripen at slightly different times, but neither has any expectation that his neighbour will help him (*sic*) and in the end ‘the seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security.’ (Putnam 1993: 162). As Putnam indicates, such behaviour (i.e. failure to cooperate) is not necessarily ignorant or irrational and in game theory this can be categorised as shown in Frame 3.1.

The common thread in all these cases is the lack of any *credible mutual commitment*; indeed each individual has an incentive *not* to cooperate, even although it is a ‘sucker’s choice’; in other words, given the correct set of circumstances, perfectly rational actors can produce what is, from a cooperative perspective, an irrational outcome. One classic (Hobbesian) solution is for third-party enforcement – the operation of sovereign power or penal sanctions; however, at the local level no putative ‘sanction’ by a third-party could be expected to operate always in an entirely disinterested or impartial way. Game theory would suggest that the best option is always to ‘defect’, i.e. not to cooperate, but Putnam points out that the theory *underpredicts* the extent of collective action in practice; and indeed (Stone 1993: 25):

Contrary to the assumptions of some analysts, cooperation is not an unnatural act that people have to be bribed or coerced to perform ... the centrifugal force of individual interest and immediately achievable purpose have [*sic*] to be reckoned with, but there is also the possibility of tapping the human yearning for larger social purpose.

Game theorists suggest that there are various explanations for this: for example, (a) in indefinitely repeated games defection is punished in successive rounds; (b) the number

of players may be limited (so each can ‘know’ the other); (c) information about each player’s *past behaviour* is abundant; and (d) players do not discount the future too heavily; these considerations go some way towards explaining why cooperation tends to occur as frequently as it does<sup>1</sup>.

### FRAME 3.1

#### The Dilemmas of Collective Action

*The tragedy of the commons* No individual herder can restrict grazing by anyone else’s flock; if their own is restricted, only they lose; unrestricted grazing, however, destroys the common resource.

*The public good* A public good (e.g. clean air) can be enjoyed by all, but it can be so enjoyed whether one contributes or not; therefore, there is no individual incentive to maintain it and the tendency will be for it to be abused.

*The logic of collective action* A strike would benefit all, but it must be simultaneous and no-one risks being the first to raise the banner for fear of betrayal by ‘a well-rewarded scab’; therefore, everyone waits, hoping to benefit from someone else’s foolhardiness. (A ‘dismal logic’, as Putnam observes.)

*The prisoner’s dilemma* A pair of prisoners is held separately and each is told that if he (sic) alone implicates his accomplice, he will be released; if he remains silent, and his partner confesses, then he will be severely punished. If both remained silent (therefore making the case impossible to prove), they would probably get off; however, since they cannot communicate, each is better off squealing, no matter what the other does (stressed by Putnam).

Source: Putnam 1993: 162-3

It is in the role of institutions that *impersonal* cooperation becomes important, although it must continually be borne in mind that at the local level personal knowledge and relationships can never be discounted. One of the principal benefits of formal institutional organisation is that ‘transaction costs’ are reduced and certain principles of institutional design can be recognised as contributing towards this (Putnam 1993: 166):

1. *Clear definition of boundaries* At the local level, definitions of this kind can be problematic, particularly where the partnership can be considered ‘informal’, but some kind of implicit understanding of respective roles is certainly essential.
2. *Participation in defining rules* At the heart of partnership, however defined, is the necessity for the partners to engage in mutual negotiation about the nature of

<sup>1</sup> There is a more extended (and numerical) treatment of game theory in Dowding 1996; the intention in this chapter is not to use the theory as an extended element of the explanation of individual and group behaviour, but as a simple illustration of the generally complex process of collaborative decision-making.

how they will cooperate; in this sense, there are no templates and each situation is unique.

3. *Graduated sanctions* In local partnerships, the only real sanctions must be internalised to the cooperative process; penalties in the conventional sense are almost certainly counter-productive. The greatest sanction is that the process does not work or does not achieve what it might otherwise do.
4. *Conflict resolution* Putnam advocates ‘low-cost’ mechanisms, and at the local level this can be glossed as implying direct and informal communications where conflicts are resolved quickly and in relation to the overall project<sup>2</sup>.

Putnam raises the fundamental question of just how such an ideal institution is to be established and maintains that it is very difficult for actors drawing up a contract to agree to abide by it without invoking the ‘third-party’ approach, ‘otherwise well-meaning citizens let their neighbours bear the cost of policing these usurpers [i.e. *freeloaders and defectors*], and scofflaws cheat on their taxes and run traffic lights’ (quote in Putnam 1993: 166). One solution to this lies in the consideration of *community* and *trust*; referred to as ‘soft’ solutions, they are at the heart of understanding how communities at the local level interface with other agencies in order to achieve common objectives: they are ‘soft’ in the sense that they are difficult to define, nevertheless they are ‘hard’ in that their absence will make real collaboration impossible or very difficult. At the heart of Putnam’s research is his concern to understand how, given the same (superimposed) structural framework, different Italian regions responded differently in how they used these structures; in his view (Putnam 1993: 167):

Voluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement.

Thus, social capital within social organisations (such as community groups) refers to ‘trust, norms and networks’. Critically, the existence of a stock of social capital will *improve the efficiency* of society by ‘facilitating coordinated actions’. Social capital, therefore, makes possible the achievement of certain ends *that would not be achievable*

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<sup>2</sup> It is interesting that, in a typical SIP, boundaries and rules are clearly set out in the partnership agreement but the issues of sanctions and conflict resolution are not explicitly dealt with.

*in its absence*<sup>3</sup>. In the end, it is an intensely practical concept<sup>4</sup> dependant on a sense of the mutual value to the participants of cooperation and not on feelings of unity or on an ‘organic’ view of society (although the presence of both or either would be a bonus). The logic of collective action in game theory would suggest that selfishness and defection would prevail, but there are powerful incentives for cooperation. Defection implies unreliability, social ostracism and disbarment from future schemes and the key is *generalised reciprocity and mutual trust*. As Putnam observes, it is necessary to stress the necessity of the accretion of institutional capital; as social capital develops, the need for *personal* knowledge of the various actors diminishes<sup>5</sup>, provided they are within a mutually-recognised network (Putnam 1993: 171 *et seq.*). The benefit of networks is that they allow the transitive *spread* of trust. This is essentially a plus-sum view; trust is not prescribed or finite, it is able to grow indefinitely. Like conventional capital, social capital can serve as a kind of collateral, with participants pledging their *social* connections rather than any physical capital. Reciprocal voluntary association is fed by the same source of social capital, so it has a dual effect – acting as both asset and as a catalyst for further personal and community development. Social capital uses *pre-existing* social connections to help circumvent problems of imperfect information and enforceability.

One important distinction must be drawn between social capital and physical or conventional capital: it is generally a *public*, not a private, good (at least in Putnam’s 1993 formulation); as it becomes embedded (and, more importantly, embodied) within social structures, it becomes an asset for the whole community and not individuals within it (although individuals may draw from it and add to it). In the ‘civic regions’ of

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<sup>3</sup> It is at least a moot point to consider the extent to which such a network can be *constructed*; unless such an underlying civic and cooperative base exists historically the process of creating one may be difficult. However, a Foucauldian acceptance that there is at least a pre-existing ‘system’ of ‘subjugated’ (or hidden) local knowledges should make it possible to create the conditions where its development could at least be encouraged.

<sup>4</sup> Putnam (1993: 167-8) cites rotating credit associations (long-established and known as ‘menages’ in the west of Scotland) where each member contributes a fixed weekly or monthly amount and each period one member will receive an amount equivalent to the total contribution of all for the period (or whatever sum was agreed); once their ‘turn’ has passed, they are ineligible for any further donations, but must continue to contribute. Although there is a strong social element to such arrangements, this or mere altruism is not enough to explain their existence.

<sup>5</sup> Although personal knowledge of persons may not always be necessary, contacts are enhanced (or inhibited) by personal knowledge and ‘reputation’ matters.

Italy<sup>6</sup>, social trust (and hence capital) has sustained both economic dynamism and government performance. Cooperation occurs at many levels – legislature and executive, workers and managers, councils and communities, residents and local groups – but explicit contracts and supervision and, particularly, enforcement are costly and difficult, so trust ‘lubricates’ cooperation. The calculus between trust and cooperation leads to the accumulation of social capital and a ‘virtuous circle’ of social progress.

However, Putnam’s 1995 book: *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*<sup>7</sup>, highlighted the supposed decline in the level of civic participation and the *consequent* erosion of social capital (the terms used interchangeably) in the United States; social capital is now seen as a concept representing ‘connections among *individuals* – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness *arising from them*’ (DeFilippis 2002: 791, quoting Putnam, my emphasis). Social capital is hence both a communal *and* an individual good – a ‘normatively good thing’ – and it links democracy (especially in the ‘new democracies’ in Eastern Europe) with the emphasis on a ‘strong and active civil society’ (Putnam 1995: 65), but by contrast there is a decline in the ‘vibrancy’ of contemporary American civil society, widely taken as a model. Putnam reiterates his view that (*ibid.*): ‘... the quality of public life and the performance of social institutions ... are indeed powerfully influenced by norms and networks of civic engagement.’ He makes the further point (p 66) that, far from being ‘paleoindustrial anachronisms’ or even ‘an epiphenomenon of socioeconomic modernisation’ reciprocal networks are a *precondition* for ‘success’ in the contemporary world. Critically, the existence of these networks, and their proven collaborative success, provides a ‘cultural template’ for continued and *future* cooperation; specifically (Putnam 1995: 67):

... dense networks of action probably broaden the participants’ sense of self, developing the “I” into the “we” or (in the language of rational-choice theorists) enhancing the participants’ “taste” for collective benefits.

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<sup>6</sup> The outstanding example possibly being Bologna (Jaeggi *et al.* 1977), which had a highly-organised and politicised system of integrated civic involvement.

<sup>7</sup> The direct quotes from Putnam in this review are based on *Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital*, a purported interview (although there are no questions shown) by Putnam in *The Journal of Democracy* in 1995 summarising his own work published in the same year.



In spite of this eulogistic view of social capital, he then goes on to detail its decline, particularly in America<sup>8</sup>; he has an extensive empirical review of this purported change, although there are some countertrends, such as growth in environmental and feminist organisations, for example, but ... (Putnam 1995: 71):

From the point of view of social connectedness, however, they [the new mass-membership organisations] are sufficiently different from classic “secondary associations” that we need to invent a new label – perhaps “tertiary associations”<sup>9</sup>. For the vast majority of their members, the only act of membership consists in writing a check for dues or perhaps occasionally reading a newsletter.

Although there has been a significant rise in the numbers involved in these tertiary movements (including nonprofit organisations and support groups), they do not offset the decline in ‘conventional civic organizations’. Paradoxically, this has occurred when more Americans than ever before are ‘in social circumstances that foster associational involvement’ – for example, higher education, middle age. Completing the review of the decline in social capital in America, Putnam cites the ‘loosening of bonds’ in the family, both nuclear and extended, and the decline of ‘neighborliness’. He gives various reasons why social capital is ‘eroding’:

1. The movement of women into the labour force (as a knock-on, ‘dishwashing crowded out the lodge’ for men! (p 74));
2. The greater mobility among the population (an ‘uprooted individual’ has difficulty in putting down roots);
3. Other demographic transformations (fewer marriages, more divorces, fewer children, etc.); and
4. The technological transformation of leisure (watching television, increased use of the VCR at home, etc.), ensuring only more solitary or familial participation.

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<sup>8</sup> Including *inter alia* attendance at a public meeting (from 22% in 1973 to 13% in 1993), in voting participation, in church-going (though only from 48% in the 1950s to 41% in the 1970s and static or in a slight decline since), in union membership (32.5% in 1953 to 15.8% in 1992), in ‘fraternal’ organisations, which grew steadily during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but have had a ‘sudden and substantial decline’ in the last two decades (see Putnam 1995: 67-69 for a fuller discussion)

<sup>9</sup> Hence, we have different ‘levels’ of association: primary (the family and extended family), secondary (social, political, volunteering) and tertiary (loosely-connected mass-movement).

In terms of ‘solutions’ to the decline, he suggests merely some ‘further lines of inquiry’ (all pp 76-7):

- The need to ‘sort out’ the dimensions of social capital – the avoidance of a ‘unidimensional’ concept;
- The need to assess the effects of ‘macrosociological crosscurrents’, e.g. what the effect of electronic networking on social capital might be;
- The need to assess the costs as well as the benefits of community engagement and avoid the romanticising of small-scale, middle-class, small-town social life; and
- Finally, the need to assess how public policy impinges on the formation of social capital (e.g. slum clearance, the closure of small post offices<sup>10</sup>).

Putnam concludes with the proposition that, at a time when the ‘preconditions for democracy and democratization’ and the need to foster a vibrant social life ‘in soils traditionally inhospitable to self-government’ are considered essential in the newer democracies, in the established democracies - ‘at the very moment when liberal democracy has swept the battlefield<sup>11</sup>, both ideologically and geopolitically’ (p 77) – growing numbers question the effectiveness of democratic institutions or simply opt out of traditional social-capital groupings. His call is for further research in order to identify what is required to reverse these trends and restore civic engagement and trust.

### **The notion of trust and trustworthiness**

Trust is, crucially, an ‘emergent property’ of the social system, rather than a mere personal attribute, which becomes ‘embedded’ in the system and allows individuals, groups and communities to anticipate and rely on the actions of others, so that ultimately the stock of social capital is self-reinforcing (‘sustainable’). It is necessary to move away from a commonsense definition of what constitutes trust to a more nuanced consideration of the salient role it (and the more generalised concept of trustworthiness) plays within the context of local area partnerships (see Mac Gillivray and Walker 2000

<sup>10</sup> In terms of British social policy, this could be reflected in the disruptive changes of policy over relatively short periods and the uncertain relationship between the respective roles of central and local government at the local level (see Table 1.8 in Chapter 1).

<sup>11</sup> The use of the ‘battlefield’ terminology echoes Foucault in Chapter 2 on the ‘peace’ being another form of warfare influenced by memories of the struggle; but liberal economics having ‘won’ the day must in this uneasy calm expect resistance, so the *status quo* is not in equilibrium or unchallengeable.

on the attempt to ‘measure’ trust). However, such trust is not blind or naïve; it is based on a reasonable belief (through experience) *that (mutual) expectations will be met*. How is such trust to be defined? Levi (in Grote 1998: 14) considers that trust has three parts:

1. *Encapsulated trust* is the ‘knowledge or belief that the trusted will have an *incentive* (my emphasis) to do what she [*sic*] engages to do’ (p. 14).
2. *Trust as relationship* Trust is also a form of relational transaction; the granting of trust depends on one actor’s evaluation of another’s trustworthiness; an important point is that trust *facilitates* but is not equivalent to cooperation (i.e. it is only one part of the process).
3. *Trust as implied risk* The act of trusting will always imply some risk to the truster; low risk may be labelled confidence, high risk gullibility. The extent of risk is variable and is a function not only of the trustee, but also of the quality of the information available to the truster (or of how seriously the trustee regards the costs of defection)<sup>12</sup>; past history and institutional confidence reinforce the truster.

Levi reinforces the point that trust can have many sources and can (Grote 1998: 14, my emphasis):

... result from close-knit networks of individuals who are dependent on each other and engage in iterated transactions that promote loyalty *even when alternative options appear preferable*.

This is what Levi describes as *commitment*. Confidence in governmental (and quasi-governmental) institutions may, as Levi says, increase *compliance*, but in terms of partnership and the development of trust a less superficial outcome is surely desirable; indeed, there must be an increase in interpersonal trust that will foster the development of a ‘duty heuristic’ (based presumably on positive experiences which ‘oblige’ people to involve themselves in the process of cooperation) or norm of reciprocity (i.e. that becomes established and expected practice). There are hence two views of trust (Grote 1998: 15):

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<sup>12</sup> In the context of a local community, the exercise of trust may be both relational and rational, but it does not always have to be as calculating as the above implies.

1. *Trust as normatively neutral* Although trust is normally regarded as a virtue, in practice it can have consequences both good and bad, beneficial or not, depending on circumstances; indeed, ‘active *distrust* may be the normatively appropriate response’ (my emphasis)<sup>13</sup>.
2. *The importance of structures in the formulation of trust* Important sources of trust are *structures* (such as the family or the workplace or a local interest group) or *institutions* (including local government or various regeneration agencies).

In structural terms, according to Levi, ‘only persons can trust or be trusting’ (*ibid.*), although she concedes that individuals *or* institutions can be ‘trustworthy’. However, although this may be literally true in a narrow sense, this surely ignores the collective experience and *embedded* (as well as ‘embodied’) knowledge of individuals acting together in local groupings (which can be regarded as ‘legal persons’ and, by extension, as having a collective ‘mind’, formed over time and through experience). Indeed, such corporate trust is at least as important as individual trust in the development of social capital (but see Bockmeyer 2000 on a civic ‘culture of distrust’) and *inter alia* removes some of the need for *personal* trust. Although Levi’s analysis is useful, it appears rather mechanistic and limited in scope; its strength is its insistence on viewing trust within a practical discourse predicated on results and of the importance of trust within and between institutions (and, by implication, between actors and institutions, widely defined). However, it conveys little sense of the wealth of possibilities of the myriad operations of trust within the complex transactions of society at all levels. Fukuyama (1995)<sup>14</sup>, however, appears to discount almost entirely any notion of a useful interaction between the local (atomised) community and the agencies or quasi-agencies of the state or even the local state. However, his view is a counterweight to a too eulogistic sense of

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<sup>13</sup> Perhaps as an extreme example, she cites the example of the US Mafia (‘a powerful and effective economic organisation’!), where distrust has been central in creating and maintaining the organisation; equally (and more positively), the US constitution distrusts both faction and centralised power.

<sup>14</sup> He sees trust in the context of ‘the social virtues and the creation of prosperity’. In his view: ‘virtually all political questions today revolve around economic ones’ (but see Fine’s criticism of Putnam above); economics ‘is grounded in social life and cannot be understood separately from the larger question of how modern societies organize themselves’. The aim of government is to ‘do no harm’ and passively ‘manage’ money supply and deficits; having abandoned such ‘social engineering’ (e.g. Keynesian solutions), most liberal institutions will depend for their vitality on ‘civil society’, seen as a complex of intermediate institutions of which the fundamental unit is the family (pp 3-13).

trust or social capital and is a reminder that the focus must remain firmly in the notion of a partnership between community groupings and the local state.

The civic community is defined by virtuous circles of cooperation and trust. Equally, the *uncivic* community is characterised by their absence. It is possible, therefore, to identify two broad states of equilibrium in civil society (Putnam 1993: 173 *et seq.*):

(1) The *uncivic* community, lacking in trust and cooperation, is a stable equilibrium, no matter how apparently disadvantageous and inimical to development and progress. In such a system, a more vertical, ‘Hobbesian’ hierarchical patron-client system may prevail, characterised by dependency, exploitation and coercion. Over time, the actors will have negotiated a *modus vivendi*, which will be self-maintaining. The symptoms may be observed: authoritarianism, managerialist (local) government, a permanent state of dependence (or fear of independent action) and, at worst, the growth of ‘extra-legal’ systems of law-enforcement, or money-lending, or intimidation. Some will benefit from such a system, but it will be arbitrary, unstable and capricious.

(2) The *civic* community, alternatively, will allow a better equilibrium to prevail. Actors will learn to play the ‘mutual-aid’ game –formalizing the implicit bargaining underlying mutual aid. Both reciprocity/trust and dependence/exploitation can hold society together, but *at quite different levels of efficiency and institutional performance*. Pre-history will usually determine which model any given society or group conforms to (‘path-dependent’ in a general sense, but the past cannot *determine* the future). Different levels of performance can persist, even in apparently similar groups, and this has profound consequence for future outcomes<sup>15</sup>. Hence, persistent poor performance will be the outcome of a long process and may have an adverse effect on how communities react to adverse social and economic conditions. Institutional practices tend to be self-reinforcing and to be effective, collaboration requires reciprocity and trust, but these are in turn reinforced by organised institutions.

### Social capital and some counter-views

Notwithstanding this generally positive review of Putnam's study of social capital, the concept is highly contested, both as a theoretical construct and as a signifier of practical policy. DeFilippis (2002: 790-95), acknowledges the popularity (*sic*) of both Putnam and his theory (although even the notion of social capital as theory is contested, see Fine below) – particularly their centrality in (southern) global development work and in (northern) community development – to the extent that, in his view (DeFilippis 2002: 790), '... the concept of social capital has become a major political and intellectual force in Western theory and practice.' However, Putnam is seen as using the concept of social capital almost as a universal nostrum; it 'promotes economic growth, health and well-being, educational attainment and just about anything else anyone would care about' (p 791)!

However, Putnam's later (1995) publication is (DeFilippis 2002: 791) 'a troubling and potentially politically reactionary book' and problematical both methodologically and theoretically; its method is too empirical, with most data based on individual mass-surveys and the results simply aggregated up to whatever geographical level is appropriate; this leads to the underestimation of for example the new social movements (NSMs or 'tertiary movements', see above), because they are not mass-movement organisations with strong networking *among individual members*. Social groups are reduced therefore to simple aggregations of individual (interacting) members; social capital is changed from something embedded in groups and networks *realised* by individuals ('embodied') – akin to the original concept as developed by Coleman (1988) – into something that can be realised by individuals *or* groups, cities, nations, etc. Conceptually, this leap poses two difficulties: (1) it removes all the 'nonquantifiable' (or intangible) ways in which groups are produced and members *relate to one another* (i.e. the efficacy of the group *qua* group) and (2) even more importantly, it is predicated on the notion that the interests and gains of the individual are synonymous and coterminous with group and societal gains (aggressive use of

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<sup>15</sup> This can depend *inter alia* on the precise mix of actors, agencies and past history in any given *place*, hence its salience and the futility of a 'one size fits all' approach; partnership is both to some extent path-

networks by an individual benefiting only them at the expense of everyone else *who does not use the network* in that selfish way can be glossed as *negative* social capital or networking).

Profoundly, networks are not necessarily ‘win-win’ structures for the individual *and* the group unless the individual acts through and with the group and reinvests any ‘social-capital gains’ (my coinage) in it. Equally, the history of American capitalism over the last two hundred years has not – as Putnam suggests – been constant, so the recent variations (the diminution) in social capital *could* be accounted for by the growth in neo-liberal economics (with their stress on the individual and an ‘anti-state’ world-view); equally, social capital cannot necessarily be *directly* responsible for promoting and sustaining economic growth and prosperity<sup>16</sup> (while it has declined, American prosperity has increased), even though it historically may have been significant (DeFilippis 2002: 794): ‘In short, even if he [Putnam] is right (about the decline of social capital), then he is wrong (about it being important in promoting economic prosperity).’

The greatest danger is that social capital is seen as a concept useful for the political right (although Putnam is not accused of espousing that cause), for three reasons:

1. It can be seen in a ‘blame the victim’ perspective (coinciding with a vogue ‘underclass’ view of the urban poor) – if you or your area is poor, it is because *you* have not ‘networked’ enough, reinforced by a view privileging the individual in social analysis;
2. It is an easy argument in an ‘anti-state’ world-view; if the key to human development and achievement is social capital and the role of the individual in accessing networks, then systemic state initiatives to alleviate poverty or provide jobs and housing or healthcare are nugatory or even ‘harmful’ in increasing dependency; and
3. Putnam appears to ignore power relations in his analysis, so ‘racism, sexism and class structures are all treated rather peripherally ... since any serious

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dependant and place-dependant.

<sup>16</sup> In other words, merely creating or developing social networks is not a sure formula for creating *economic* prosperity in either global or community development.

engagement with them ... would have fundamentally undercut the core

- assumptions of the book' (p 794).

Finally, there is a clear lack of any notion of *conflict*; Putnam's America assumes that it is conflict-free and that a renewal of social capital would, in an uncontested universe, benefit all.

These criticisms by DeFilippis are mild compared to the ire at social capital vented by Fine (2002 and Fine and Green 2000)<sup>17</sup>, contrasting and comparing social capital and globalisation, which together (but separately) exemplify the 'current intellectual climate [which] marks a dual retreat from the extremes of neoliberalism and postmodernism' (p 797). He identifies *eight* 'critical features' of social capital, including: (1) its wide-ranging and eclectic character, (2) its being 'definitionally elusive', (3) its universal attraction as an explanation of the world, (4) its evolution (especially under Putnam) from Bourdieu's seeing social capital as 'irreducibly attached to class stratification and the exercise of economic and other forms of exploitation' (p 797) to the current all-embracing, methodologically-suspect concept, (5) its failure to understand either the social in (economic) capital or the need for concepts to be historically and socially grounded, (6) its complicity in the entryism of mainstream economics into the social sciences to justify neoliberal world-views, (7) its being used as a cover for rational-choice approaches to the analysis of society, and (8) its supposed role in giving a social dimension to economics, while in effect accepting mainstream neo-liberalism as normative. His most trenchant criticism of the concept is that it represents the 'degradation of scholarship' (p 799) and he urges those with 'progressive intentions, intellectual integrity and "scholarly capital"' to eschew it.

Within the context of this study, there has been no intention to avoid grounding the (putative) practice of social capital formation in the harsh and entangled world of power relationships at the local level (see chapter 2); equally, its utility as an analytical tool (or possible describer of actual processes) is confined to the consideration of what might be called 'the partnership process' in urban regeneration – no validity is claimed for it outside that process – but it does help to 'make sense' of some of that process; most profoundly, its acceptance as a concept implies in no way the acceptance of a

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<sup>17</sup> The title of his piece reveals all: *They F\*\*k You Up Those Social Capitalists!*



neoliberal economic agenda as desirable, much less inevitable (although it is in many ways the prevailing policy discourse which must be addressed).

While acknowledging it as a ‘perplexing’ concept, it is appropriate to recognise its utility (*sic*) in that it is useful ‘for how we think about questions of poverty, social exclusion, power and governance’ (Bebbington 2002: 801): the idea that in terms of social relations it is a resource facilitating (or excluding) access to other resources; that an actor’s set of relationships does not map automatically on to class or gender or other positions; that the structure of these relationships can change; that people invest in these networks; and that they *can* alter the nature of power and resources and markets (one may say particularly at the local level). As a *concept*, it may allow room for manoeuvre within complex existing political economies and geographies by renegotiating and shifting balances between actors. It is useful as an existential and ethnographic tool for understanding how local communities work on the level of partnership<sup>18</sup>. Finally, social capital is a useful analytical tool for this study in two principal ways: (1) it stresses the salience of association both as an important indicator of social connection and as a potential vehicle for community interaction and change, and (2) the creative use of the concept can help in an understanding of how ‘positive outcomes in terms of government efficiency and policy’ (Williamson 2002: 810) might be achieved. On its own, as Williamson states, it may not be a *sufficient* condition for positive and equitable political outcomes, but it may be a *necessary* concept in imagining what a coherent institutional framework as an alternative to a rigidly governmentalist or neoliberal capitalist society might look like. As such, it can be both a useful and progressive analytical tool, and in these senses it is used in this study.

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<sup>18</sup> Interestingly, Mayer and Rankin (2002: 804-8) discuss its utility as a vehicle for the discussion of ‘the reconfiguration of state-society relations’, e.g. antiglobalisation movements, anti-workfare groups which equally build networks and trust; these (apparently) *contradictory* or ‘disruptive’ aspects of collective social action might radicalise the concept and help in a wider understanding of how democracy and civic community might be enhanced.

### Collaborative planning

So far, this chapter has been concerned mainly with an analysis of what constitutes social capital and what is meant by trust as one of its principal components. However, it is useful to move from an analytical perspective to a perhaps more normative one in the area of practice, i.e. to an approach which discusses what principles might guide and constitute governance at the local level. Healey (1997: 211) defines *governance* as:

... (involving) the articulation of rules of behaviour with respect to the collective affairs of a political community; and to the principles for allocating resources among the community members.

This definition neatly encapsulates the operation of partnership working at local community level; it articulates both the practical nature of the exercise (*allocating resources*) and its corporate and transactional nature (*rules of behaviour* and *collective affairs*). By political community, she means any ‘collective entity’ organised legally, or by consent, or by membership, but it need not be territorial (connected to any one ‘place’). In modern society, concern has traditionally been with what governments *do* (or allow to be done), with the operation of ‘the state’. Distinction is often made between the *state* and *society*, or between the *public sphere* and the *private sphere*. Neo-liberals will allow to the state only what the private sphere has problems in addressing (cf. some of the comments on Putnam and Fukuyama above), but an older distinction going back to Aristotle separates the *public realm* (where collective issues are discussed) from the *household* (a more private and contained entity; again cf. Fukuyama). A more Marxist view would distinguish the economy, civil society and ‘the state’, government seen as autonomous and external, shaping our lives but being something over which we have little control.

Government policy (at both local and central level) is influenced by public opinion (which it can also help to form); in democratic societies, members of parliament and local councillors are elected (‘all politics is local’) and the manifold operations of government can affect both the economy and civil society<sup>19</sup>. Even *non-intervention* in,

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<sup>19</sup> There is something of an analogy here with the constitutional ‘separation of powers’ between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary; the separation is formal, but the entanglement and connections between them are palpable if covert.

say, macro-economic policy can be a powerful signifier of government policy and have consequent social effects, (cf. the earlier discussion on the ‘three dimensions’ of power). An *institutionalist* approach to issues of governance would emphasise links (Healey 1997: 207) ‘through social networks and cultural assumptions and practices which cut across formal organisations’. Significantly, *styles* of governance are learned in households, in companies, at the workplace and through voluntary associations of all kinds. The precise relationship between formal government and wider society will depend on historical antecedents and geography. A neo-liberal approach will aim to roll-back the state and transfer some (indeed most) of its responsibilities elsewhere and the language of deregulation and privatisation will stress ‘partnership’ and ‘empowerment’<sup>20</sup>. Commercial firms are encouraged to take on a more ‘social’ role; communities are encouraged to take control of ‘their’ facilities; tenants are encouraged to manage ‘their’ houses. None of these aims is undesirable in itself, nor are they incompatible with real partnership and good governance, but it is where they become a means of weakening and marginalizing government, particularly local government, that sharp policy issues arise.

The articulation of such policy issues and debates suggests that the ‘autonomous’ nature of government is, in fact, ‘negotiated over time through those webs of relationships’ which link it to the wider society it serves and through discourses which ‘evaluate and legitimate’ it (Healey 1997: 208). Demands for openness and accountability may arise from a perception that governments employ what can be characterised as a modernist polity in an allegedly postmodern world; governments are expected to move from a managerialist style to a more entrepreneurial or ‘enabling’ or ‘facilitating’ one. All this implies the need for considerable institutional reform, moving from what Healey calls the *hard infrastructure* of institutions, laws and resources to the *soft infrastructure* of capacity-building among firms and communities (and individuals), who are being required to invent (or reinvent) their own governance (p. 209). At this point, it is intended merely to state this process, but that does not imply that this process is desirable, inevitable or even possible; ideally governance in a broad sense should be

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<sup>20</sup> Since these are central concerns of this study, the relation between an ‘anti-state’ world-view and the operation of partnership and empowerment will need to be addressed; it is not proposed to do so within the scope of this chapter, but in Chapter 4 on partnership and governmentality; this study does not presume either partnership or empowerment to belong exclusively to a neoliberal agenda.

the result of the dynamic *interplay* between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ infrastructure in a Healeian sense (since these are the obverse and the reverse of ‘government’).

However, a more pointed reason for openness and accountability historically has been corruption and closed-circles in the exercise of power, especially say between local authorities and property developers. The interests of development (a normal and necessary process in any community) became conflated with those of property developers, with the wider community and the democratic process effectively excluded. Once such activity is discovered and penalised, there can still remain a powerful (*sic*) legacy of distrust that may become self-sustaining. Government must work actively to re-establish trust (the situation will not revert of its own accord to the *status quo ante*); given the discussion above, it is clear that renewed praxis of openness and fairness and an attachment to the common good will be successful only if it *works* and is *seen to be working*. Governance is, therefore the concern of everyone, not just of formal governmental agencies. There is both a need and pressure for the ‘renegotiation of the remit of formal government activity and for a reconsideration of the ways government agencies work’ (Healey 1987: 210). Healey’s focus is on spatial and land-use planning agencies ‘at the sharp end’ in ‘highly contested contexts’, but local communities are also often at the sharp end in equally contested arenas and the need for them to renegotiate governance is just as acute.

In a real sense, governance without praxis is dead (or largely futile) and it is possible to see politics in two ways, meaning either (1) *relations of power*, or (2) the *effort of gaining influence or exercising power* in the public realm<sup>21</sup>. In the first sense, politics connects the relations of everyday life to political structures in societies; these structures are themselves created by our predecessors and in governmental and quasi-governmental institutions they influence and control patterns of resource flow, of rules of behaviour, and of ‘cultural systems of meaning’. These ‘deep structures’ underpin the flow of activities that constitute social life and all embody power. In the second sense, politics may be described as the manifold activities of governance. Government power is concerned primarily with:

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<sup>21</sup> It is a useful reminder that, in the context of this dissertation, ‘politics’ mean simply the playing-out of these power-relations and power-exercises/influences *at the local level*. It also illustrates the relationship

1. Control of the flow of resources;
2. The power to define formal rules; and
3. Control of the agenda.

Healey describes the ‘politics of influence’ clustering round governments, which may be glossed as the perception that government (including local government) is where things get done (or appear to). However, governance need not be entirely autonomous or isolated (i.e. it need not emanate solely from formal government); a *corporatist* approach could involve government, labour and business in determining national policy (as in Germany); in some other countries, such as the Netherlands and Denmark, a much wider circuit of partnership is involved (*co-sociational*, Healey 1997: 212). In the more centralised UK, there is no great tradition of such approaches, and it is more difficult to get consensus where there is no tradition of it, or where too many competing interests fail to consolidate round fewer groupings or interests<sup>22</sup>. Without such a consensual approach, however (Healey 1997: 213), ‘the machinery of government (can become) increasingly separated from the dynamics of social change’. The struggle for power (at government level) can become self-absorbed, leading to dictatorial or patron/client regimes (or simply being ‘out of touch’ and elevated into a self-serving elite). Even an attachment to pluralistic policies can lead to short-term bargaining (to conciliate or buy-off strident interests) or single- (or restricted-) issue programmes. The key issue (p 213) is:

... how to transform the machinery of formal government and politics to enable a sustainable and supportive interaction between government activity (and) everyday life.

It is useful here to look at the role of *policy*; policy may be regarded as the set of principles or the mechanism whereby government (or any other agency) articulates its programmes, to make them more effective in delivery or to expose them to accountability and scrutiny. To some extent, this articulation of policy principles separates out ‘the issues’ from mere ‘power-play’ or personalities. Policy can also be seen both as a governance objective formally stated (but not necessarily implemented in

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of power to the collaborative planning process (i.e. politics is the means whereby power is realised through the planning or other process).

<sup>22</sup> The advent of the Scottish Parliament perhaps provides the opportunity for these co-sociational groupings to develop on what is a much smaller (even parochial) stage. The danger is that existing submerged (if not subjugated) power groupings - professional, social and managerial - assert *their* right to preferential hegemony instead of the inclusion of the widest possible civil society.

practice), and in a much wider sense such as ‘social policy’, the way that any society manages the general welfare of its citizens. This latter kind of policy may not be made explicit, but may be more implicitly embedded in cultural practices; in the same way that the common law is founded on precedent and practice, so social policy may ‘emerge’ in the routine and everyday conduct of governance or may be negotiated in a practical but unwritten way among the various actors. By dealing with real problems in specific situations, practical policies will emerge. A *policy-driven approach* requires that objectives are articulated, are part of some programme of action and are capable of some degree of assessment and critique. Such an approach makes government more accountable, but it also makes possible the management of activities in more effective and efficient ways (because they are seen to be meeting, *or not meeting*, real needs).

The danger in highly-complex governance systems, at national or local level, is that they become rule-bound, or that policy is driven by ‘objective’ standards, or that attitudes become inflexible. Even if, as Davies suggests (Davies (2001: 28):

There is now a more flexible basis for understanding the behaviour of local officials, which may have less to do with the bearing of structures and self interest, than with pragmatism, which may reflect both a rational-instrumental and social-purposive thinking.

Rule-bound bureaucracies are common at all levels and the danger, apart from inflexibility, is that the rules are circumvented or ignored in a haphazard way, possibly giving rise to manipulation or corruption. In such cases, a useful approach suggested by Healey is *management-by-objective*. Instead of being formalised into rules, policies are regarded as the tools of a management style which assumes that specific cases allow agents to interpret them according to circumstances – policy as principle, not straitjacket. This approach echoes the workings of Clegg’s circuits of power and implies discretion, transaction and mutual empowerment, within an ethical context defined by notions of ‘good government’. However, as the concept of ‘deferential democracy’ (trusting government more or less implicitly) declines, allowing discretion to managers and agents itself demands accountability and transparency and agents cannot become absolute power-brokers. The type of virtuous circles of governance and a strong civic culture envisaged by Putnam (based on his Italian research) must underpin such

widespread and decentralised operations of discretion<sup>23</sup>. However, the policy-driven approach on Healey's model as part of a wider, more accountable and sensitive approach to governance offers a good model for progress.

Considering various forms of governance to see which may be most suitable for the growth of the policy-driven approach: representative or pluralist democracy, corporatism or clientilism, Healy concludes that the best approach is still through a form of representative democracy. Government, on whatever scale, cannot be too narrow and must engage with a diversity of interests; hence, collaboration and consensus-building are important goals. What Healey calls the *criteria-driven approach*, in which implementation is effectively transferred from government (the enabler) to independent agencies, commercial or community-based (the providers) could have an important role at the local level, provided that a public-service ethos and a collaborative reference framework is maintained. It is important that government, central as well as local, is not 'out of the loop'; the circuit must involve all partners at some level. A kind of republican communitarianism<sup>24</sup> is as undesirable as dominant hegemonic government by decree; no agency can simply opt out of the process. Simple 'value-for-money', 'hands-off' criteria will not in themselves contribute to capacity-building or genuine partnership. The criteria adopted by the 'contract culture' of corporate planning and performance criteria may not be appropriate at the local level, where many of the aims of partnership working are difficult to quantify. However, some kind of agreed criteria can be useful as a benchmark against which to measure progress.

Notions such as the *entrepreneurial consensus*, a form of local corporatism (i.e. an alliance between the local community and development agendas), can encourage interactive practices, especially where the agenda is wider than the mere economic (or where 'economic' is understood more widely). It is a model of 'participatory discursive democracy', building heavily on trust, local knowledge and inclusion and can be seen as meeting the criteria for the civic society (and incidentally partnership) as discussed earlier. The general conclusion to be drawn from Healey's study is that governance is a

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<sup>23</sup> One such type of 'virtuous circle of governance' may be the social inclusion partnership which in principle allows for a more decentralised form of governance and ideally encourages and underpins the formation and operation of a more civic society.

<sup>24</sup> It is interesting and amusing that, usually at times of exasperation with the working of government and other agencies, the resource group at Yoker refer to themselves for their own validation as 'The People's republic of Yoker'; it is always done (half) tongue-in-cheek.

complex process which draws on many different models for its praxis, such as the tension between techno-corporate approaches and more pluralistic democratic processes. The building of consensus and the collaborative approach is difficult and complex, but will result in more effective and efficient governance judged by the widest range of criteria. In turn, this will lead to the development of trust and the formation of social capital and the ‘virtuous circle’ enabling (if not totally *ensuring*) sustainable social and economic development.

### **Interim Summary and Conclusions**

Following the consideration of the operation of local power, the intention in this chapter was to explore the general concept of social capital as a matrix or context within which this power operates. The study also sees power as a base upon or within which social capital might be constructed. Within this broad theme, there are two principal concerns:

1. To consider the background against which local social relations are constructed in terms of networks, and the cognate operation of trust; and
2. To locate these networks within a practical local governance context providing a framework for collective action.

A commonsense approach to local transactions would observe that they occur between and among actors representing a variety of agencies over a range of service issues, not merely within a local space, but over time as well. This history results in the formation of a set of relationships and embedded practices (in part the ‘circuits’ of the previous chapter) which in turn (ideally) produce networks of trust or interdependence. In reflecting on these issues, the chapter splits into two broad sections: (i) an extended discussion of social capital and trust and (ii) a consideration of local governance.

The notion of social capital has become almost central to any discussion of local regeneration and the three pillars of Putnam’s approach, norms (rules), networks (sets of relationships) and the operation of trust (as a binding agent), are widely regarded as essential to its operation. In his earlier formulation of the concept, Putnam maintained that, based on his empirical observations in Italy, the functioning of strong social networks would *produce* favourable economic (and social) outcomes, based on principles of mutuality and reciprocity. In spite of a tendency towards individualism (the ‘dilemmas of collective action’), the fact of mutual collaboration is persistent in



human relations. If this cooperation is institutionalised (formally or informally) the ‘transaction costs’ of cooperation are reduced (by mutual consent) and coordinated action is facilitated. Crucially, social capital is a *public*, not a private, good grounded in reciprocal collective voluntary association. By the time of *Bowling Alone* Putnam’s emphasis had blurred and there is a strong suggestion of the intrusion of an individualistic, rational-choice ethos as a remedy for the supposed decline of social cohesion, especially in the USA.

The salience of trust, grounded in the expectation of the fulfilment of mutual aims, is a key concept of social capital. Trust in turn implies commitment, but the idea of it as normatively neutral places it within a pragmatic and practical context, although it too has become associated with a neo-liberal world-view which privileges the familial and the individualistic and diminishes the role of government and the state. Communities are regarded as civic or uncivic depending on levels of trust and cooperation and offering different models of trust and institutional performance. Most criticism of social capital centres on this drift towards a more market-orientated, individualistic perspective, but provided it is grounded firmly in a wider social context aware of the operation of power and conscious of conflict and stressing communal values and coordination, it is useful in making sense of local engagement.

Consideration of collaborative planning moves the discussion into the realm of governance, particularly with the attempt to remedy the perceived ‘remoteness’ of both central and local government from the community. Central is the need for a dialogue between the ‘hard’ infrastructure of government (institutions, laws, resources) and the ‘soft’ notion of capacity-building (see Chapter 2) and the need to make government more accountable through a process of discursive democracy and practical policies meeting tangible need. Governance is seen as a universal concern involved in the demands of everyday life. Policy formulation should be clear, open and pragmatic. In essence, governance should (Healey 1997) be both knowledge-rich and sensitive to different cultures, and be founded on *consent*.

## Chapter 4

### THE PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

#### *The Role of Government and the Working of the Local Partnership Process*



**Plate 4.1: Practical partnership; new housing in Drumchapel for Kendoon Housing Co-operative.**

... the impetus, energy, commitment and resources that are brought by the large-scale partnership initiative need to be tied to a long-term view, that goes well beyond the life of political administrations. This ... is the real reason for building real power in estates ... the professionals and the agencies can come and go. It is the residents who will go on living there and whose children will be born there.

*Empowerment and Estate Regeneration* (Stewart and Taylor (1995): 73; concluding remarks)

#### **Introduction – The structure of the chapter**

Having considered the workings of power and the formation of social capital in the previous two chapters, the task in this chapter is to reflect on what will be defined as the partnership process. The concern is not with partnership *structures* (in a formal sense)

but with the inherent *processes* or *mechanisms* of collaboration (which arguably produce deeper structures than the merely formal; see Giddens 1984) whereby they might be constructed. As previously discussed, the successful operation of partnership working is dependant both on an understanding of the operation of power (and the presumption that local actors are active participants in circuits of power) and on the existence of active and embedded local networks helping to construct social capital and trust (which presumes that local actors have the capacity to engage in collaborative working); the relationship between these components is not a casual one and the study regards them as being in an ascending sequence<sup>1</sup>. Partnership working goes, therefore, beyond formal structures (indeed should underpin them) and encapsulates elements of each of these components, in a dynamic relationship.

In chapter 1, within this general concern to understand the nature of partnership, two principal issues emerged:

- (1) Based on the earlier concerns to understand the workings of power and the role of social capital formation, to consider critically the actual operation of formal partnerships, particularly through the lens of governmentality and to review the formal literature of partnership in Scotland; and
- (2) To consider critically the ‘shape’ of local partnership and what might constitute it.

The aim of the chapter is to assess what meaning can be attached to the concept of governmentality and its relevance to the study, analysed in terms of *The Foucault Effect* (and hence echoing some of the analysis in Chapter 2) in order to determine the approach of formal government to partnership; this is followed by a consideration of the general policy context of partnership and then by an analysis of the ‘discourse’ of partnership. These three concerns are illustrated by a review of *Progress in Partnership* (The Scottish Office 1993), the foundation document for the operation of social regeneration partnerships in Scotland and the chapter concludes with a consideration of the conditions for the operation of partnership and an attempt at definition.

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<sup>1</sup> Echoing the ‘three dimensions’ of power as discussed in chapter 2, partnership may also be seen as having three dimensions: the first dimension (‘the base’) is constructed of those interactions of power, economics and social relationships which make up the local circuit; upon this is built a superstructure in two further dimensions – the second consists of the networks of social capital, trust and collaboration and the third of partnership working and the style and operation of governance within the area. This theme will be developed.

**Partnership: a critical view.**

Although the desirability of a policy of inclusion and partnership is the key theme of the thesis, this is not a policy which can be accepted uncritically. There is, in the urban discourse, a long and honourable tradition of dissent, of resistance, particularly on the part of individuals and collectively of communities who consider themselves to be in some measure oppressed by government or excluded from the economic benefits accumulated by society as a whole (The Scottish Office 1988 and 1993). It may seem self-defeating to resist the policy of empowerment currently proclaimed by central and local government, but North and Brueghel (2001) demonstrate that consensus can at times be hegemonic; the explicit discourse of partnership, particularly as articulated by government, may indeed be inclusive, but it encapsulates a well-hidden implicit discourse of penalties for non-cooperation. At the local level, external funding, the supply of personnel, access to services and the availability of premises are all critical to communal action; protest, advocacy and resistance are possible without them, but proactive engagement with external agencies is, however, severely impaired. It may, therefore, appear perverse to begin the consideration of partnership by arguing *against* the concept, perceived almost universally as a positive element in urban regeneration, but rather in the manner of ‘active distrust’ as outlined by Levi (1998) a healthy scepticism is not inappropriate. Indeed, her concept of trust as normatively neutral could equally be applied to partnership. What is important are *outcomes*, not structures or even discourse. Whom does the partnership benefit? Has there been an increase in empowerment? Who ‘controls’ the partnership? Is the ‘agenda’ overt or covert? Are the changes sustainable? Have the partners been ‘transformed’? In other terms, is the partnership *genuine* (or, in modern street-talk: is it *real*; see Rose 1997)?

One approach to understanding in a critical way the process of partnership and to begin answering some of these questions is to deploy what Raco and Imrie (2000) have called *The Foucault Effect*; they explore Foucault’s concept of governmentality (Foucault 1991) to analyse the shift in emphasis in urban policy towards a ‘rights and responsibilities’ agenda, as part of a wider transformation of governance, and what they call ‘advanced liberalism’, towards ‘activating’ citizens, as individuals and collectively, into taking more responsibility *for their own government* (Raco and Imrie 2000: 2187-88). This new emphasis on ‘citizenship’ in the development and implementation of urban regeneration policy and practice has already been discussed under social capital in

chapter 3 and its nature may be encapsulated in a quotation from a government publication of 1998<sup>2</sup> where it is stated as requiring (Raco and Imrie 2000: 2187) ‘greater democratic legitimacy for local government and a new brand of involved and responsible citizenship; in short, reinvigorated local democracy’. The quotation contains the notion both of progression (‘modernising’) and of perhaps no more than good book-keeping (‘best value’) and echoes the almost straightforwardly transactional vision of society quoted from a statement of Tony Blair in 1997 (*ibid.*, my emphasis):

... the basis of ... modern civic society is an ethic of *mutual responsibility or duty*. It is something for something. You only take out what you put in. That’s the bargain.

On the surface, however stark this proposition may appear, it is not unreasonable to expect mutual responsibility and reciprocity on the part of citizens in a democracy, but it must be seen as part of a continuum from what Raco and Imrie see as the Thatcherite project for ‘encouraging voluntary and community behaviour *in the context of a reduced role for the state*’ (*ibid.*: 2188) my emphasis).

‘The state’ in this context may be seen as referring to both the national and the local state, but in practice – in the interface at community level – it is the role of the local state which is being reduced and this as an opportunity for the active citizen to play a role in their own governance in a context of what Raco and Imrie characterise as growing social fragmentation, opportunities and expectations. However, it can be argued that there is an element of cause and effect here; the apparently similar agenda of both a (determinedly) right-wing and an (ostensibly) centre-left government since at least the early 1980s to redirect the focus of government in relation to both the local state and the citizen must itself have contributed to this ‘growing’ fragmentation. In order to describe and evaluate this process, Raco and Imrie use what they call a ‘Foucauldian framework’. The general context for these new ‘rationalities and techniques’ in government is the impact of both globalisation and the rate of technological change, seen as a threat to established ways of life. (see Dicken 1998 for a general discussion of this ‘global shift’ and Sassen 2001 for the place of cities in the global economy<sup>3</sup>.) These threats (or at least challenges) may be summarised as:

- The development of ‘flexible’ labour markets;

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<sup>2</sup> *Modernising Local Government – Improving Services through Best Value*, UK Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions.

- The break-up of established traditions and cultural referents;
- The pace and extent of change; and
- The ‘disembedding’ of socio-economic activities from their traditional matrix.

These changes may be associated with the ‘redistribution of risks and rewards’ in society from ‘collective, state and bureaucratic-led provision’ towards ‘individualisation’, in which the role of the state shifts from being provider and arbiter (controller) to facilitator<sup>4</sup> or, in a more graphic image, to enabling citizens to ‘pilot their way’ through the presumably choppy seas of change (Raco and Imrie 2000: 2188-91). The new paradigm takes various forms: the fragmentation and privatisation of services and the emergence of ‘identity’ politics. The new reality is alleged to be a move away from class or collective identity towards one where (quoting Giddens) ‘individuals are no longer prepared to accept the paternalistic, clientist forms of governance which have characterised post-war state systems’. In a Foucauldian analysis, such a shift indicates more than simply a response to change, no matter how profound that change may be; it (for government) (Raco and Imrie 2000: 2189) ‘involve(s) a *calculating* preoccupation with activities directed at shaping, channelling and guiding the conduct of others’<sup>5</sup>.

However, the state itself cannot be characterised as a unified actor; in a post-structuralist sense, it is seen rather (Raco and Imrie 2000: footnote (1) on p.2189):

... as set of social relations stretching beyond the domain of the formal juridico-political infrastructure of traditional analyses without any necessarily inscribed institutional fixity and formal or substantial unity<sup>6</sup>.

The state is not a single entity, but is itself fragmented and atomised. The formal government is merely one of these elements, albeit a critical one for our study. However, what is important is not so much the *form* or composition of the state, but

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<sup>3</sup> See Short 1996 on the cyclical nature of modern capitalism; slump follows boom, disinvestment follows investment, with severe effects on more ‘marginal’ areas.

<sup>4</sup> Given that this is based on the ‘Foucault effect’, the notion of government as facilitator marches with the earlier conclusion of non-sovereign/non-dominant power as ‘facilitative’; however, within a plus-sum matrix, this does not imply a *weakening* of government, rather a *strengthening* and acknowledgement of the local role.

<sup>5</sup> My emphasis; this term strongly suggests policy rather than mere reaction to external trends.

<sup>6</sup> It can be argued, however, that *Progress in Partnership* and the formation of SIPs still *look* like they emanate from ‘the domain of the formal juridico-political infrastructure’!

what may be termed the ‘mentality of government’<sup>7</sup>. In Foucault’s view, government is (Foucault 1979: 62):

... an ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics, that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power.

As Raco and Imrie observe (and see particularly *Progress in Partnership*), one way that government deals with the ‘problematic’ of this complexity is precisely by the use of white papers, discussion papers, statutory instruments, consultative documents and the like, which seek to transform ‘regimes of (government) practice’. It can be argued that a programme of decentralisation or the establishment of social inclusion partnerships (SIPs), ostensibly aimed at the diffusion of empowerment, is in fact the creation of ‘domains’ of ‘calculable space’, calculable because the norms of participation and even the delineation of eligible groups and areas have been set *by the government*. This ‘advanced liberal’ discourse and practice, as well as for example the marketisation of welfare services (and programmes such as *Welfare to Work*), involve also the ‘reinvention’ of particular forms of community activity (such as urban regeneration partnerships), which imply strong negative sanctions for non-compliance (such as the withdrawal of funding). In Foucault’s term, this is an attempt to ‘govern through the governed’. This is not mere ‘hands-off’ government; the new paradigm becomes the only acceptable choice – responsibility and freedom are, paradoxically, realised through the prescriptive and dominant norms set by government<sup>8</sup>. To achieve this advanced liberal regime, the mobilisation of self-governing capacities is critical to transform the (allegedly previously complacent) individual into an active citizen. Government does not govern society as such but promotes conduct (at individual and collective levels) *consistent with government objectives*. Thus (and paradoxically) freedom is control transformed and relocated.

The great strength of understanding and using Foucault’s view of governmentality is that it enables us conceptually to link the techniques of (advanced liberal) government with what are perceived as the aspirations, approaches and actions of the population at large (the ‘hidden discourses’), particularly within urban partnerships. For apparent freedom (or even a little more real freedom), residents and

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<sup>7</sup> To gloss governmentality as the ‘mentality of government’ is in no sense to trivialise the concept; this notion represents the ‘equilibrium level’ or the ‘default position’ of government – it is how it *thinks* and the position it might regard as ‘natural’.

<sup>8</sup> Although the *discourse* is that of partnership.

communities in these areas become subject to increasing scrutiny, monitoring and ultimately control, albeit of an apparently benevolent and remote kind. Governmentalities are continually produced, modified and reproduced by which the rationalities (purposes) of government and the ultimate rule (sovereignty or even dominance) of the state are realised. The agenda is not necessarily the local agenda – needs may be defined and assessed elsewhere – but the task of addressing these needs and implementing the agenda is made the 'responsibility' of the responsible and active citizen. In practice, of course, there is still a range of agencies charged with the delivery of local services and the collectivist approach (the partnership) is stressed. However, very few of these agencies (or agents) are autonomous; almost all are dependant to some extent on government funding and support. At the same time they are 'independent' of one another, so that they act in a multiplicity of ways in order to achieve their various objectives (and thereby create their 'own' *circuits*). The authority (legitimacy) of the partnership, particularly in terms of collective action, is highly dependant on responsible choice and active participation. The role of the local community is in turn dependant on the capacity of individual residents to engage in the (highly complex) process within a discourse constructed elsewhere. This is not so much a 'case against' partnership, as an admonition that the process *is* complex and that the role of government, apparently absent, is still the exercise of sovereignty by other means. In some sense, this test of governmentality as outlined by Raco and Imrie will be used as a kind of 'Occam's razor' or 'acid test' of partnership; in the end whose purposes does it serve? Are the benefits mutual or is it merely government by remote control?

### **The background to the growth of partnerships**

As will be demonstrated below, the *language* (discourse) of partnership must be understood in a quite specific way, and just as the use of language is not value-free, so the *reason* for partnership working at all must be understood as being grounded in a particular context. Partnership itself can be thought of in general terms as akin to *participation*, as part of<sup>9</sup>:

(the 'democratic imperative' that) ... those who will be substantially affected by decisions made by social and political institutions must be involved in the making of those decisions.

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<sup>9</sup> Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought (1977, revised 1988: 630).



This ‘definition’, from an EEC (*sic*) directive, is useful only as a starting point; it is by no means sufficient to encompass the complexities of this issue. However, its very simplicity and clarity cuts to the quick of this sensitive topic: there is no longer a presumption that decisions can simply be made *about* people; those people must be themselves (at the least) part of the processes of decision-making. However, the reason for the policy shift went much deeper than mere management. As Lawless (1989) indicates, experiments in urban regeneration in the post-war period had their origin in the 1960s and 1970s under the Wilson and Heath governments. The prime motivation was the need to counter increasing joblessness because of economic ‘restructuring’ which had led to a loss of (particularly) manufacturing employment. Other reasons were the failure to eradicate poverty even in the prosperous 1960s and after twenty years of the Welfare State; to do so new programmes for the disadvantaged would need to be initiated in the cities, and above all the problem came to be seen as having a ‘localised nature’; the increasing assumption was that (Lawless 1989: 4):

... particularly grave urban problems were concentrated in definable urban localities, and that policies designed to deal with these problems should be defined in terms of locale.

(It is ironic that many of these ‘urban localities’ were themselves seen as the solution to earlier problems of poor housing, overcrowding and poor health, as described in the case of Whiteinch in Chapter 1, see Pacione 1995.)

The growth of problems in many of these areas and the decline of traditional employment is part of a much wider social phenomenon, what may be termed the rise of the ‘post-industrial’ city; a fuller discussion of this is outside the scope of this study, but see Harvey (1989), Jessop (1995) and Shaw (2001). Essentially, an economy based on the production of goods is being replaced by one based on the trading of services, with craft skills (and non-skills) being replaced by ‘knowledge’ of the new processes (and by automated industrial processes based on new technological developments). It is also true that manufacturing in particular is simply being relocated to areas with significantly lower labour costs, whether the process is ‘knowledge-based’ or not. Most of the now ‘deprived’ estates were built specifically to house industrial workers and their families; this economic shift is still in process and its long-term effect cannot yet be determined, but its effect on local communities in many areas is very palpable. The world of work has changed; the nature of housing tenure has changed; the political landscape, local and national, has changed; skilled has changed to unskilled, advantage has changed to

disadvantage, and in general whole areas have been characterised as ‘deprived’, areas which were themselves characterised as the answer to earlier problems. Both Yoker and Drumchapel fit squarely within this category<sup>10</sup>.

Although the growth of partnership working has been founded on the growing realisation of the apparent spatial concentration of urban problems in the wake of industrial and economic restructuring, it is also related to the growth of the notion of administrative decentralisation in British cities (see Chapter 1). However, the establishment of the SIPs and of the four *New Life* partnership areas before them are not strictly related to this process. They really belong more to the urban task-force tradition of targeted, episodic and limited intervention in order to achieve specific objectives (see Table 1.10). They do generally have decentralised elements and they aim to be holistic, but it is best to deal with them as discrete entities and judge them within their own terms of reference.

### **The discourse of partnership**

The January 1999 special edition of *Urban Studies* was devoted to what it called *Discourse and Urban Change*, a reflection on the *language* of urban regeneration predicated on the assumption that (Hastings 1999: 17):

... the processes by which meanings are made, shared, negotiated or imposed are intrinsic to processes of social reproduction, contestation and change and are therefore actively involved in shaping economy and society.

The focus of this study is to explore not so much the ‘meaning’ of *language*, but the discourse of *process* in some of the deeper structures that underpin urban regeneration (for example, the use of terms such as *decentralisation* and *partnership*). However, language and meaning are important as part of the process, but as Paddison (1999: 108) states (my emphasis):

... decentralist strategies are invariably advocated as ones which are necessary (but not *sufficient*) to legitimise preferred changes.

Similarly, while the proper language is necessary as part of the empowerment/decentralisation/regeneration process, it is equally not sufficient to define it and there is a need for a changed embedded (and embodied) reality if the process is to be

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<sup>10</sup> See MacGregor’s longitudinal description of the same processes in Deptford in London (MacGregor 1995, esp. pp. 52-55).

sustainable. Thus, there are what Hastings (1999: 7) calls ‘substantive concerns and empirical questions’ surrounding the discourse of urban partnership, such as (my gloss in parenthesis):

- The nature of citizenship itself (as embodied in action);
- The nature of citizen participation (in active partnership);
- The character of urban governance and planning (ideally on a collaborative basis);
- Policy processes (interactive); and
- The exercise of power (on a ‘plus-sum’ basis).

‘Discourse’ needs to be understood in more complex ways: it can be understood firstly as referring to a *single event* or instance of language use (for example, in a speech in which a government minister may lay out ‘the policy’ on partnership governance), where the main concern is with the particular vocabulary used, or the rhetorical strategy employed (for example, the title *New Life* is redolent of rebirth or fundamental change). What is important is how the discourse is interpreted, how it is subsequently used (e.g. to legitimise certain practices) and the measure of the eventual outcome (how it corresponds to the stated intentions) – a document like *New Life for Urban Scotland* will be cited as a template both for policy and practice and as a reference point for subsequent measures of their effectiveness. A second way to regard discourse is as part of a *group* of utterances or texts within a ‘single domain’ (such as a formal partnership or the notion of partnership itself), where it may be used to establish ‘conventions and patterns’ of usage and to legitimise power exercised in a particular way or to establish norms (the ‘rules of the game’ as discussed with reference to Putnam in Chapter 2).

There are two more fundamental ways in which discourse may be understood: either (a) in a post-structural sense where ‘language constitutes or produces the concepts and categories we use in order to make sense of the world’, or (b) – following Foucault – as having ‘productive properties (which) are not limited to the constitution of “knowledge” but extend to other dimensions of social life, including social relations, identities and subject positions’ (both Hastings 1999: 10). Discourse is intrinsically related to *power* and its exercise (see Chapter 2) and is socially grounded. In Foucault’s (controversial) view, power *precedes* language (government can talk of partnership and *define* it because it has both the authority and the resources to do so), but language is also one of the main ways in which power is realised (becomes operative through

enunciation, definition, advocacy, persuasion, compulsion). It is sufficient to understand that there is a dialectical relationship between the two and hence that language (use) is not neutral or value-free; ‘language, and particularly language change, (can be) viewed as an index of other sorts of social change’ (Hastings 1999: 11). Although this discussion of discourse has scratched only the surface of what is a complex subject, it is useful as a reminder that language is a signifier of more than a surface reality (that speakers say what they mean and mean what they say) and requires a degree of interpretation, analysis and comment. In the consideration of partnership working at small-area level, an analysis of discourse may be used as a useful preliminary *test* of the extent to which the partnership process has become embedded (or, more accurately, ‘embodied’) within even the cultural aesthetic (the actual language) of official documents in particular.

### **Illustration: *Progress in Partnership***

It is useful to consider here a simple discourse analysis of *Progress in Partnership: A Consultation Paper on the Future of Urban Regeneration in Scotland* (PiP) (The Scottish Office 1993) as an illustration of some of these points and as a test of government intent; the document may be seen as underpinning current regeneration policy in Scotland (although recently superseded by the Scottish Executive’s 2002 statement on community regeneration: *Better communities in Scotland*). It begins with a foreword by Ian Lang the then (Conservative) Secretary of State for Scotland – at that time (before devolution) the highest political office in the country – intended to underline its status and in part also to confirm its continuity with *New life for Urban Scotland* (1988), described as (PiP 1993: ii) ‘a landmark in the history of urban regeneration in Scotland’. Thus, although there is the intention to state a change in policy, there is also the intent to demonstrate continuity and to restate *New Life’s* main principles:

- Partnership between public bodies;
- Full involvement of the private sector; and
- A key role for local communities.

The need to reinstate these principles at the head of the document illustrates not just continuity, but arguably both a *failure* of the previous initiative to have had the desired

effect and the government's determination to maintain it, albeit in a modified form. This failure of the 'partnership approach' is stated quite explicitly (PiP 1993: ii, my emphasis):

Our Partnership approach has not required the creation of new powers, statutory bodies or financial instruments (but rather) commitment from our partners on the basis of a shared vision for the future of our disadvantaged urban areas ... (and the value for money) offered by the co-ordinated, comprehensive approach to urban regeneration, value *which is not offered by the piecemeal approaches which have not worked in the past.*

It could be said that the approach here is almost one of injured innocence and a clear statement of ownership ('Our Partnership approach has not required ...'), with the emphasis transferred to the need for 'commitment' from putative partners and to an end to a 'piecemeal' approach. The introduction thus encapsulates several important clues to the type of partnership envisaged by central government:

- Its approach is endorsed at the highest political level (i.e. it is authoritative);
- It lists the putative partners (public bodies, the private sector, the community);
- It appears to reject the need for new powers, structures or finance;
- It places the onus for implementation on the partners; and
- It rejects what it sees as the shortcomings of 'past' practice.



Plate 4.2: Ian Lang

The language is *reasonable* in tone, the accompanying photograph of the Secretary is solemn but benign (see inset), and the introduction ends with the hope that the 'spirit of partnership' will elicit appropriate responses. In the *Introduction* to the report, it is stated (positively) that, in the previous ten years (i.e. from the early 1980s to the early 90s) the 'great majority of Scots' had seen a considerable increase in prosperity, but conceded that 'benefits had not been

distributed evenly' and that there were areas of 'concentrated deprivation' where the residents 'suffered' high rates of unemployment, etc. (p. 5). This passage reads as a purely descriptive, almost context-free, account of the necessity for a new approach: there is no hint of wider economic or social movement, no account of the role of government policies, no hint even of the magnitude of the problems. The impression is given that some *individuals*, concentrated in certain areas, have somehow been left behind in a generally progressive society and that, as a consequence, they are

‘suffering’. Policies should (now) be aimed at ‘a sustainable transformation’ of these areas, ‘by the better use of (existing) resources and by harnessing ‘the energy and commitment of local communities themselves’ (p. 5). The solution is, therefore, a matter of better organisation of resources and of involving local people in the process of regeneration rather than in fundamental social and economic change.

Having stated the issue in very general terms, the document now becomes very specific about the geographic location of the principal problems (p. 8 - in ‘the disadvantaged public sector housing estates on the periphery of our cities and large towns’) and what these problems might be:

- Housing and environmental decline;
- The fact that social, commercial and recreational facilities are ‘missing’; and
- The increased concentration of unemployment.

The document also refers to population decline and ‘instability’, with a high instance of out-migration. Lessons were stated to have been learned from previous attempts at regeneration, particularly:

- The need to avoid ‘quick-fix’ and single-issue solutions;
- The fact that the problems were ‘deep-rooted’;
- That the private sector had a ‘key role’ to play; and
- There was the need to involve local people by ‘building on their willingness and ability *to assume increased responsibility*’ (my emphasis).

These basic statements are developed to stress the need for an integrated economic, social and physical programme of renewal, over a ten-year period; for the private sector to be ‘included’, particularly for ‘advice, expertise and resources’ and as an aid towards the ‘breakdown (of) economic isolation’; and for the ‘involvement’ of the community, so that decisions taken reflected need, to ‘allow’ the development of responsibility, and to ‘secure’ commitment (p. 6). This development of what is meant by ‘lessons learned’ to some extent modifies the rather didactic and prescriptive tone of the early part of the document; there is a recognition of the considerable scale of the problem and its complex nature, the private sector is seen in more auxiliary mode and the community is, in effect, ‘invited’ to join rather than simply ‘accept responsibility’. For its part, the government, while retaining a ‘leadership’ role, is more intent to ‘demonstrate commitment’ and pass on ‘first-hand experience’ of (the process of) regeneration (presumably based on its experience in the four *New Life* areas). There is an

acknowledgement of the *danger* (undefined, and a remarkably strong word to use) of ignoring areas of deprivation (PiP 1993: 6):

... there is a danger that major benefits will by-pass disadvantaged areas unless appropriate measures are taken to improve economic, physical and social infrastructure and equip the residents to compete effectively in the labour market.

Although it can be argued that this places the emphasis on the residents (individually) to compete, and thereby labels them as having failed in some sense (without perhaps giving due weight to wider socio-economic change, see Shaw 2001), in practice it can also be regarded as the basis of an appropriate policy response at the small-area level, particularly where the concern is to get individuals back to employment (rarely a collective enterprise).

The tone is of disinterested concern on the part of the government, and this sympathetic approach is reinforced by the inference drawn from the outcome of the ‘right-to-buy’ exercise, which gave residents ‘growing ... confidence in the future of the estate (*sic*)’ and allowed them to have a ‘greater stake in their communities’ (p. 7). Monitoring is intended (benignly) to ‘document activity (and) measure progress’. The *Introduction* concludes by assessing the Urban Programme which, since its establishment in 1969 was considered to have been a success in tackling some elements of deprivation; however, following a review in 1991, it had been decided to retain the programme, but to link it more closely to the aims of *New Life*. Having consulted widely, therefore, the government was still able to redirect the programme to meet its own policy needs, while appearing to be consensual and collaborative. In a sense, this gives a pointer to the whole discourse of the *Progress in Partnership* document.

It is not proposed to analyse the remainder of the document in the same detail, but it is useful to note that in Chapter 2 *The Lessons of the Partnerships* (i.e. the four *New Life* partnership areas), the government’s belief is that the ‘principles established and embodied’ in that experience should form the basis of the partnership approach, and it is:

... our conviction that a co-ordinated, comprehensive, strategic approach is the best way to revitalise large, multiply deprived urban areas and their communities.

As a policy statement this is unremarkable and would have widespread support (it is a constantly recurring theme of activists at local level), but it is clear that the *New Life* paradigm is set as a boundary for the discourse. Moreover, much of the ‘piecemeal’

approach of the past was directly and indirectly funded *by the government*, which has always been in a strong position to influence local authority programmes through its financial subventions, policy statements and the use of statutory instruments. There is, therefore, no guarantee that any ‘new’ approach would be any more successful, based solely on what government had ‘learned’ in Castlemilk, Ferguslie Park, Wester Hailes or Whitfield.

Although in one sense this discourse of partnership and collaborative working is normative or prescriptive (‘our conviction’) and can be backed by the government’s financial power (and indeed Foucauldian ‘power-knowledge’ since it is at the centre of intelligence and policy-making), it nonetheless still requires the active *participation* of a complex network of agencies. Indeed, in Chapter 2, the point is made that these outer schemes are not ‘free-standing settlements but suburbs of their respective cities and towns which must interact with the wider area’. (In some ways, this is a curious statement: it implies that the schemes had somehow ‘opted out’ of society at large of their own volition and that *they* had now to reintegrate – blaming the victim?) There is a danger, even where there is an active process of local partnership working, that success or failure will be measured purely by reference to local conditions and results (many ‘initiatives’ are self-referential and whereas local networks can be established, wider city-wide networks at community level are more difficult). There is no real hint that regeneration areas can learn directly and cooperatively from one another, except presumably through central government as the conduit of knowledge and experience.

The document offers a comprehensive, well-illustrated summary of what central government considers to have been achieved in the realm of partnership working, admittedly under its ‘leadership’, throughout Scotland. It ‘proposes’, ‘suggests’ and ‘puts forward’ ways in which it might be achieved over a wider area. In many ways, the document is a very useful handbook of the process of partnership working and does provide a template (or at least a guidebook) to what has been achieved. But, however much the stated intention is consultative, the presentation (if not the overt discourse) suggests otherwise. The government’s case is made persuasively and logically and, although it begs many questions (about how the current state of many of these disadvantaged areas has come about, for example), it is presented in an emollient and positive way. It suggests that any observations will be relatively minor and that the government’s principles for and organisation of partnership working will be adopted.



The ‘power’ of government is thus exemplified and mediated through the discourse even of consultation.

### **The process of partnership**

One key to understanding what might constitute the partnership process as opposed to its discourse is a paper by Hastings (1996), which sees partnership as the essential component required by central government for additional funding in Scottish urban regeneration areas; however, although there is a desire by government (even more localised in Scotland with the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and Executive in 1999, after the paper was written) to see partnership as an interactive process between local government and its putative partners (the ‘community’ and the ‘private sector’), there is also a requirement that this partnership will be ‘visible’ or reified in some sense. Thus, there is both a *structure* (signified perhaps with some kind of contractual agreement and probably a local ‘presence’, in the form of staff or an office, as well as a board or committee) and a *process* or a *practice* (which can equally be formalised through working committees or boards or forums, but is much more difficult to recognise). The existence of formalised structures (currently Social Inclusion Partnerships) is deemed *necessary* for additional government funding (replacing the Urban Programme), but partnership working is really an *aspiration*, to be realised only by (at some future point) measuring outcomes and the extent to which the partners are seen to be interactive (Hastings 1996). Even although there may be some visible format whereby partnership working might be constructed (or even, ideally, produced) – such as a partnership board – the mere existence of such a body is no guarantee that interactive working on a collaborative basis has become embedded or embodied in the practices of the partnership (or among all the partners).

Moreover, central government sees the ‘private sector’ as essential to the operation of such partnerships and sets the template in terms of basic structures on that basis. Local government, historically a major provider of local services, no longer occupies central space; the partners are ‘equal’ notionally and each has an active role to play. Practice since 1999 seems to have modified this approach; although there is nominally a ‘private sector’ presence on partnership boards, the (formal) partnership is really constituted by the community (through elected or nominated representatives), the

local authority (through nominated elected members, not all local) and a variety of quasi-governmental agencies which are important providers of local services (for example, health or employment training or local enterprise agencies). Arguably, this is a more pragmatic and workable arrangement, but there has nevertheless been a governance shift, the reasons for which are worth exploring.

Hastings recognises three essential components of partnership (Hastings 1996: 258):

- (1) Synergy;
- (2) Transformation; and
- (3) Resource enlargement.

The term *synergy*, deriving ultimately from biology, is used to refer to ‘a relationship between agents whereby their combined effect is greater than the sum of the effect of each one considered individually’<sup>11</sup>. In partnership terms, it may simply ‘indicate general expectations of collaborative benefit’ (same source), but interestingly, the failure to deliver this benefit may have a negative effect ‘if the totality is ill-conceived or ineffectively organised’ (*ibid.*). Synergy needs thus to be *effective* and produce real benefit if it is not to contribute to the equivalent of negative trust and the destruction of social capital. In essence, the concept of ‘synergy’ in local partnerships was used originally to refer to mutually-beneficial collaboration between the public and private sectors (profit for the private sector, new resources and the achievement of social goals for the public sector), but it can equally be used to refer to the current three-way partnership of community/local government/public agencies. (It is interesting that the original concept is still current in the development of public/private partnerships (PPPs), used in practice to achieve quick implementation of capital projects such as schools and hospitals; in this sense it is a specialised meaning of the term and is outside the scope of this study.)

Hastings identifies two kinds of synergy: *resource* synergy and *policy* synergy. Following a series of interviews, she concluded that the public sector saw partnership as involving primarily the resource approach (with coordination of action as the primary goal), while local residents saw the policy approach as more important (with coordination not the primary concern) – residents were concerned with the ‘(generation)

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<sup>11</sup> Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought (1977, revised 1988: 840).

of appropriate responses to local needs’ (Hastings 1996: 261). The present study certainly concurs with this last statement, but interestingly it must conclude as a result of interviews with local residents and activists that they see policy concerns as rather remote and identify the greatest needs as proper coordination and greater resourcing for local projects<sup>12</sup>. It is certainly true that policy synergy is the more difficult to agree, but the ‘rules of the game’ for SIPs should obviate this problem, at least in theory (see Chapter 9 for more discussion of this).

*Transformation* is equally important; it can be understood as the ability of one partner to change the culture or the attitude of another. In the earlier government view of partnership (e.g. in *New Life*), the role of the private sector was to ‘shake up’ the public sector, while it in turn ‘socialised’ the private sector in a kind of structuration analogous to the interaction between human agency and social and political structures (Giddens 1984). The principal criticism of this approach lies in an assessment of (a) the culture and (b) the relative strength of the prospective partners. Partners are not equal in experience or disposition of effective resources, and their cultural background can lead to mutual incomprehension. The private sector inhabits a world of commerce and finance, and viability is determined by the motive of profit; although it is partly regulated by statute, there is a culture of aversion to regulation and the atomised individual, producer or consumer, is its basic unit. The public sector delivers services based on its ability to raise revenue through local taxation and government grant; many of its activities are regulated by statute and it is governed by committee in a collectivist ethos. Equally, in the local public realm, there is little history of direct involvement by the private sector. Services are provided overwhelmingly by the local state or quasi-governmental agencies. In this arena, the process tends to remain unidirectional because of the relative weight of the partners and the historical pattern of service provision (Hastings 1996: 262). However, mutual transformation<sup>13</sup> remains a key goal of partnership working and at the local level this is a tripartite relationship between the local community, the local authority and other non-private service providers.

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<sup>12</sup> Resource synergy could thus be equated with simple capacity (see Chapter 2) and policy synergy with legitimate capacity.

<sup>13</sup> However, seen through the lens of governmentality, transformation has a less positive tone: does it not imply a change of attitude on the part of the *other partners* so that the dominant discourse becomes that of the government?

*Resource enlargement* is not dealt with in any degree in Hastings and it is fair to regard it as an aspiration to which all parties will adhere. It remains, however, critical to any understanding of how partnership works on the ground, as shown in the case-studies and by general observation of the situation in both Yoker and Drumchapel. In an area starved of resources of all kinds (and hence ‘deprived’), the control of the flow of these resources is critical. There is likely to be little endogenous wealth and these areas have a history of being heavily dependant on public services. The role of both central- and local government is thus heavily underscored in these areas. Local voluntarism is generally dependant on grant funding and in order to develop any sense of community participation and capacity (and conversely obviate the growth of apathy or active distrust), the flow of resources in terms of finance, personnel and facilities is essential. With the Urban Programme, it was possible for local authorities to receive grant funding directly for locally-based service projects, but the programme was intended primarily to encourage local *voluntary* projects. The local authority acted as conduit and filter for applications and the ‘rules of the game’ were set by the Scottish Office, which ultimately approved them. In theory, local communities were empowered by gaining experience in the development, setting-up and ongoing management of projects; in practice, however, these were supervised formally by the local authority which tended to impose its own ethos and regulation (and which also provided 25% of the ongoing revenue costs). At the end of the funding period (up to seven years), central finance was removed and the project was either ‘mainlined’ (absorbed into the local authority system, finance permitting) or ‘terminated’ (an ominously final term). (For a practical and fuller illustration of this, see Chapter 6 on the Yoker Youth Library project.)

With the advent of Social Inclusion Partnerships, the role of the Scottish Executive as the setter of the agenda is much increased and is discussed in more detail below, but the issue of resources remains at the heart of urban partnerships and cannot be downplayed. If, as discussed in previous chapters, the principal motivation for local regenerative activism is perceived *need* (cf. Wilson 1996), and if this active response is best achieved and played out through the medium of strong local networks (cf. Putnam 1993), it is equally true that it can be sustained only where adequate resources exist, resources of finance, of personnel and of facilities. It is in the extent to which these resources persist, directed towards mutual goals predicated on real need, that any local

enterprise can be said to be *sustainable*. It is, however, not the mere existence of these resources but also the manner in which they are administered and used.

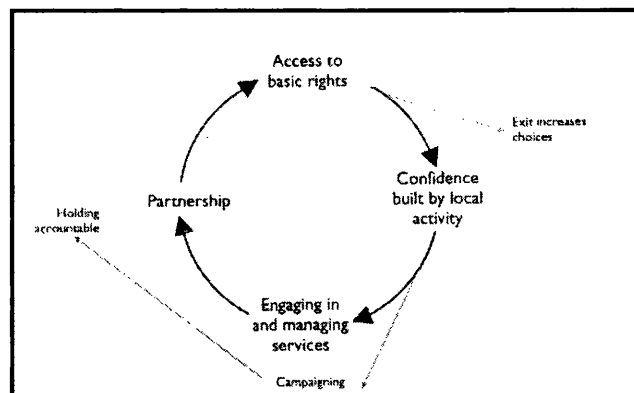


Figure 4.1: A 'virtuous circle' of partnership  
[Source: Stewart and Taylor 1995: 66]

### The conditions for partnership

Partnership is not a neutral term and its meaning – or range of meanings - (along with terms such as empowerment) is 'constructed (i.e. produced and reproduced) in a context of power and domination which privileges official discourse(s) over others' (Atkinson 1999: 59). The dominant official discourse in local estate<sup>14</sup> regeneration has become that of central government which, as he says, is able to set boundaries and limits (in all senses) and determine the general course of action to be followed. There is a further refinement of this in Healey (1997: 211): she sees politics as having two main concerns: (1) what she calls the 'relations of power' (cf. Clegg's 'circuits of power') and (2) the gaining of influence and exercise of power 'in the public realm', defined as including an ascending hierarchy of household > firm > state; if one interposes 'community' for 'firm' it comes closer to the interests of this study. She makes an interesting correlation between 'the political relations of everyday life' and the 'political structures of societies' in the sense that they are mutually interdependent and affect one another: 'structured by relations of power' (*ibid.*). It is also true that this correlation is a factor of *everyday* life and that this process is continuous and constantly changing – dependent

<sup>14</sup> In Scotland, the more descriptive term 'scheme' is more commonly used than 'estate', a gentrified title for an ungentrified reality, and since 1999 the Scottish Parliament and Executive determine local additional finance in terms of urban regeneration. In this chapter, 'estate regeneration' is retained as a more generally understood term, but 'central government' refers to the Scottish rather than the UK parliament, unless otherwise stated.

on variables such as individual roles, resources, finance, policies, negotiations – that is on ‘events’. The situation is not static and the terrain of engagement is not even (though certain issues, concerns and needs may persist over time). For Healey (1997: 212), power is ‘embodied’ (embedded) in resource flows, in behavioural rules and in ‘cultural systems of meaning’. Politics is thus universal, inhering within arenas, routines and *styles* (my emphasis).

As has been discussed in reference to *Progress in Partnership*, it is necessary to see this (political, determinant and enabling) role of central government as being crucial to the drama played out at the local level, *even where it is not overtly apparent as an active partner*. Thus, the policies of the nation- (or indeed sub-national) state are essential ingredients of the ‘deep structures’ underpinning (and by implication even controlling) the flow of local regeneration activities. If politics, and policy determined at the centre, is universal, it is equally true that the process of regeneration is not value-free. Healey (1997: 212) recognises three characteristics of the exercise of government power (my gloss):

- (1) The ability to control the flow of resources (particularly financial);
- (2) The power to define formal rules (as in social inclusion partnerships); and  
(by extension of the first two)
- (3) The ability to control (or at least set) the agenda (in a broad sense).

If, as Healey (1997: 213) contends, the actions of (central) government are ‘increasingly separated from the dynamics of social change’, that has profound implications for programmes such as Social Inclusion Partnerships which are largely dependant on government direction (in a ‘remote’ sense) and finance. (The ‘third way’ of New Labour since 1997 and the formation of the Scottish Executive in 1999 in some sense re-engage central government with urban social issues and bring ‘the centre’ in some form ‘closer’ to the local.) The struggle for (political) power is, in Healey’s view, self-absorbed (tending towards the dictatorial and circuits of clientilism and patronage) and there is a tendency, even within pluralistic political systems, for short-term bargaining and single- (or restricted-) issue programmes. Critically, however ‘near’ or ‘distant’ government may be, the issue may be how to transform the machinery of formal government into a sustainable and supportive interaction between government activity and everyday life, while recognising that (Atkinson 1999: 60):

... the mere existence of an official discourse advocating empowerment and partnership is no guarantee that it will actually be translated into practice in an unmediated fashion or that the intention ... is *genuinely* to empower.

The intention of central government, therefore, may actually be to *diffuse* or atomise power at the local level (by ‘weakening’ the power of local government) rather than to empower the community directly, and in that process either overtly or covertly increase or consolidate its own power (or at the least leave itself more room for manoeuvre by removing some of the power of a ‘competitor’). Thus, the ‘discourse’ of empowerment and partnership may conceal or obscure a different politics of power and control. Indeed, there is no necessarily overt contradiction between strengthening ‘the centre’ and at the same time empowering the local, in some sense (especially if part of the agenda is to cut local government ‘out of the loop’). Community groups may, for example, have more direct access to and management control over funding via a partnership structure than under previous local government structures; in that sense they have become ‘empowered’. However, unless there is a solid ‘plus-sum’ view of power, this process will weaken some other agency, in this case local government, whose resources may be ‘diverted’ into this new enterprise rather than towards city-wide projects. It is necessary, therefore, to analyse carefully the discourse and practice of empowerment, partnership and decentralisation in the field.

### **Interim summary and conclusions**

The chapter set out to examine what might constitute ‘the principles underlying the operation of partnership working at (the local) level as revealed in the literature; the concern is not with partnership *structures* but with the inherent *processes* whereby they might be constructed’ (see pp. 93-4) . As a prelude to understanding the partnership process proper, the ‘case against’ partnership was considered, with an emphasis on governmentality or the ‘Foucauldian effect’. The language and process of partnership could conceal a more overt intention of central government, itself part of a diffuse and complex conglomerate of power, to retain sovereignty, in effect by the transfer of ‘responsibility’ to the subjects/objects of government. Thus government exercises power without apparently governing and freedom for some is at the cost of greater control. Partnership is thus seen as a complex process, with the necessity to move beyond the overt appearance of collaboration to a deeper understanding of the processes

involved and the relative strengths and intentions of the various actors. It first examined the urban policy context within which issues of disadvantage and the need for urban regeneration had been perceived as being localised in certain areas on the ‘periphery’ of cities and that the approach to resolving these issues had become fixed within a construct of participation and collective working in local ‘partnerships’. As had been discussed in earlier chapters, real partnership assumes the presence of local empowerment and the acknowledgement of the working of power circuits, and the existence of what had been defined as social capital and trust. However, the need for this new mode of partnership working was predicated on profound changes in the economy and society generally, particularly on the shift from a manufacturing to an exchange economy and the consequent disruption to established work patterns.

The issue of the ‘discourse’ of urban change was considered; the contention that processes by which meanings are constructed are intrinsic to the processes of social reproduction, contestation and change and are therefore actively involved in shaping economy and society. The ‘language’ of regeneration is critical to the process, since it must reflect an underlying embedded (or embodied) reality; in turn, however, it can *shape* that reality. Language is not neutral or value-free; in Foucauldian terms, just as knowledge is power, so is language (and its use). So, the language of partnership or collaborative working can be used as both a test to establish (superficially) its reality, but also as a means of constructing that reality. *Progress in Partnership* (The Scottish Office 1993) represents the official governmental perspective on urban regeneration. Drawing on its own experiences as the lead in the four *New Life* areas, the government proposed its own principles for partnership: the need to avoid ‘quick-fix’ and single-issue solutions; the fact that the problems were ‘deep-rooted’; that the private sector had a ‘key role’ to play; and that there was the need to involve local people. The document was purportedly consultational in intention, but it was presented and read more as a handbook or set of guidelines and, although the tone was consensual, modifications rather than fundamental change were likely to be the outcome.

As an alternative to this ‘official’ approach, the chapter then considered the process of partnership, particularly as developed by Hastings (1996). In Scotland, the formation of partnerships as foreshadowed by *New Life* and *Progress in Partnership*, now known as Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs), had become an essential prerequisite for enhanced government funding. In these new partnerships, the

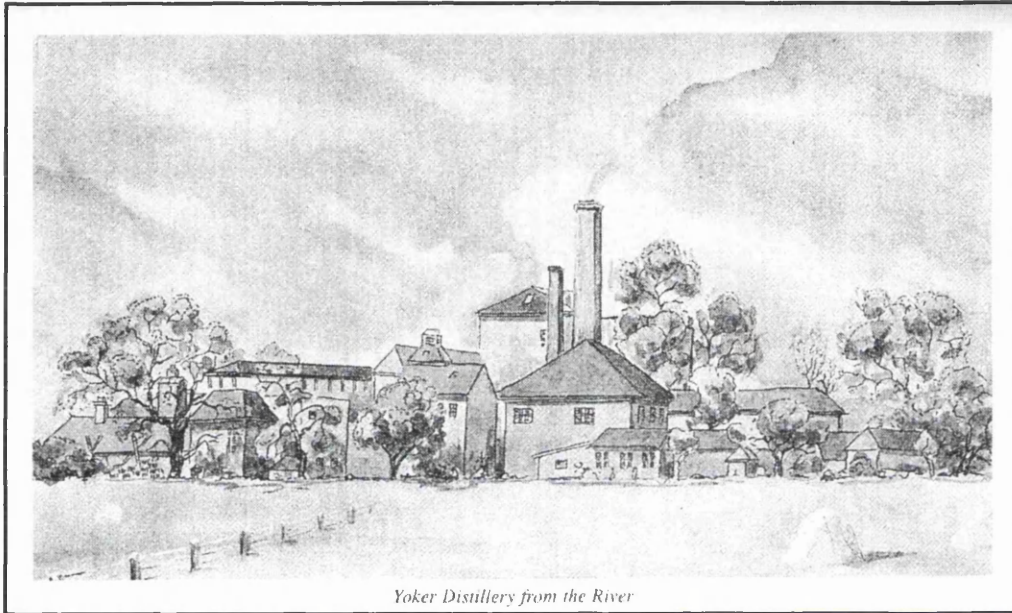


community was expected to play an intrinsic part. The ‘components’ of partnership, particularly as developed by Hastings: synergy, transformation and resource enlargement, were then considered and analysed. In this new process, governance is seen as crucial, particularly the relationship between political structures and what Healey (1997) calls ‘the politics of everyday life’. The interests of central and local government, and of local communities, may not coincide and the role of central government remains critical. To some extent, partnership is seen as the product of a cumulative process, whether arising through the interworking of power, social capital and collaborative working ‘on the ground’, or through the intervention of government policy initiatives aimed at regeneration. The task in the fieldwork chapters will be to explore some of these issues further through the experiences of some of the key participants.

## Chapter 5

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Positionality, Techniques and Objectives for Research in the Field.*



**Plate 5.1: Layers of history: The old distillery at Yoker – a relic of its rural past - now vanished, replaced by ‘heavy’ industry which has disappeared in its turn.**

The whole sense of the book might be summed up in the following words: what can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence.

*Qualitative Research* (1997: 242) edited by D Silverman, quoting Wittgenstein.

#### **Introduction**

An important aspect of this exercise is to establish how I, as researcher, came to undertake this particular course of study and how I related to it as it progressed and to the various people with whom I came into contact. The interest in the topic of how communities in what can be called ‘disadvantaged areas’ relate to initiatives (particularly within the sphere of local government) designed to ‘improve’ their

situation springs directly from work experience over at least twenty years in which there was a progression (in a neutral sense) from being a local government officer administering aspects of council policy to being physically located in one area with a specific remit to forward the policy objectives of three agencies, one of which was the local community<sup>1</sup>. I realised that there was often a mismatch between stated policy and its application in practice, not only on the part of the relatively elite practices of an apparently cohesive agency such as a local council, but also on the part of local communities (*sic*), which were uncoordinated, disparate and often lacked the capacity to engage effectively with larger ‘external’ agencies<sup>2</sup>.

Approaching the research topic from this background immediately raises the issue of *positionality* on the part of the researcher. The researcher must be conscious (*self-conscious* in methodological terms) that (Seale 1999: 159, quoting Geertz; my emphasis):

... most of what we need to comprehend a particular event, ritual, custom, idea or whatever is *insinuated* as background information before the thing itself is directly examined...

In this current exercise there is neither the intention nor the ability to ‘pretend’ that my background is somehow merely insinuated or implied (although Seale may have intended this implication to be understood in a broad ‘psychological’ sense); the researcher’s background is, on the contrary, critical to the whole project. This self-consciousness recognises that the research has a strong *interpretative* quality rather than being observation alone (although observation is a crucial part of the process) and that part of this hermeneutic is the collective and reflected-on experience of the researcher, including experience gained *in the course of the research itself*. Experience is in my circumstances an important research tool, but one of many, and not one that is at any time concealed in the guise of detachment.

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<sup>1</sup> The three agencies concerned were Glasgow City Council, Strathclyde Regional Council and the community of Drumchapel as represented by three directly elected representatives. Various other agencies were also actively involved and there was a general remit for me to work intensively with the local community in all its aspects. The extent to which this arrangement was a true partnership is in part the subject of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that all the comments made about local communities apply also to these ‘elite’ agencies, which also exhibited a lack of coordination, had different agendas and often did not actually have the capacity - through their local agents - to engage in meaningful collaboration.

I began the study in late 1996, when I had taken early retirement from my position as Director of the Drumchapel Initiative, when there was no difficulty in referring to myself as a 'local government officer' (even 'in remission') and still feeling a close affinity to local government procedures and personalities. My area-based planning experience in the early 1980s has proved the most durable, since it put me in contact with communities, groups and individuals and gave me a more rounded view of the planning process and its highly complex and contested nature. I became particularly involved in collaborative planning exercises with a number of agencies (see the discussion on Healey in Chapter 4) which had important consequences:

- It underscored the importance of collaborative working;
- It emphasised the importance of personal contact;
- It made apparent the inherent capacity of local individuals, groups and communities;
- It revealed the salience of trust and the necessity of meeting mutual expectations; and by contrast
- It highlighted the apparent (and often real) contradiction between stated official policies and actual practice, raising the issue of agenda-setting.

The nett result of these work experiences can perhaps be equated with Seale's 'insinuated' background experience, but only at the *beginning* of the research process. As the research has progressed, not only has my theoretical stance developed and changed, but I have also gained practical experience in the techniques of research (interviewing, participating and observing) and these have all combined to change my position. Moreover, my position is not in equilibrium and even the very process of writing up the thesis has itself posed epistemological and hermeneutic problems: How do I *represent* the research? What *meanings* can be ascribed to it? In the end, it is only my representation and my meanings, but *I* have changed and developed as part of the process. The process has not been detached, but it has been as far as I can make it disinterested and I have no pre-determined position or representation to advance.

### The nature of the study

However, this experience is not intended to suggest that I as researcher have thus any *special* entry into ‘the real world’ and that the account is ‘authentic’, but rather that it is an important and useful means of attempting to interpret what that world is saying (or in another guise ‘making sense’ of that world)<sup>3</sup>. Whether the thesis represents can produce a single narrative from research (Seale 1999) is more difficult; it will be a single narrative (the thesis), but based on a variety of voices and compiled from a range of sources, and offering *an approach* (or combination of approaches) to understanding and interpreting the processes involved (Cresswell 1994). Key areas of investigation, after a period of initial reflection and reading, were decided as:

- partnership;
- the workings of power at the local level;
- the formation and maintenance of trust/distrust;
- the nature of the formation and operation of social capital;
- collaborative planning and working; and
- what might constitute a template for sustainable social efficiency (otherwise partnership working).

Although each of these topics is explored in its own right and considered from a theoretical perspective, they will each in varying degrees constitute a *leitmotif* running through all the case-studies, interviews and observation exercises. In other words, they will be regarded as variables to be examined in the course of the research, not to be measured in a quantitative way, but to be used as the qualitative standard against which to assess the pragmatic research. There are three principal themes: *empowerment*, *collaboration* and *partnership*, used as the foundations upon which to erect a sustainable superstructure of participation in the process of regeneration.

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<sup>3</sup> There is a hint here of Foucault’s ‘hidden discourses’ (see Chapter 2); the intention is to ‘excavate’ (in an ‘archaeological’ sense) what these discourses might be and to analyse and describe them, but not to give people in the study area ‘a voice’ – they already have voices and are quite capable of using them on their own terms.

### Qualitative and quantitative methods

The study began with a stated intention to be ‘... concerned in part with ownership ... not over territory so much as over *process*’ (p. 1) and this intention must colour the general methodological approach; ‘territory’ may be construed as an entity which is measured, delimited and described whereas ‘process’ implies action, production and agency. However, these processes do occur within and from a particular territory and involve artefacts and resources as well as people (see the entry on human agency in the *Dictionary of Human Geography* Johnston *et al.* 2000: 349-52), so the one is not detached from the other in a duality and they are intimately linked. The choice of whether to use a quantitative approach or a qualitative one is influenced heavily by my concern to concentrate on the actors in this particular drama – their thoughts, opinions, approaches – rather than on the frequency of their performance or on a statistical analysis of attendance or some measure of ‘outcomes’; this is to caricature the distinction between quantitative and qualitative, but it is to the qualitative that the study is inclined; the complex nature of community demands a human approach (Farrar 2002: 384, quoting Nisbet):

By community I mean something that goes far beyond mere local community. The word ... encompasses all forms of relationship which are characterised by a high degree of personal intimacy, emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion and continuity in time. Community is founded on man conceived in his wholeness rather than in on or another of the roles, taken separately, that he may hold in a social order.

It is interesting to note that in 1798 Sir John Sinclair (compiler of the first *Statistical Account of Scotland*) offered this definition:

... by statistical is meant ... an inquiry into the state of a country for the purpose of ascertaining the quantum of happiness enjoyed by its inhabitants and the means of its future improvement. (Quoted on the frontispiece of the *Glasgow* volume of the *Third Statistical Account of Scotland* 1958.)

There is more than a hint here of the complex nature of what is meant by statistical, and the choice of a qualitative approach is not intended to equate it narrowly with a more humanist or ‘personal’ approach by contrast with a (currently unfashionable) positivist

quantitative approach seen as ‘impersonal’. It is important therefore not to adopt an *a priori* attitude of *either* quantitative *or* qualitative dependant on the capacity or bias of the researcher; it is fundamentally more important to use as wide a variety of research methods as possible ‘that best satisfy the needs of specific research projects’ (Philip 1998: 273). Since the intention here is to explore attitudes and approaches of groups and individuals engaged in the partnership process in urban regeneration areas (see Buttimer 1998 on various kinds of ‘thought’), a quantitative approach has been used mainly to provide a backdrop to the more intensive qualitative approach.

Hence, the official statistics in Chapter 1 provide a particular ‘perspective’ on the study area (alongside the historical and the policy perspectives); however, these statistics are not methodologically neutral – they are compiled according to an official template (the so-called Compulsory Core Indicators) set by the Scottish Executive to exemplify what it considers to be significant about the SIP area and by an agency appointed (*sic*) by the City Council. The baseline study (q.v.) in fact does go further than this and attempts to assess a range of opinions and has a particular strength in assessing the views of asylum-seekers, but even where ‘standards’ in the SIP area are measured against those in Glasgow city and Scotland as a whole, it says little about causal factors or *responses* (in terms of action) to existing conditions. A more in-depth analysis is required, one which does not seek so much answers to questions as to make sense of a range of issues and responses.

### **General Methodological Outline**

Having established as the basis of the study the assessment of the response of local communities in so-called ‘deprived areas’ towards attempts at regeneration, it had been the original intention to study several areas in Glasgow and Scotland, and if possible to look at a site or sites on the European mainland. My most recent professional experience had been in the Drumchapel area of Glasgow, an area which had a long history of ‘external’ agency intervention to counteract its perceived problems, but since I had only recently finished working there and had left behind a situation which was both uncertain and volatile, I decided not to choose that as one of my study areas. (This

decision was later modified in part, see below.) My study had to explore the issues *as perceived by the community in the area concerned*<sup>4</sup> (see Allen 1997 and Buttimer 1999).

I did have extensive experience of working with the community in Yoker, but I had not worked there for more than six years and considered that this would give sufficient distance, both in time and in contemporary knowledge, to approach the area from a fresh perspective. Once Yoker had been decided on as a focus of study, some other areas were considered which had perhaps had a similar economic and social history and were of a similar size, to equalise the research terrain as much as possible. Two areas which were considered were the Forgewood area of Motherwell and Ferguslie Park in Paisley; these were relatively accessible and two of them (Forgewood and Ferguslie) had a history of (central government) intervention. I decided, however, to begin with Yoker to establish a firm methodological base. As the research has progressed and deepened and as I have explored a range of theoretical approaches to the issues, I have decided to concentrate entirely on Yoker (with a brief comparative study in Drumchapel) in order to give the study sufficient depth and range of understanding. It needs to be stated as a general principle of the research approach adopted in the thesis that the intention is not to have a *representative* sample of opinions; all the respondents were 'knowing' subjects, interviewed because of their involvement with, or knowledge of, the particular 'project' under review. The gaze of the researcher is hence both partial and focused (see Haraway 1996) and responses are recorded within a semi-structured set of questions, but the opinions expressed are those of the respondents and there is a sufficient spread of views to enable a complex narrative to be constructed.

### **The layout of the thesis**

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the general methodology of the thesis, but at the beginning of the writing-up of the fieldwork research (the interviews on the Old School and Advocacy projects) I had begun to develop an understanding of the relationship between the subject matter of these three chapters in a different way. In broad terms, the chapter on the Youth Library project represents primarily an

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<sup>4</sup> It was my intention to let, as far as possible, the issues 'emerge' from the study, i.e. to let the research 'speak for itself', rather than begin the research with a rigid list of questions from which I would cast the study. I came with many preconceptions and although I could never become completely detached I wanted to eliminate my personal bias as much as I could.



illustration of the community responding to perceived need, i.e. of its exercise of community empowerment; the Advocacy project was, on the other hand, primarily concerned with the operation and development of social capital and trust; while the Old School project was an illustration of the issues inherent in partnership working. None of these categories is exclusive of any of the others, but there is a clear sense that it is reasonable to make this kind of division between them, at least in broad categorical terms.

A more fundamental point, in terms of the structure of the thesis and an understanding of the processes involved in the theory and practice of partnership in action, is that the relationship between these three categories or concepts is not a casual one and it will be argued that the relationship between them is an interactive and interdependent one. It is also important to see the relationship as dynamic and constantly changing; the process being described is not in equilibrium. The relationship also needs to be understood in two ways: as a series of ascending steps, each one rising on top of the other and depending to some extent on what has gone before – empowerment > social capital > partnership; but also as a changing sequence, each element interplaying with the other(s). For the purpose of the thesis, the argument will be developed firstly with the consideration of Empowerment (Chapter 2), followed by Social Capital (Chapter 3) and Partnership (Chapter 4) as an ascending sequence, and the three theoretical chapters will be set out in that order. To reflect this, the sequence of the fieldwork chapters will be the Youth Library (Chapter 6), the Advocacy project (Chapter 7) and the Old School (Chapter 8) in that sequence. This layout gives some symmetry to the thesis, although reality is more untidy and ‘entangled’ (see Sharp *et al.* 2000).

### **Archival Search**

To begin the study in a systematic way, I decided to undertake a comprehensive survey of the minutes of Yoker Resource Group, the representative body of the Yoker community<sup>5</sup>. There were a number of reasons for doing so.

- The minutes represented the most complete record available of the ‘collective mind’ of Yoker over a long period;

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<sup>5</sup> It is not my intention to suggest that Yoker Resource Group can simply be conflated with ‘the community’ (or communities) in the area, except in a very particular sense, i.e. as a collective representative body with a long and continuous history.

- The minutes were an official record of what the community considered worthy of recording over that period;
- The minutes were a comprehensive record of the activities of Yoker Resource Group, not only over time, but also over a wide range of activities;
- The minutes were also a comprehensive record of the interaction of the Yoker community with a wide range of other agencies over this period; and
- The minutes constituted, in themselves, evidence that Yoker had an extended collective memory, archived in a systematic way.

It was decided, in addition, to research the minutes over a long period, well beyond any personal period of involvement and in order to gauge how the group's approach to issues had developed over time. The group had kept systematic minutes in a 'house style' for over twenty years. Although it had been intended to analyse the *language* of the minutes, it became clear that the style was closely modelled on that of the City council and that they were written in a standard format that conveyed some information about the topic under discussion and the conclusions reached, but little about the process of the discourse of the group during the course of the discussion. (The minutes were not verbatim and tended not to identify individual speakers or the mood of the group during the discussion.) It was decided, however, to code the record of the minutes according to a proforma, which would highlight certain aspects, principally the date of the meeting, the numbers attending, the topic under discussion, the decision reached and any comments that occurred during the compiling of the record. The record was also further separated into three main categories: *policy*, *resource* and *other business*. In part, this was to assess Hastings's (1996) contention that 'resource synergy' was more easily achieved in local-area partnerships than 'policy synergy' (see Chapter 4), that is that change in the provision of resources (principally from the local authority or other larger agency) was easier to achieve than change in formal policy.

As the research has progressed, this has been bypassed as a concern, except in very general terms (discussed under empowerment), nor is it intended to have any quantitative analysis of attendance nor frequency of discussion of particular topics. However, the record as compiled is still a very valuable resource; it gives a longitudinal view of the activities of the group over an extended period (and can be used as a particular reference in its own right), it gives a means of tracking the development of specific issues (useful in the understanding of the case studies) and it provides a key or

index to the minutes proper, which can be consulted as required. The group has also maintained an extensive archive of background reports, which can also be identified from the minute reference. Therefore, although the putative use of the minute record has changed, the exercise has been useful for the thesis in providing a fixed record of activities and decisions over an extended period.

### **The Case-studies**

In order to understand better some of the issues that were of interest to the Yoker community, which like all communities had many different interests and concerns and was heterogeneous rather than uniform, it was decided to undertake a number of case-studies which would illustrate different facets of its activities. The principal concern was to try to understand better the processes whereby Yoker responded to the various needs, concerns or 'challenges' *identified by that community* (see Wilson 1996 for a discussion of community development arising from need). Because communities consist of a large number of individuals who will react differently to different situations, a predictable collective response cannot be presumed. It is also true that the response in Yoker would be peculiar to that area; although I might be able to analyse the response to any particular issue or set of circumstances, I could not assume that the same response would occur anywhere else, nor that another area's response was applicable to Yoker. It was necessary, therefore, to try to understand the processes in Yoker in some depth in order to be able to analyse fully what that would say about the responses of Yoker *as a community* (in at least a formal sense). It was also useful to try to understand distinct facets of the Yoker response, to see if any general conclusions could be drawn. The four case-studies chosen were:

- The Old School Project;
- The Disability Project;
- The Youth Library Project; and
- The Advocacy (Incinerator) Project

These four were chosen because they represented quite distinct areas of the group's activities, either meeting different needs for the direct provision of services to what were perceived to be client groups inadequately catered for (the Disability and Youth projects), or relating to what the group considered essential to its future development

(the Old School project), or demonstrating its role as a coherent advocate of community principles in the face of an external threat (the Advocacy project).

### *The Old School Project*

This was a project to acquire, refurbish and develop for community use on a commercial basis the former premises of Yoker Secondary School, which shares a campus with the Resource Centre (see Chapter 8). Since there was little documentation referring to the negotiations which had taken place (apart from some references in the Yoker Resource Group Minutes – YRGM, various dates), the best approach to information-gathering about the project was to interview directly those who had been involved closely in the negotiations (see Baxter and Eyles 1997) and those who might have views about the project, even although they had not been directly involved. Since this was very much a proposal and not an active project, the people to be interviewed would in a sense belong to an ‘elite’, either close to the heart of the policy-making of the group, or sufficiently senior officers of the council delegated to negotiate on its behalf. In addition, I had to approach the interviews without knowing much about the details of what had been discussed or what people’s attitudes were, so I regarded this case-study very much as a base-line which I hoped would illustrate the general attitudes of the various actors towards area regeneration and their roles within that process<sup>6</sup>.

My method of approach in choosing interviewees was to establish contact first with the resource worker of Yoker Resource Group, whom I had known from my previous work experience (see the *Introduction* to the chapter). As a sounding board for the ‘voice’ of the local community, he occupies an important and pivotal position and was both a necessary and useful starting point for research purposes. However, to get another view from a strictly local perspective, I also interviewed the chairperson of the group, another local resident with a long history of involvement in organised community activity in the area. For the council perspective, I spoke to a senior officer from the Property Services department, dealing with council property, particularly its lease and sale. I also decided to interview the elected council member for the Yoker

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<sup>6</sup> It was only after the interviews had been conducted, and after subsequent reading, that I was able to code the responses according to theoretical concepts such as circuits of power, hidden discourses, the existence of social capital and institutional thickness. The interviews did provide a rich source from which many of these concepts could be ‘grounded’ in the situation in Yoker and, indeed, suggested reading along these lines.

ward, who was both a senior member (City Treasurer) and someone who was well known and trusted at the ward level. I then spoke to the finance officer of the group and the director of the local housing association. The panel of interviewees was, therefore, balanced in order to give the views of ‘both sides’ of the issue and a spread of local actors. It is important to stress, however, that the issue was not seen in a polarised or dualistic way; the views and opinions of each respondent had to be accorded equal weight in

interview terms and what was important was the need to explore all facets of the issue, not to determine what was the ‘correct’ approach but to appreciate the complexities of the issues as stated. The interviews were semi-structured to reflect my research concerns but I tried to let all the respondents speak freely within that framework.

As the initial research interviews proceeded, my method of dealing with and analysing them was experimental (very much part of my own learning process). The interviews were transcribed (by hand!) and they were then analysed by outlining key passages and giving them each a unique reference number (e.g. each interview was identified as YCS Int 1, etc. and each highlighted section was given a unique reference, YCS-1a for the first on page 1, YCS-2a for page 2, and so on) for ease of reference when compiling a narrative. The initial sift was to list all the reference numbers in columns under the conceptual headings of Empowerment, Social Capital and Partnership, with a comments column summarising the content of the section. The highlighted quotes were then grouped in columns under the same conceptual headings, with some explanatory notes added. The next stage was to take some of the theoretical concepts in one column, cite an appropriate quotation from the interview text and add a comment or ‘correspondence’. In this way, a detailed narrative was constructed linking as far as possible the ‘theory’ with the field interviews. From this, concepts and quotations could be woven into a discursive narrative which formed the basis of Chapter 8.

### *The Disability Project*

The Disability Project was chosen for analysis since it represented an example of Yoker Resource Group as a direct provider of a service to local people. That response takes two forms: (a) the provision of premises, adjacent to the Resource Centre and forming part of a community ‘campus’ and (b) the provision of a care service to its disabled

members by the community directly. It is, therefore, a good example of not only the response but of community empowerment in action in a very concrete way. However, in order to provide an effective and continuing service, the project must enter a mutual partnership with the Social Work Department of the City Council, itself a direct provider of social services to the disabled as well as an indirect provider by means of grants in aid to voluntary sector projects. The purpose of the interviews was therefore to determine:

- The state of the relationship between community and department;
- The extent to which mutual needs were being met;
- How difficulties and disagreements were dealt with; and
- The extent to which the voluntary group was regarded as an equal partner by the department.

Although the interviews followed a standard pattern as detailed elsewhere, the process gave rise to a severe ethical dilemma and was not completed according to the original proposal. This dilemma resulted from the nature of the project itself and more especially from the nature of the client group. I had an overwhelming feeling of intrusion and voyeurism. My research concerns seemed very precious compared to the real needs and concerns of the people in the project and I had a strong sense of ‘using’ them for what seemed an esoteric purpose. Branfield characterises the growing and emergent field of disability studies in academia as being colonised by non-disabled academics:

For it now to be hijacked and reappropriated by ‘non-disabled’ people is something we must guard against. Social policy research centres, who spend large amounts of resources researching in to disabled people’s lives are all too often run by ‘non-disabled’ people who have carved a comfortable niche for themselves out of our oppression (Branfield, 1998: 144).

I decided to terminate the interviews there and not to use the project as a case-study; however, the experience had been a useful (if sobering) one. If my concern was to let the interviews ‘speak for themselves’ they had done so – and very forcibly. On a human level I had learned a valuable lesson: I could not pretend ‘detachment’ and empathy has its price. The Disability Project showed that in perhaps an extreme form and I have approached the remaining studies with that in mind.

*The Youth Library Project*

The Youth Library project was chosen for study for a number of reasons. It was a direct intervention by the Resource Group to meet a local perceived need, with social, educational, training and leisure implications. The client group – young people – was perceived as ‘difficult’, particularly in terms of integration with the wider community and with each other, and because of perceived ‘anti-social’ behaviour. The library was innovative in that it was locally run and managed, was sensitive to local need and the needs of the young people themselves, avoided a ‘traditional library atmosphere’ and successfully acted as a point of encounter (in a eulogistic sense!) not only for local youth but for their peers from a very wide area<sup>7</sup>. When, eventually, departmental budgets came under pressure, the facility was closed, in spite of vigorous local protests, and has never been reinstated. Therefore, trust which had become established had apparently been destroyed, local vulnerability to the pressure of a more powerful agency had been confirmed and the spirit of partnership set aside.

The interview process used for this project was rather different from the preceding projects; although I did interview various individuals both within the Yoker area and outside it, I decided to interview some of the former users as a ‘focus group’. There were a number of reasons for doing so: it was a chance to widen the scope of techniques being used to elicit information, most of the users were still relatively young and might have been intimidated by the formal appearance of the interview, a more collective opinion would in itself illustrate the success of the project in developing the consciousness of the young people as a group able to articulate needs and opinions and it would give them ‘strength in numbers’ against a perhaps more practiced interviewer. In the event, the group interview was not a great technical success: fewer turned up than anticipated (only four instead of the anticipated seven or eight), some of the respondents were still inarticulate and needed a good deal of prompting, there were technical difficulties in getting some of them to speak clearly to the dictaphone and, most disappointingly, there was very little active dialogue among the respondents. I was, therefore, very disappointed at the likely outcome of this particular approach. On

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<sup>7</sup> This accessibility to a wide area, cutting down negative feelings of territoriality among young people, was precisely *against* the ‘rules’ of the Urban Programme grant, which confined the use of the premises to the local area; however, this access became one of the greatest strengths of the project and was not challenged by the funders.

transcription, the results – although technically relatively poor – yielded far more information than expected and provided a useful insight into the ‘mind’ of the respondents as a group. The very ‘difficulty’ I had had with the group and their ‘difficulty’ in behaving as a group in an ‘articulate’ way underscored the preconceptions I had of them as young people and how they should react to my questions; in the end it was on their terms and they enabled me to construct a narrative on that basis.

The particular methodology involved in the transcription of the interviews was a simplified version of that used for the Old School. Interviews were transcribed, sections were highlighted and comments and correspondences to theory and literature were made. For the group interview, the transcription was set out in columns, but individual replies to questions were grouped together in one column, to keep some sense of the group response. As before, these replies and possible quotations were interpreted in terms of the conceptual concerns of the thesis, and this formed the basis for the narrative in Chapter 6.

#### *The Advocacy (Incinerator) Project*

What has come to be labeled during the course of the study as the Advocacy Project had its origins in a proposal by a commercial firm to locate a waste incinerator at a riverside location on the south bank of the Clyde near Braehead power-station in Renfrew. As a campaign of resistance developed, Yoker Resource Group representatives came to play a key part and their advocacy skills were developed in a unique way, which illustrates both their capacity to respond to a perceived threat in a sophisticated way and their skill in working alongside other community groups to achieve a common goal. The ‘project’ is seen as best illustrating the development and use of social *networking* (and hence social capital) in the pursuance of a common goal.

The particular methodological approach for this project was to build up a series of ‘layers’ from which a story and ultimately the thesis narrative would evolve. The baseline was the minute record, which was analysed to provide a narrative referring specifically to this project. Once this account had emerged, a questionnaire was compiled, based partly on the record (to elucidate further some of the issues raised) and partly on the conceptual (theoretical) concerns of the thesis in relation to power, social capital and partnership working. Questions explored (1) the origins of the project, (2) how the ‘threat’ of the incinerator was perceived, (3) the significance of local support in



Yoker, (4) the depth of trust in the campaign, (5) the extent of the campaign's success, (6) the nature of the respondents' role in the campaign, (7) how the respondents were perceived by the developer and (8) the lessons learned from the campaign and the view of Yoker's role from the 'outside', i.e. from Renfrew.

Respondents were chosen on recommendation from key players in Yoker; I had no knowledge of the campaign, so I was investing some trust in the principal respondents to give me a sufficient spread of interviewees. The interviews were all undertaken in the autumn of 1999 and involved speaking to people who had been identified as playing a significant part in the community's campaign. This inevitably meant interviewing some of the same people as had been involved previously, but this had the advantage of developing the relationship with them and no reluctance to be interviewed was encountered. New, non-local interviewees included two Renfrew activists, who were able to give an 'outside' view of the Yoker participation in the campaign, coloured by their overt sympathy which, however, could not have been anticipated. Once the interviews had been concluded, I became convinced that three of them (a Yoker activist and the two Renfrew respondents) provided a fascinating if partial insight into how the campaign had developed and how *they* had developed as a result of it. The interviews were then transcribed and coded according to a simple conceptual framework which listed the questions in order and against each a précis of each respondent's reply side-by-side. A *Comment* column allowed me to interpolate both the bones of a narrative and also some of my theoretical insights. *Based on this analysis*, a formal narrative was then constructed, which formed the basis for Chapter 7.

The interviews will be discussed in detail when the case-study is dealt with in the chapter, but as a whole they tended to reinforce one another as to the usefulness of the whole campaign in increasing local expertise and the stock of social capital. No-one from the development company was interviewed, however interesting that interview might have proved; I wanted to keep the discourse as local as possible and a later 'hostile' interview might not have yielded much more information. It was striking that the campaign remained vivid in the memory of all the respondents and the transcription into a narrative has tried to convey some sense of the importance of the campaign to them, and its lasting effects.

### *5. The Drumchapel Project*

The fieldwork material at Yoker was sufficient for a robust study of the relationship between the group (and by implication the wider community) and the City council and others as an implicit partnership. However, the need was felt for a further validation of these processes by means of an external 'test' or measure which would serve to triangulate the study still further. Yoker had just (January 2001) been designated as a Social Inclusion Partnership (a SIP), the first time that it had been included in such an formal arrangement and it would be useful to compare it, in terms of institutional thickness, the depth of social capital, the level of community empowerment and the capacity of its institutions to enter into a formal partnership arrangement, with another area which has a history of such formal initiatives or partnership agreements.

In spite of the reservations mentioned earlier, Drumchapel is an ideal subject for such a comparative study. It is located in the same quadrant of the city and shares many aspects of Yoker's employment (and unemployment) history. It had been involved at some level in partnership for almost fifteen years and was a full partner in a current SIP agreement. It would be expected, therefore, that it would have acquired considerable capacity and social capital during this period, that dense community networks would exist to produce people with the skills necessary to engage fully in partnership with outside agencies and that partnership working would be deeply embedded as a skill within that community. In addition, because of the long history of formal partnership in some form, Drumchapel is much better documented than Yoker and has been evaluated over a long period (see, for example Millard 1996, an examination of the effects of local government decentralisation on Drumchapel). There are, however, caveats in researching Drumchapel:

- The in-depth study relates to Yoker, not Drumchapel,
- The very longevity of intervention in Drumchapel and its much larger size (it still has a population of over 16,000 in 2000) make for a much more complex terrain of study, and
- The needs in terms of time to do justice to a comprehensive study of the area preclude such an approach to Drumchapel within the time available for the study.

However, there is justification for a very focused and particular study concentrating on the issue of community capacity, based on what written material has been issued in the name of the partnership and on a selective series of interviews.

The study began with the published documents, which apart arguably from the initial *vision statement*, which was produced by a steering group not including local elected community representatives, do represent the 'mind' of the partnership and are issued in its name. By a close analysis of their content and discourse, concentrating on references to community involvement, participation or development, it should be possible to determine what the partnership itself considers to be the status of the community's capacity to be an active participant in the process. Even if the initial documents were issued as a form of 'external' perspective, which might have been lacking in 'street knowledge' of the actual depth of community capacity, the subsequent *baseline study* and *reviews* should have revealed a more accurate assessment.

To supplement the documents, a limited series of interviews was undertaken. These were not intended to be representative, except in a very particular sense, but the respondents were chosen to encapsulate different facets of active community involvement in the area – the partnership's principal local officer, two younger active board members who worked in tandem, one older more-experienced board member, and a long-time local activist who had chosen to remain outside the formal partnership process<sup>8</sup>. It was not my intention simply to base the choice of interviewee on my past knowledge of the area. The 'structures of intervention' (basically the SIP) were different and even if the actors had remained the same, both my personal and research relationship to them had changed and they in turn had had to respond in a fundamentally different way to changed local circumstances. I decided therefore to adopt much the same approach as had been adopted in Yoker: to assume that, although there was a reasonable familiarity with the terrain, there was no presumption of knowledge of the situation in actual terms on the ground.

The initial approach was made to the principal paid officer of the SIP, as a 'knowing' respondent. He was requested to suggest some other interview candidates once I had explained the nature of my topic, and agreed to be interviewed himself. I had

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<sup>8</sup> The four interviews have revealed a variety of responses which have served to reinforce the analysis of the written documents; more interviews would not necessarily have yielded any more valuable

also decided, however, to see if it were possible to interview a local activist and businessperson I had known previously. He agreed to be interviewed, along with three members of the partnership board. I also spoke informally to both the youth development officer of the partnership and to two of its community development personnel. These latter conversations were really intended simply to provide me with a more in-depth appreciation of the range of their work and general approach. In general terms my approaches were well received<sup>9</sup> and the interviews were all conducted in Drumchapel, at times and in venues convenient for the interviewees. I was given considerable help and time by the partnership staff, who arranged suitable rooms for me and provided any other help I required. Questions focused on (1) a general statement of relationship to the SIP, (2) on partnership issues, (3) on social capital issues and (4) on local power and (5) on issues of relationship of the respondent to the SIP (there were seventeen questions in all).

The interviews were transcribed according to a conceptual framework echoing these groups of questions, but the two interviews with the principal officer and the local activist provided an absorbing study in comparisons and contrasts and I made them the focus of that part of the chapter, allowing their responses to set the layout of the narrative, with some comments interpolated, but otherwise 'speaking for themselves'. Combined with the contents analysis of the official documents, they have together provided a partial and focused account of Drumchapel's response to partnership working.

### **Participant observation and the longitudinal approach**

In addition to these formal case-studies in both Yoker and (to a lesser extent) Drumchapel, it is important - in order to understand the areas and personalities which are the subjects of the research - to maintain a close relationship with them and presence among them during the whole period of the study (see Dowler 2001). However, it is not intended to see this strictly as an ethnography: 'a particular method ... which in its most

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information. The interviews and the documentary analysis will be supplemented by continued observation of the partnership processes during the course of 2001-03.

<sup>9</sup> The one exception was my perception that my approaches to the community development staff were received with a certain amount of reserve on their part; they may have been aware of my previous position and, as a newly-established team and perhaps unsure of themselves, were simply being cautious. Whatever the reason, there was relatively little rapport during the meeting.

characteristic form involves the ethnographer participating overtly or covertly *in people's daily lives* for an extended period of time ...' (Hoggart *et al.* 2000: 252/3; my emphasis). It is not daily lives so much as the interaction of a key local group with other agents and agencies that is being studied. Equally, it is not enough simply to descend on the area from time to time and only for a specific purpose; it is also necessary to be in direct contact with it over an extended period to gain a diffused and general impression of what and who people are, how they operate in a variety of circumstances and what constitute their continuing concerns (as a 'pragmatic' exercise, see Kitchin and Tate 2000: 13-14, although it is not so much 'truth' that is being sought as praxis). As observer I also participate; however, whereas I may (in a dilute sense) influence these activities (see below), my intention is not to *change* them (in some kind of 'action research'). This *participant observation* (see principally Hoggart *et al.* (2000) and Flowerdew and Martin (1997)) is instrumental and draws some of its characteristics from anthropology (immersion in local 'culture' in some sense, with some 'critical detachment') and human geography (the importance of situation and behaviour).

However, it is striking the extent to which I have adopted some of the techniques of the Chicago School (Hoggart *et al.* (2000): 255), although I had developed them independently, based partly on work experience and partly on my general philosophical approach (which involved trying to come to some 'understanding' of the grounded position of people with whom I came in contact). Key concepts employed were:

- a situational approach;
- the use of case-studies;
- an element of discourse and content analysis;
- a belief in the 'socially constructed nature of phenomena';
- the relative ability of people to make decisions;
- the partial insight of the observer; and
- the importance of language.

No great use has been made of *personal* documents or accounts because of the general nature of the study, but personal relationships have developed over the course of the study and its nature is both 'participatory' ('living the culture' of the community while there) and 'observational' ('watching' or observing its activities). There is a particular recognition that '(from) the beginning, it is necessary to consider how much research is *bound up in networks of power and/or knowledge* and is, therefore, inherently political'

(Cook 1997: 135, my emphasis). In the narrative of the thesis, this political character has been assumed as background and not made explicit<sup>10</sup>, which reflects the need to make compromises between different representations of reality whilst recognizing the differential and uneven nature of local power. Critically (Cook 1997: 139, my emphasis):

[t]hrough initial conversations and especially through sustained periods of interaction you can ... learn which aspects of your identity allow you to be ... acceptably placed in the world views of both the key informants and the community under study and ... *establish how any common ground might be found.*

No diary, tally or other written material has been kept as a record of these observations, partly because of their long term and very varied nature, but also because of a reluctance to convert real experiential and existential activity into some kind of 'text' to be mined for information. Where written material was supplied during the course of the study (agendas, minutes, reports for example), this was always annotated and forms a valuable if informal archive.

In general, I have not sought to be neutral regarding the group under study<sup>11</sup>, but I maintain an element of 'suspicion' about all my contacts (not taking them at face value), which are (Wade 1984: 219) 'contingent [and] intersubjective'. Equally, I have not sought to be aloof or detached, since my reputation both as researcher and as 'resource worker' (my local 'official' designation) depends upon my being 'known' and broadly sympathetic. I participated frequently at meetings of the group, I gave an opinion if asked (less frequently spontaneously) and I have been asked to undertake specific tasks for the group, both voluntary and paid. In more informal settings, I have no hesitation in actively participating in the general discourse, but my reputation is still founded on the 'social capital' and trust I acquired in working in the area while a council official, although perceptions have changed during the period of research. Although it is difficult to quantify the 'benefit' of my cumulative experience, it was valuable in giving some idea of mutual positions and of capacity (a younger researcher or one not from my background might have had to work harder establishing themselves and their credibility). Trying to weigh the balance between 'participation' and

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<sup>10</sup> This is not to avoid political issues, but it does reflect the reality of the local discourse where overt political discussion is rare.

<sup>11</sup> Compare the comments in Shurmer-Smith (2002: 13): '... a place where one has worked previously is close enough to know, but distant enough to generate topics of research'.

‘observation’ is difficult: the more active I am, the more I participate; the less active, the more I am in the role of observer, but there is no clear distinction between the two. However, I always try to be internally *critical*, retaining ‘introspection, questioning and self-doubt’ (Cook 1997: 140, quoting Zoe, from her field experience).

In addition, the topics and situations studied are not in equilibrium; they constantly change, are required to respond to different circumstances and influences, are not insulated from what happens in the ‘outside’ world and are themselves subject to processes of internal change. For all these reasons, a more or less constant presence - especially in Yoker - was considered essential; it cannot be called ‘saturation’ and is not equivalent to living in the area, but this ‘longitudinal immersion’ is a real part of the research process. It is the sum of verbal and non-verbal communication, of sensing an ‘atmosphere’, of seeing the process of physical change, both in people and in the fabric of the area. It is also the process of seeing how they respond, well or badly, to changing circumstances and, indeed, of yourself becoming a part, however tangential, of that terrain (see Baszanger and Dodier 1997: 17). This immersion is difficult to describe, but it must be understood as an important, if discrete, element of the research process. The research, however, does not claim to ‘speak’ for anyone other than the researcher, but his understanding of the voices of others must be influenced by the extent to which he has come to know them. I have arguably produced a more detached and less *vivid* account (Cook 1997: 146) than I might have anticipated, but I have tried to be faithful to the spirit of what I have experienced and to misrepresent no-one.

### **Interim summary and conclusions**

As stated in the preamble, the intention in pursuing this research exercise has been to try to establish, if possible, the extent to which partnership working (participation) within one particular neighbourhood in Glasgow (Yoker) is *sustainable*, i.e. that it has been generated, maintained and exercised by and within the community of Yoker and that it will continue into the future. The suggestion is that it *is* sustainable, provided that the impetus for partnership is *endogenous* (that it is a local response to perceived community need), that it is *adequately supported* (in terms of personnel, finance and facilities) and that the concern, in policy terms, is the *development of the capacity* of the local community to engage, on as near equal terms as possible, with other partner

agencies. It is possible, within the limited aims of the exercise, to conflate participation and partnership working; there are other forms of participation – cultural, social, political – which may not appear to involve partnership working as such, although any increase in the volume of interaction at the local level and between the local and the wider civic community (of which it is still a part) will *tend* to increase the stock of what can be called social capital.

However, within the more formal consideration of partnership, there is a need to assess what Putnam (1993) calls norms of reciprocity (the ‘rules of the game’), the existence or otherwise of levels of trust (or even active distrust) and the dense network of active community involvement which form the backdrop (the base) upon which the superstructure of partnership can develop. There is, however, no dualism between base and superstructure; they have a close interconnection and mutual dependence (i.e. there is no room for ‘elite detachment’ either at the local level or at the centre). Partnership is a dynamic process and social capital requires constant use and renewal. To examine this process in a linear way and to write up that examination in a coherent narrative fashion gives little flavour of ‘the complex and even chaotic human reality beyond’ (Cloke et al. 1991). The terrain of enquiry is not in equilibrium; between 1996, when the study began, and the present the local scene has been in constant motion and the various sets of both internal and external relationships have changed.

It is, therefore, important to recognise both this constantly changing pattern and the need to establish some notion of the *principles* which may underlie the partnership process. These principles are not ‘laws’ and thus the general approach cannot be considered as positivist; taking Comte’s rationale for the ‘scientific status’ of positivism (see Johnston et al. 2000), it can be stated that, although the study is based on a ‘direct observation of the world’, it does not claim that its observations are repeatable, it does not claim that any general conclusions can be constructed into theories, they have only a limited technical function (as general indicators of method) and they are certainly not part of any ‘great universal truth’. The assessment is a qualitative analysis which seeks to understand and describe processes as exemplified by the actors involved.

There is, however, a danger that the type of study undertaken, that is the in-depth analysis of one area, can lead to ‘over-dominant concrete’ conclusions (Cloke et al. 1991). The study does not claim to be *representative* of a particular typology of deprivation, whose findings can be applied uncritically to other, statistically similar,



areas. It does suggest that, in order to ensure genuine participation at the local level, the principles as exemplified *probably* require to be present; or, rather, that without them true participation is unlikely. Participation is fundamentally dependent on *capacity* and the precise mix of individuals and agencies in any one area will determine its form. The study has always presumed that it is being undertaken from a perspective of partial or situated knowledge. Omniscience is not claimed. The ‘situation’ comes from the researcher’s past experience as a practitioner in both the principal areas of study; a certain amount of ‘baggage’, both positive and negative, must be assumed, but the further away in time direct involvement is, the less it can be assumed to have an effect in itself. It has become transformed into ‘reputation’ and acts much in the same way as trust or distrust. Where there is a positive effect, that will help the process; where it is negative, that will impede it to some extent. However, the fact that respondents have agreed to be interviewed suggests at least an initial level of mutual trust. The notion of partial knowledge raises more difficult questions about how knowledge is constructed (*sic*) and whether there can be any such thing as a pure objectivity on the part of the researcher, or indeed if that is desirable. In an impassioned discussion of a feminist approach to knowledge, Haraway (1991: 113) argues that the dilemma is:

... to have simultaneously an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for knowing our own ‘semiotic technologies’ for making meaning, and a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a ‘real’ world, one that can be partially shared...

The intention is, therefore, to be appropriately critical of all knowledge gained in the course of the research, but – having done that – acknowledge that it does tell *something* about the real world and how people live their lives. The knowledge that the researcher is part of the world they are investigating and not detached from it is a strength, not a weakness. The study can be described in part as an ‘ethnography’, in the sense that it (Herbert 2000: 551);

... rest[s] upon participant observation, a methodology whereby the researcher spends considerable time observing and interacting with a social group. These observations and interactions enable the ethnographer to understand how the group develops a skein of relations and cultural constructions that tie it together.

The purpose of the archival research, the case-studies and the in-depth interviews has been to exemplify this point (see also Cook and Crang 1995). By a systematic study of

the approaches by a community to the issues and problems confronting it, the study has sought to understand the world of partnership and participation as experienced by them. The study is, therefore, from the perspective of that community, or at least of a number of individuals within it, but recognising also that the interaction between that community and the wider world of which it is a part is both an inevitable and necessary part of that world (and of a theoretical 'world', see Lees 2003). The following case-studies are intended to explore these points and, in the process, to engage in a dialogue (perhaps occasionally a dialectic) with the 'theory'.

## Chapter 6

### THE YOUTH LIBRARY PROJECT

#### *A Local Exercise in Power, Empowerment and Disempowerment*



**Plate 6.1: Yoker old school and schoolhouse from the southwest;  
the Youth Library occupied the upper floors,  
the Neighbourhood Centre the lower.**

Yes, we had the freedom to do what was really required, and that was to try and get as many [as possible] of the people coming to it and borrowing from it. So, we could be quite dramatic and intense and eccentric, if you like, in our promotions and our recruitment; and I don't think ... no, there was no way the conventional authority would have gone down some of the roads the we went down. And in this respect, maybe we went too far in some directions, but it certainly had the desired effect to launch the library in the community, and within a few months, everybody knew of it ...

*Interview with community respondent*

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to begin the analysis of fieldwork in Yoker with consideration of the *Youth Library* project, as an example of the issues surrounding the exercise of *power* in a community context. Chronologically, the series of interviews on

which this chapter is based was undertaken after those for what are now chapters 7 and 8; however, the increasing understanding of the relationship between the exercise of power, the formation of social capital and the ultimate development of partnership working has resulted in the placing of this chapter first in the sequence, on that basis. Equally, the order in which these topics will be dealt with is not accidental and it may be regarded as an *ascending* sequence (cf. Foucault and Wilson), akin to notions of base and superstructure. The concern to see community development as a ‘bottom-up’ process is reflected in the progression of these three theoretical concerns as their obverse is mirrored ‘in the field’. Therefore, if we regard the operation of power in ‘circuits’ as arising from the interaction between the local community and its necessary (and continuous) contact with ‘external’ agencies (such as the city council)<sup>1</sup>, this interaction takes place between actors each of whom already has power within their own sphere. In his discussion of power, Clegg analyses the circuit as principally concerned with the control of power in order to minimise its ‘loss’ from the centre. However, there is not only one centre: there are *multiple* centres of power and circuits operating within them – within the community and its constituent groups, and within the council, or any other ‘external’ agency.

However, the study is not intended as an inductive analysis as the theory is somehow ‘proved’ by what has been learned in the course of the fieldwork. It is, rather, intended as a deductive analysis based on a dialogue, or even a dialectic, between practice and theory. As far as a primacy is given to one, it is to practice, to allow the interviews and the respondents to ‘speak for themselves’ and to illuminate complex practices as they are constructed and produced by the various agencies and actors<sup>2</sup>. The study was initially constructed to reflect on interactions within communities and between communities and various ‘external’ agencies, on what might be the constituents of a sustainable regeneration partnership, seen at that time in a rudimentary

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<sup>1</sup> Foucault (see Chapter 2) discusses the notion of ‘hidden discourses’ or ‘knowledges’ at the local level, in contrast to the elite discourses or meta-narratives of more powerful agencies. However, these discourses are ‘hidden’ only because they are not narrated or described or acknowledged by the more powerful - at the local level they have their own validity and certainly have their own power; they are ‘revealed’ precisely by the process of the coming-together of the local and the external, even although this may result in mutual non-comprehension. Thus, the local area *has* a voice, and hence knowledge and power; ‘empowerment’ needs to be understood as a complex process in which there is a process of mutual exchange, but it should not begin on the presumption that local actors are ‘powerless’.

<sup>2</sup> The interviewees are all regarded as ‘knowing subjects’ and were questioned on specific topics. Within this constraint, however, respondents were encouraged to speak freely. There is no pretence that this is a spontaneous performance; the interviews are semi-structured and designed to elicit a range of responses

way as some kind of ‘formal’ partnership<sup>3</sup>; however, since Yoker had never been (until the early part of 2000 and the formation of the SIP) part of any formal partnership arrangement as an area, but nevertheless exhibited many of the characteristics of partnership working, this view was quickly seen as being defective. It was necessary, therefore, to reflect more deeply on what these characteristics were, and this developed into an interest in how power might operate among the various actors at the local level. Some focus was necessary in order to explore some of these issues, partly because Yoker had a long history of community involvement and direct provision of services to local people, which ranged over a timespan of twenty years and over a considerable range of projects.

The chapter thus illustrates (rather than ‘proves’) some of the theoretical concerns over the exercise of local power and the views of local respondents towards that exercise. The following two chapters will consider (Chapter 7) the networking between Yoker and Renfrew communities in response to the threat from an external source (the Advocacy project, as an example of the exercise of social capital) and (Chapter 8) the bilateral interaction at a ‘corporate’ level in the negotiations over the Old School site (as an example of the issues surrounding partnership). It is intended that this chapter will be concerned with the response of the Yoker community to the exercise of ‘external’ power and to reflect on the attitudes of various individuals and agencies towards the loss of an important community facility in that context. Bound up with this is the concept that community development needs to be built ‘from the inside out’ (Wilson 1996), which is in turn a facet of the process of empowerment<sup>4</sup>. In this approach, the individual is seen as the *active agent* (‘the subject’) of change, but within the context of collective action: ‘focusing attention on the individual is very different

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<sup>3</sup> This distinction between ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ partnership is a central concern of the study. To some extent, partnership is often reified and seen as some kind of structural construct (often set out in tabular form showing a set of hierarchical or functional relationships); this is what is meant by ‘formal’. There are problems inherent in this approach: *unless* partnership is seen to have this kind of definable structure it is deemed not to exist and, conversely, if it does have this structure then it is deemed *to be working*. However, neither is necessarily true. All kinds of transactions at the local level involve a degree of *partnership working*, regardless of formal structure, and it is these ‘informal’ partnerships which are the main concern of this study. This point will be developed more fully elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> Particularly relevant here is the notion of ‘circuits of power’, as detailed by Clegg (1989). In practical terms, the exercise of power by large agencies is often dependant on the activities of local agents who are ‘empowered’ to act on behalf of the organisation in its transactions with groups or individuals ‘on the ground’. This local interface is the forum where some aspects of the transmission and transaction of power is observable within the context of ‘the community’.

from reinforcing individualism’ and (my emphasis) ‘individual change becomes a *bridge* to community solidarity and societal change’ (both Wilson 1996). Although the political right may have espoused individualism, this espousal is within the context of the adoption of capitalist and neo-liberal economic norms and focuses on the individual as an atomised consumer.

Within the context of local economic and social regeneration, individuals may indeed empower themselves and act in a selfish way (see the reference to game theory in Chapter 3), but this will become efficient in a *social* sense if the individual exploits their own sense of empowerment as a springboard to collective action and hence to empowerment at the community level. Within this context of local community, there may be a tension between individual economic betterment leading to a sense of having ‘sold out’ to consumerism (or simply of having developed a range of other concerns or interests which are more pressing than communal action), followed by disengagement from community solidarity, and a continuing community dependency on support structures seen to be stifling both individual and collective development. To some degree, this tension can be resolved when economic and social development is mediated through small-scale locally decentralised agencies (such as the Resource Group); in Wilson’s view: ‘(the) life space – i.e. the primary community neighbourhood or village – is the important space for human development’ (Wilson 1996: 620). Even if it is accepted that this ‘life space’ is only one of a number of possible spaces (no community exists in isolation and no individual identifies wholly with one community), within its own terms it can act as a powerful focus for individual and collective development.

An important consideration here is the distinction between a ‘zero-sum’ and a ‘plus-sum’ view of empowerment. (This issue is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 on empowerment and the argument is recapitulated only briefly here.) The zero-sum, or *distributist* view of power, conceives it as a discrete and limited entity, wherein power transfer from one agency or one agent to another can be only at the *expense* of the more powerful agency or agent; they *lose* power in the process. The plus-sum, or *generative* view, embraces the principle of the *abundance* (not scarcity) of power, as a source of personal and collective energy; it is neither limited nor discrete and it has a strong transformative potential (cf. Hastings 1996). In the plus-sum view, community *need* corresponds to a source of energy generating a movement for change. Individual awareness (linked to self-esteem) leads to assertiveness and the exploration of avenues

for change<sup>5</sup>. As will be observed in the current study, this process can be reversed with unforeseen consequences ('relationships of power will often be unstable, ambiguous and reversible' Hindess 1996: 101). The plus-sum approach should essentially be non-adversarial and consensual and avoid the development of polarising frameworks in the process of interaction both within communities and between communities and external agencies, leading to 'a new ethos based on personal transformation, community participation and global responsibility' (Rifkin, quoted in Wilson 1996: 622). It is worth noting, however, that the community-power debate and Lukes's (1974) three dimensions were predicated on mechanisms for the exercise of power *within situations of conflict*; hence the need for a more *facilitative* (cf. the gloss on Foucault in Chapter 2) or plus-sum view. The dialectic of conflict (or conflicting demands) *can* lead to transformation and a plus-sum approach rather than coercion.

Within the context of this study, which focuses on the relationship between the community of Yoker (as represented by the Resource Group) and the City and Regional<sup>6</sup> councils, as the principal external agencies with which it has to deal in order to achieve its objectives, the most fruitful area of study is often to reflect on how this relationship operates at the level of established projects focused on meeting community need. Usually, the group will identify a cohort of individuals whose needs (it perceives) are not being met, either by generalised welfare provision which is aimed at helping individuals but has no 'communal' perspective, or even by council provision which can be area-based but which is seen as deficient, or inefficient, or simply absent. It is also

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<sup>5</sup> Wilson (1996) sees empowerment as a synthesis of individual and collective change. In an ascending sequence, individual action (or the multiple action of individuals) leads to collective action, which in turn produces material outcomes (change). There may be many barriers, personal, material and political, to this process, but it provides a theoretical working base for the format of analysis in this chapter. Note also that this idea of an ascending sequence is central to the thesis's approach to the mechanisms underpinning partnership working.

<sup>6</sup> Strathclyde Regional Council (1975-1996) had responsibility for education (including community education) and social work services and, centrally, for the administration of some Urban Programme (UP) projects. It operated in practice on a decentralised basis where the role of the local agent in relation to the local community was crucial. Glasgow City Council operated in various guises and with a varying range of powers over the whole of the study period; from 1975-96, its main functions affecting the local area were housing and planning, but from 1983 it had a system of area management with dedicated local officers and with a community budget specifically charged with developing and co-ordinating projects (including UP projects).

true (particularly in the case of Urban Programme<sup>7</sup> projects) that communities may be able to target funding at groups whose needs are met only in part by normal provision, particularly at a time when local authority funding in particular is perceived to be constrained. There are two principal ways in which this funding can be regarded: firstly, it can be seen as ‘plugging gaps’ in local-state provision; i.e. it is regarded as providing a service that the council (for example) *would* provide or had historically provided, but is prevented from doing so by the strictures of the central state<sup>8</sup>; or secondly (and more positively) it is regarded by communities as enabling them to provide direct services which no other agency would normally provide, the need for which is determined *by the community*. The Yoker attitude has always been closer to the second view; it has seen itself consistently as providing ‘added value’ and not as merely plugging gaps in council provision.

### **The Project - The interviews**

For the purpose of this study, it was decided to interview a range of people who had differing relationships to the project. The focus was, however, quite narrow and there was no attempt to ascertain the views of the community ‘at large’ or of anyone who did not have a close relationship with the project in some way. The only ‘general’ interview was with the principal officer of Yoker Resource Group (SB), who – while having a very synoptic view of the whole Yoker enterprise – was an initiator of the project and has remained deeply committed to its ideals. Most of the other interviewees had either a professional interest in the library or were users. The project leader of the library (FM) was interviewed, as was a member of the staff (RD) and its supervising officer in its latter stages (RC). By coincidence, the local City Council elected member (CR) was

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<sup>7</sup> The importance of the Urban Programme as an enabling component for community development should not be underestimated. It provided both capital and revenue finance and could also be a source of local employment. It led to empowerment through the exercise of direct community management and of at least a tactical response to local need. Its weaknesses were that it was mediated through a number of external agencies, it was time-limited (to a maximum of seven years) and that few communities were robust enough to be able to maintain the same level of funding after the grant had expired. There was in practice close supervision by external agencies of the funding and the community’s partnership role could be more apparent than real. It has now been superseded in Scotland by funding through Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs).

<sup>8</sup> As part of the process of interview for the thesis, the opinion was expressed on several occasions that the Urban Programme was really money that ‘belonged’ to local councils which central government had diverted by cutting back on rate-support funding, only some of which was returned through the programme.



himself a professional librarian. Finally, a group of former users, four in all, was interviewed. The range of interviews, though small, does represent a disparate range of opinion which gives a flavour of the issues and attitudes involved in the project and raises a number of interesting theoretical questions, detailed in the following pages. Everyone interviewed spoke, as far as possible, for themselves and not on behalf of the organisations they may currently represent, although it must be remembered that people are ‘grounded’ within organisations, particularly where they have a formal representative or management role and are at best only ‘semi-detached’.

### **The project’s establishment – The positive use of power**

Yoker Youth Library was established in 1987 as a project, funded through the Urban Programme, aimed at a group (young people) perceived by the Resource Group as being inadequately catered for in terms of dedicated local provision. It is a good subject for a study of this kind, not so much because it is ‘typical’ of the kind of project initiated by the community in Yoker, but because it illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses of community development ‘from the inside out’ (Wilson 1996), and because it is a project which still resonates strongly in the collective memory of the community, both positively and negatively. It classically has a beginning (the conceptualising, funding and establishment of the project), a middle (its operation, its gaining of credibility and a positive reputation) and an end (its change of status, its closure and the aftermath of that) and that sequence will provide a template for the chapter. In some ways, it has never ‘ended’; although its operations have ceased and its staff and clients are now dispersed, its ‘half-life’ lingers. There is a palpable sense in which local people (and indeed members of external agencies) are still aware of the project, have a strong sense of what is *not* there, and have retained strong views about its history. As an undertaking, it exemplifies not only the exercise of community empowerment (the principal subject of this chapter), but it also has resonances in terms of the development of social capital locally, the operation of trust (indeed of distrust) and the difficulties inherent in true partnership working.

The project was conceived in direct response to the needs of the area’s young people; in the words of one of the prime movers (SB):

The library came about in the first instance by the Yoker Resource Committee looking at what youth provision there was in the area, and particularly starting to listen to youth about what type of provision they required, rather than saying, ‘Here’s what you should have’: In our estimation of what was going on [*in mainstream youth provision*] ... major national programmes, like the YES [*Youth Enquiry Service*] programme ... were being downloaded on to youth at that time, rather than giving them the participation and ... enabling them to look at their own problems in a special way.

Interestingly, one of the areas highlighted was the need for young people to be able to talk freely about sexual behaviour (which they could not in facilities then provided), especially as the transmission of HIV and the issues surrounding AIDS were becoming important at that time. An early clash with the prevailing culture of youth provision was the library’s practice of supplying controversial teenage magazines (such as *Viz*). However, from the beginning, the library was intended to be for the area’s young people (who served on the management committee) and responsive, as far as it could be, to their needs as perceived by them. ‘Control’ was certainly to be exercised by the Resource Group, but there was no attempt to dictate the project’s internal policy, so long as it coincided with the aspirations of its clients.

In order to establish the project (a library/information centre/meeting-point) the group looked at existing facilities (e.g. at Castlemilk), which they judged, however, to be poorly managed [FM]:

[It] was very much in turmoil with its management group, who had no youth at all on it; [they] had the impression that the library should have been about books [*sic! In the sense of books and nothing else.*] ... the guitar class within the library was considered a bit *noisy*.

Having seen other local projects, the real catalyst for their interest was a similar project in Northern Ireland (observed while they were attending a conference on housing, part of the wide pattern of networking established among communities) which brought together the two communities there. Not only that, the project was ingenious in how it was financed (including getting ‘an archbishop to sign a promissory note’ and being rebuilt after it was burned down) and in its cross-community significance [SB]:

So this guy [*in Northern Ireland*] was my hero. But we went and looked at that library and we were really astounded ... by the fact [that it was] mixed – both communities used it; that was something I found really good.

From the beginning, the concern was to have premises which were flexible, responsive to need and community based:

... a youth library was somewhere where kids could enjoy themselves, where they could get reading and get into audio systems and so on. It could be educational and still be fun, and get it through their [*i.e. the providers of mainstream services*] heads that these kids are not accessed [*sic* = do not have access] to libraries, because the minute they walk in the door and they make a noise, they are told to keep quiet and get out.

There was some initial difficulty in persuading funders that an ‘additional’ facility was required in the area (according to standards-based criteria, the area was already supplied with a library in Knightswood, about a mile away). There was also some local ‘difficulty’ in that the local elected council member was himself a professional librarian and had strong views about what should constitute a library (although he supported the funding application). The local group wanted ‘a youth project with a library, rather than a library that was going to be run *maybe* with a youth project’. One other initial difficulty was that the project was to be housed in the existing Neighbourhood Centre (currently the focus of the Old School project, see Chapter 8), ‘run by’ Community Education<sup>9</sup> along conventional lines and catering, amongst others, for the local elderly population (through lunch clubs and similar activities, see below). However, in spite of these initial difficulties, funding was granted through the Urban Programme and the facility was established.

### **Operation – The empowerment phase**

It is not proposed to go into detail about the library’s actual operation. It functioned for more than eight years, it gained a reputation nationally for its services to young people, it succeeded in meeting a real need (although the age profile of its members may have been younger than originally intended – see some of the comments of the users below) and it did succeed in becoming ‘inculturated’ within the local community. It developed a wide range of activities, well beyond the remit of a conventional library (FM):

Well, we started a book fair, which was very successful, and that was straying outside our teenage remit because it was mainly the primary schools. Latterly, we were going to start a dry [?] arts studio and that would have taken us into the realms of cartooning and campaigning. One of the things that was uppermost was trying to discourage drug abuse and one of the leading exponents of

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<sup>9</sup> The formal ownership of this building by Community Education would become critical in the termination debate; the fact that this department had by then emptied the building of ‘its’ activities left the library project isolated in an old and decaying location with no obvious additional uses and with no-one formally ‘responsible’ for its upkeep.

the art(s) was of the view that we could use it [*the library*] for that purpose and they had actually drafted a newspaper, a magazine, and created a character. These are definitely non-traditional library functions, but everything can be related back to books and learning from books and other sources, and encouraging people to use their time constructively.

The library was flexible about its function and developed skills in relating to the wider community in a way they would not have done in a conventional library setting; again, as the librarian in charge was able to comment:

With the wider community, it [*the relationship*] was excellent. I mean. All these teenagers had parents that lived locally, wee brothers that lived locally, quite often [grandparents] that lived locally; because of our setting in the Community Education building, which was used by everybody, we got to know them.

So, the library had a distinct but integrated role within the community and fulfilled a real function.

### **Termination – The legacy of disempowerment and distrust**

Although the principal focus of this chapter is on community empowerment predicated on need, what might be called the ‘termination debate’ foreshadows the later discussion in Chapter 8 on partnership working and the role of governmentalism; fundamentally, the issue is in whose interest local projects operate and not merely who sets the ‘rules of the game’ (cf. Putnam 1993) but also who ‘operates the switch’ in Clegg’s circuits of power (by analogy with electrical circuits). It is also true that this debate (and action) may have closed the project in an apparently absolute way, but as a debate its consequences have persisted to the present, in the form of a ‘half-life’ (in the sense that the immediate impact may have receded and be ‘unseen’ but that traces in the form of distrust and disappointment linger). The reactions of some of the users have been detailed below, but it is proposed here to concentrate on the arguments advanced by the non-users. Everyone takes the view that the project was ‘successful’ (defined in a variety of ways), which makes its demise seem unlikely. It appears that, in spite of some of the difficulties over its establishment and some of the perceived hostility from some of the established users of the building and from the managing department, this was not a factor in its closure. SB is explicit on this point:

I would say that, two years into the project, the hostility towards youth in the area, particularly with the generation gap of middle-aged and elderly people was completely broken down, and I would say that's one of the library's major achievements.

Indeed, according to the same respondent, the closure of the library has resulted in the re-establishment of the *status quo ante*:

Old people are feeling very scared and intimidated by young people, and young people feel tied down and intimidated by old people, so they don't talk to each other.

The reasons for the closure must, therefore, be sought elsewhere and may be summarised under two headings: (a) persistent conflicts over the perceived function and purpose of a youth library, and (b) differing perspectives ('geographies of perception', see below) about where 'the centre' for local activity resides.

Some insight into how libraries in general were perceived can be gleaned from the views of one of the library staff (RD):

... the general ambience of the place in terms of the level of noise was very unusual in terms of a library

and:

... even if they [*the users*] didn't borrow things, they came and they hung around desks, for want of a better description, in a way that people wouldn't do in a public library ... that was part of their reason for coming; they talked to each other, and they talked to us.

In her view (speaking with heavy irony!) the library was 'very unique'. The same respondent made the interesting comment that, although the library did have contact with specific community groups (particularly those dealing with younger children) and although it was managed (at a distance) by Yoker Resource Group, 'we were quite autonomous' and that they did not perceive themselves to be a part of the wider community, as opposed to providing a specific service to it.

From the community perspective (as represented by Yoker Resource Group), the project was about social inclusion, information and accessibility for young people and about breaking down misconceptions and barriers. The proximate reason for the debate around closure was that its Urban Programme funding had come to an end after seven years (in theory, this funding could be extended for longer, but in practice rarely was). Again, one of the principal reasons why it was terminated was, according to the local perspective (SB), because the focus of management had changed:

It came to the end of its funding and also came to the end of its management control by the people *that were actually involved in it* [my emphasis], that is the local people and in particular the youth committee.

To the Resource Group, this local management (including by the users) was central to the philosophy of the whole project and not simply some detached facet of it. In addition, the project remained at its core a service to its users, as a youth project (in the widest sense). To the professional librarian, there was always a conflict there (RD):

... I think an awful lot of people still didn't see themselves as having a public library, because the stock in many ways was very particular to an age group. ... they saw Yoker more as a leisure facility ... they did see it more as a place to relax, where(as) they might have come into a place like this [*Knightswood Library*] for specific stuff on [*school*] projects.

There is a hint in this comment that it was not a 'proper' library, although the fact that it functioned as a meeting-point, provided a specific range of library services *and* complemented mainstream provision should have been perceived as a strength. Indeed, the local councillor (CR), made this point more explicitly:

It was a type of library of which I had absolutely no personal experience and, speaking as a professional librarian, it seemed to me to fill a particular niche which other libraries don't address [*sic*] ... it assumed *a hybrid kind of form* [my emphasis] which a mainstream library never would.

From the centre, the perception was that the project had become increasingly geared towards the non-library needs of the users and, as RC observes:

... towards the end sustaining the level of library input was pretty difficult and it was turning more into a youth club type of project and I suppose there wasn't the support [for that function as a youth club] coming from other sources.

From this central departmental perspective, unless the library functioned as a library, in a form *perceived as such*, and not as 'the club' as the users perceived it, then the department found it difficult to maintain. In stark contrast to this is the comment from the local librarian in charge (FM) as to why the project was a success:

Yes, we had the freedom to do what was really required, and that was to try and get as many [as possible] of the people coming to it and borrowing from it. So, we could be quite dramatic and intense and eccentric, if you like, in our promotions and our recruitment; and I don't think ... no, there was no way the conventional authority would have gone down some of the roads the we went down. And in this respect, maybe we went too far in some directions, but it certainly had the desired effect to launch the library in the community, and within a few months, everybody knew of it ...

From the same source comes the opinion that the library's smallness and isolation was a positive strength for the staff:

... one of the problems was lack of money and lack of skilled assistance to call on on [sic] the phone; you're not working in a giant bureaucracy where everything is a phonecall away. So you're quite dependent on others in the community: on their knowledge and their savvy and their skills. So eventually there's an *interdependence* [my emphasis]. We benefited more from [local] assistance in the first instance.

This sense of interdependence and reliance on the community was felt by him to have deep roots:

... it was quite a confident and active community and it was involved in many successful campaigns: saving the Renfrew Ferry, the housing campaign. I don't know if it was from trade union roots or whatever, but there was quite a capacity to work out difficult problems and a tenacity and everything else; really, it was a *resourceful community* [my emphasis]. I felt, and the staff felt that too.

Clearly, its positioning within this 'resourceful community' was seen as a positive asset and the library was seen as both successful and adaptable. Why then did it close?

The real key to understanding this lies not in how the library was perceived in terms of its function (much as the Libraries Department might have found it difficult to 'justify'), but rather in how 'central' or 'marginal' it was perceived to be. These 'geographies of perception' are fundamental to an understanding of how different agencies 'view' projects from their own perspective (within their own 'space'). From the viewpoint of the *local* 'centre', the project was critical in meeting the needs of an important segment of that community. From the departmental 'centre', the perspective was very different. Although the project had been 'mainlined' at the end of its Urban Programme funding (i.e. ostensibly absorbed into the Council's funding base), this in no way guaranteed its future, regardless of what local perceptions might have been, because of its rather 'marginal' status in terms of departmental function. At the end of Urban Programme funding, all the staff were technically made redundant (with appropriate compensation, hence with an 'obligation' to the Council) and immediately re-employed *by the Council* (not the community). In addition, some staff were redeployed elsewhere and the library's hours of opening were cut (including the crucial Saturday opening), to make its pattern of operation conform more to that of a

conventional library. However, the transfer to the local authority came at a particularly unfortunate time (RC):

I think in retrospect that it was accepted that it [*mainlining*] was a mistake, but at the time it was done with the best of intentions, to save the project. But, in hindsight, if it had remained in some way as a community project, then it might have survived for longer. ... [However] it was one of five libraries to close in that year and the directorate [*of the department*] took the view that it couldn't maintain that service on the [low] level of library business it was doing, as opposed to perhaps a mainline community library serving the whole of the community.

It is reasonable to conclude from this comment that the reasons for closure were (a) a lack of resources at the centre and (b) the perceived marginality of the Yoker project. It is ironic that, in part, closure was motivated by a sense of equity; if five mainstream libraries had to close because of financial stringency, it would have been unfair (from the department's perspective) to have maintained the Yoker facility. The closure was not premeditated at the time of mainlining, nor was there obvious animus directed at Yoker, but from the department view, it was simply too peripheral to justify its retention in the face of other closures. There is, however, some sense in which closure was seen as inevitable. As the local councillor says:

... when something like that has no future for financial or other reasons, then there's no way of handling it sensitively; it is just the fate of the project.

In some sense this illustrates the councillor's dilemma: an argument based on city-wide need and finance is hard to counter with an apparently 'selfish' local need 'wasteful' of constrained resources. The staff were all redeployed (see above), but for the users there was no substitute and the loss of the library has never been replaced. Being the only occupier of the building, once the library went, the building closed and 'with a combination of no money and no premises, it was inevitable' that it *would* close. For the various local players, the effect was profound. According to RD, members of staff were: 'Absolutely shattered; we all were'. Although tragic for all involved, the actual timing of the closure was not without humour; there was only two days' notice and staff were told [SB]:

'Sorry about this, we're [the department] going to close you now'. Because they believed – I don't know if they really did believe it – they told us they believed that [*a political activist now an MSP*] was going to appear.



However, even though the staff were committed to the project, it became impossible for them to resist the closure because, as SB observed:

All of a sudden, the staff weren't allowed to voice an opinion without checking through the departmental line manager ... [they] were towed into line with the politics of the Libraries Department, rather than the local politics of the people.

Once the library had been absorbed into the departmental management structure, and opening hours had been restricted, its client group faded away, thus compounding its difficulties and reinforcing the argument for closure. Even although the Resource Group had offered to find some alternative sources of funding, the project was regarded by the department as outside its core establishment and it refused to enter into any negotiations with the community on alternative resourcing. Hastings (q.v.) regards resource synergy as being an essential element of partnership, but the history of the youth library illustrates almost a form of naked resource *power* on the part of the council; it now controlled all the resources of finance and personnel and had a very 'zero-sum' view of its operation. The final comment on the closure should be from the librarian in charge (FM):

[I felt] Sadness, naturally. [*reflects*] Just ... when I left it seemed at its zenith to me, because everything was chiming just beautifully, but it was also chiming with a lot of other things in the community at the same time and I felt that the whole thing was on a roll. And I think this [*the closure*] was indicative of changes beyond the library; the community centre was being emptied at the same time and we were entering a period of a malaise it seemed. I think that was also true of politics and economics in the country as a whole.

### **An alternative perspective – The views of the users**

An important interview, which to some extent stands outside the body of the others, was held with some of the former users themselves (for a fuller discussion of this interview and some of the issues surrounding it, see the Methodology chapter). This 'focus group' interview was different in that it involved speaking to the users as a body. Briefly, this was done for a number of reasons: the former users are still relatively young and being in a group would give them a sense of solidarity and mutual 'protection'; the intention was to explore a collective memory and allow the respondents' views to interact in a discursive forum; and to avoid the relatively rigid and perhaps intimidating format of the face-to-face interview. For a variety of reasons, the interview was problematic. The

four respondents (out of the six or seven originally expected to turn up) were still somewhat intimidated by the process, few addressed the microphone directly or clearly (one spoke so softly as to be inaudible throughout) and the general impression was of a controlled acceptance of what had happened.

However, while the interview was somewhat episodic and impressionistic, it still revealed a great deal, apart from what needs to be ‘read’ into some of the answers (i.e. to interpret them in the light of other interviews, or subsequent conversations, or of a wider understanding of the local situation). There were four respondents in all: Ca, Ch, K and S – all former users and, significantly, still in contact with the Resource Centre, although not all were or have remained local residents. The group was smaller than originally intended (ideally six or seven would have been preferred in order to get a wider spread of views, but the users were scattered and it was difficult to get any more together), but they represented various levels of involvement with the project: as committee member and user (Ch), as a practical ‘helper’ (S) and as users (Ca and K). Although there was no clear sense from the interview that the library was ‘owned’ by the young people, it was thought of as having a different atmosphere (K):

You go into normal libraries, it’s always quiet and there’s nothing really happening; you go into that one, there was always something ...

It was very difficult to get any more sense of what were the special qualities of the building, but it is striking that the respondents saw the library as a very positive resource, but this feeling was transferred from themselves to other users, even younger than they would have been:

(Ch, referring to a recent act of vandalism) ... there was the damage done to the trees out there, if the library had been here, I don’t think that would have happened. [It] was open on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 8 o’clock; it gave the weans somewhere to go and meet their pals, but it’s not there any more.

and (K):

Since the library went there’s nothing, not really, for me; I actually come from Hardgate [*several miles from Yoker, in another local authority district*], but I used [it because] I worked in the building [*Yoker Resource Centre*]. But since it shut it’s just weans hanging about corners and there’s nothing for them to do, apart from the sports-centre, but you need to pay for that.

These two comments represent recurring themes in the interview:

- The library was used extensively by young people from outwith Yoker (discussed more below);
- It was a free facility with universal access (subject to ‘the rules’); and
- The concern with giving ‘the weans’ (children) something to do.

The respondents all agreed that the library was a recognised meeting-place for young people from a wide area, not just Yoker. ‘Outsiders’ did not perceive any threat or hostility [S]:

Once people got to know your face, there was no problem.

It was difficult to get any more detailed information from the respondents, apart from Ch comparing the library with the local sports centre:

Because you can’t go down there and meet up with your pals; they can only take so many there – OK, there’s only so much space up in the library ... They used to sit on the steps up there and have a wee talk with their pals and there was plenty of space up there for them. The sports centre, you had to pay to get in, up there [*in the library*] you didn’t have to pay if you wanted to take CDs in or whatever, or not take anything in, just meet your pals up there. You didn’t have to pay for anything.

However, one of the adult respondents [SB] is very explicit on this point. The Yoker project (after some initial friction with the elderly users of the Neighbourhood Centre) succeeded in breaking down barriers in two directions: inter-generational and inter-territorial. Initially, some of the library users had antagonised older people by the sort of petty vandalism that allegedly characterises young people:

... spitting over the verandah at the library on to the old pensioners eating their dinners [and having been made to apologise] ... and I can remember the same boys within two years were going and digging their [*the old people’s*] gardens and helping them.

He was also quite clear that:

... the other thing that happened in that library [was] that kids were coming from Clydebank, kids were coming from Drumchapel and from all over the West area and mixing together in that library, whereas before they had territorial boundaries where they were actually flinging stones and hitting each other with sticks ...

Conversations with him and others have established that the project did provide a secure meeting place for these young people, free from the territoriality which might otherwise have precluded its use by people from outside. Ironically, this wide usage would have been against the rules of the Urban Programme grant, which would have designated the

client community as the young people of Yoker (only). However, this function as a ‘neutral’ place of encounter was one of the project’s strengths, one which has never been replaced since the library’s closure. On the other interesting ‘encounter’ (with the other users of the Neighbourhood Centre, particularly its more elderly users), there is little expansion in the interview (except for nodded agreement that it was true), apart from the elliptical comment that (Ch):

I did [get to know them] by working in here [*the Resource Centre*]; you knew quite a lot of them over there.

Reaction to the library’s closure was remarkably muted. Ch was the most voluble in his comment:

How did I feel? Let down. Once that closed, there just seemed to be a gap opened up down here. I mean, where the youth library used to be, there was just nothing any more. It bothered me, but it didn’t really bother me; I think it bothered the weans more. They were going there and meeting their pals and suddenly there was just nothing, nowhere for them to go and meet their pals. It affected a lot of the younger ones more than the older ones, I feel.

Once again, the concern was for ‘the weans’, reinforced by Ca:

I was a wee bit disappointed, but I didn’t use it as much as the kids did. I wasn’t down at night, it was just during the day when I was in the centre ... two or three times a week, or whatever. It was definitely disappointing.

And by K:

I was a bit disappointed as well; if it had to be closed down, it wasn’t very fair and it wasn’t fair on the young(er) ones either.

Only S expressed a deeper sense of disappointment (the actual dialogue is very unclear):

I was disappointed; I used it ... as well. [I felt if I was just kicked out. (?) My ability to use the computer just disappeared.] [Reference to ‘council people’ and ‘paying more to keep it open’.]

This feeling of being ‘kicked out’ or ‘let down’ was expressed best by Ch:

Being on the management committee here, we fought to keep the youth library open, but I don’t think a lot of people fought hard enough to keep it open; they didn’t take into consideration what the kids felt. There was a petition put through, which I felt was just ignored. Nobody really seemed to care about losing the youth library.

Three of the users were, however, more explicit about the extent to which they felt they were listened to:

(Ch) Definitely not; as far as I was concerned a petition was signed and it was just put aside and ignored ... it was [a] petition to D Dewar [MP] and C Robertson [Cllr]. D Dewar replied; I can't remember what the letter said – it basically said that it couldn't be helped, blah, blah, blah ... I just thought that wasn't the case.

(Ca) [Nobody came and talked to us]; they just made the decision to shut it down [and] nothing anyone could have said or done would have kept it open.

(S) ... they made their mind up before they even decided it [*i.e. decided to close*].

The building and its services are clearly missed, but there is a sense that it is the personal encounters, with staff, with the other centre users and with other young people that were more important (Ch):

There are people you don't see any more and you used to see them in the library; you're missing the opportunity of seeing them. You don't get that any more.

The sense that the library should be reinstated was strong, but expressed in muted terms:

(Ch) Definitely; I think it should be reopened, for the facts we stated before, because of the weans hanging around. We stay down here and you get a lot of hassle with weans hanging about and nothing to do; [they do] damage down here and I think if [the library] was there, you wouldn't have the damage.

(Ca) I would, definitely; it would bring people back into Yoker who don't come here since the library shut. [*Repeats comments about vandalism and hassle.*]

(S) ... I think the community's a lot poorer. I think everywhere should have a library like that.

(K) [*Agrees.*]

### **Interim Summary and Conclusions**

The intention of this chapter was to illustrate the exercise of power within a community context, based on Wilson's view that community (economic) development had to be, if it was to be sustainable, 'from the bottom up'. The principal implication from this was that the community had to be the *prime mover*, the 'active agent', in this process, determining its own priorities for action and able to manage projects (if necessary in collaboration with other agencies) to achieve them. The Yoker group has historically developed a wide range of projects over the period of its existence and has in the process developed a deep capacity for management and an expertise in practical

partnership working. The project chosen for detailed study – the Yoker Youth Library – was in many ways a niche project, aimed at a specific (if important) group deemed to be in some sense marginalized or whose needs were not being met by mainstream provision. This approach represents a cardinal principle of Yoker’s view of community regeneration: that it is intent not to duplicate or replace the service provision of other agencies, but rather to *complement* them or make provision where none exists. In this respect, the Youth Library Project was ‘typical’ of Yoker and its developmental approach.

As an interim conclusion, it is useful to see this project in its historical development as representing three aspects of power (by analogy with, but not equal to, Lukes’s three faces of power as outlined in Chapter 2). The establishment of the project represents the exercise of *power* (equalling resource-capacity: ‘getting things done’) in two equal but distinct ways: (a) the local authority exercising both its legitimacy (as sponsor of the project) and its capacity (as joint-manager and part-funder) and (b) the local community (through the resource group) using – in Foucauldian terms - its ‘hidden’ or latent<sup>10</sup> capacity to engage with the external or superordinate agency (the council) in initiating and managing the project. The process of *empowerment* occurred during the operation of the project as an ‘autonomous’ element within the general social service provision of the area meeting a specific need and engaging the community as manager and the users (young people) on the management committee in partnership with the council as (hands-off) ‘supervisor’. The users were empowered both by accessing a wider world of learning and entertainment/leisure and a ‘terrain’ which was territorially neutral and served as a point of encounter for potentially competing interests. Equally, it *ought* to have energised the council (especially the Libraries department) through positive partnership working (and there is evidence in the interviews that it did).

It is possible to see this as linear process: Joint working (a) leads to mutual cooperation (b), which fragments to self-interest or distrust (c) on closure; (a + b) can be seen as *positive* power, (c) as *negative*. Phases (a) and (b) can be seen as representing a one-dimensional or public exercise of power; however, (c) has echoes of the two-

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<sup>10</sup> Its capacity to manage projects was already well established, but it had no track record in managing a library. It was thus relying on its ‘stock’ of social capital as collateral; it could be trusted and had a positive ‘history’.

dimensional or more ‘private’ exercise of power, certainly on the part of the council, able to ‘retreat’ into its inner structures, both to adjudicate on need and priority and to withhold further funding. The community is relatively powerless in resource terms while the council resorts to ‘naked’ or coercive power (ameliorated in part by the provision of a mobile service) and an appeal to the wider city interest. However, the users have no dedicated facility and are left profoundly distrustful. Any circuits on the Clegg model that operated were small-scale and personal involving negotiations between the project management, the supervising officer in the department and the Resource Group officers. When the scale of involvement increased to council level, these personal circuits broke down, although never fracturing completely. (Even the involvement of the local councillor, himself a librarian, was insufficient to save the project; his representation of *both* the local and the city-wide interest was untenable and he had to take a ‘disinterested’ position and agree to closure.) Based on the interviews, there is no evidence of a ‘three-dimensional’ approach, where the community simply accepted closure as exemplifying the proper role of the council in which they could play no part.

The project was interesting but it was not unique (there were already three other youth libraries in Scotland), although its precise form was inspired by a successful cross-community project in Ireland and by their having a determination that the project would be run to a significant extent by its users. This use of existing community networks (social capital) and the cross-fertilisation of ideas is typical of the Yoker approach and in this case its commitment to real participation in the management of projects was realised. (All of the users interviewed had remained in some form of contact and involvement with the group even after the demise of the project, although it is not claimed that this is typical of all the users.) Both users and staff appeared to have benefited from their experience of the project and early difficulties with other users in the Neighbourhood Centre, particularly elderly users, were overcome and there is evidence that good relations developed between the project and council departments with which it came in contact and that a measure of ‘resource synergy’ did develop. By some measure, the future of the project seemed assured when it was ‘mainlined’, incorporated into the structure of the council department. However, differences in perception, general funding difficulties for the council and different approaches to management and accountability led to its closure. This can be construed as an exercise

in either ‘naked power’ (dominance) or even as a form of governmentalism: apparent decentralised management operated remotely and acting ultimately in the name of the wider corporate interest.

The profound effects of its demise are still being felt. What positive social capital benefits may have accrued from the project were to some extent dissipated by the development of a subsequent distrust which has persisted. In addition, there was in the end a breakdown of partnership working and the loss of community empowerment in a tangible sense. In these respects, the project adumbrates some of the issues considered in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8 and illustrates the complexities inherent in even one relatively small undertaking. There was no *intent* to close the project, it simply had to be terminated because of financial exigencies and its perceived marginality. All of the interviews contain some sense of regret that it has closed. In the end, it was not sustainable as a project and the community was *powerless* to prevent its closure, which has left a gap which has never been filled<sup>11</sup>. The reasons for this lack of sustainability will be explored further in the next two chapters.

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<sup>11</sup> It can be argued that the closure of the Yoker Youth Library was an exercise in *repression* since the facility was physically closed and the service effectively terminated. Echoing Foucault (Chapter 2), it can be said that it may not be war, but the current ‘peace’ retains the sense of the futility of struggle against a stronger force.



## Chapter 7

### THE ADVOCACY (INCINERATOR) PROJECT

#### *The Role of Advocacy and Networking in the Formation of Social Capital*



Plate 7.1: The Clyde in the 1950s, looking northwest towards Yoker.

And the people were seeing their environment changing; the face of the housing was changing, the streetscapes were changing; they were seeing grass where they'd never seen it before, and stuff like that. So, all these things were tied in and helped as well. It wasn't a case of: Here's a campaign, let's go out and talk to people. I mean, we had the structure and the mechanism in order to draw people in at that time.

*Interview with community respondent*

#### **Introduction**

The subject of this chapter represents Yoker in corporate guise, but in a profoundly different 'project' from the Youth Library. It was public, involved large numbers of people over a wide area, it was protracted in time, it showed the considerable skills of the community and its representatives and the outcome was ultimately favourable to

them, but in an unpredictable and unexpected way. The campaign against the proposal to site a toxic-waste incinerator on a site at Braehead (Renfrew) brought together communities on both sides of the River Clyde in a protest against the proposal. The campaign did not originate in Yoker, but Yoker came to play a significant part in the process of resistance, both at the level of key individuals locally and on a community-wide level as a focus for mass protest. The study in this chapter has focused on the role of some key individuals under the title of the Advocacy Project, since the intention is to concentrate on the process of how Yoker personnel came to be involved and how they were perceived by others, particularly key players in Renfrew whose support was crucial in developing and maintaining a sustained campaign of protest and resistance. The campaign persisted over a long period (and this is reflected in the minutes of the Resource Group) and the communities' responses to it changed and developed over that period in quite sophisticated and subtle ways. Its nature and evolution allows for a deep probing of the use of community networks and *social capital*.

The responses were possible both because of the personal qualities of the individuals concerned and their ability to modify and adapt to circumstances. Because they operated from a secure communal base with a wealth of encapsulated experience they had the ability to draw on this experience and the collective pool of talent available to them. These approaches will be narrated as the interviews are analysed and they demonstrate well the contention that the deeply embedded knowledge (and hence power) inherent in local communities is activated by contact with an external stimulus with which it is more than capable of engaging. This process is an illustration of how Foucault's 'hidden discourses' become manifest; if they are regarded as somehow latent (and therefore hidden), their potential is released because of their contact with external stimuli – positive or negative – and the extent to which they can engage with these 'outside' forces is dependant on the existence of local empowerment and social capital and the ability to form working relationships. The intention in this analysis is to illustrate the dynamic nature of how communities can respond to what they perceive to be a threat, particularly an external threat which they see as conferring no benefit on the communities, but will rather inflict definite harm. To a large extent, the campaign against the siting of the toxic-waste incinerator threw the communities back on their own internal resources (official agencies were either indifferent, bound by procedure or

even sympathetic to the development project). What was tested were three significant attributes of what might constitute the ‘civic’ community in these two areas:

1. Their ability adequately to represent the views of their areas and to be advocates on their behalf (hence the ‘Advocacy Project’);
2. The presence of what Sharp *et al.* (2000) called ‘resisting power’ and an exploration of how that worked in practice; and
3. The depth of contacts, experience and expertise that allowed local community representatives to engage with powerful opponents in a radical, creative and imaginative way by the use of existing and developing social capital.

### **The Respondents**

This second set of respondents was chosen in much the same way as the first, to include people with a direct knowledge of the project, with a range of views. However, it has been decided to approach this element of the study in a different way, to illustrate more fully the particular aspect of community ‘thickness’ implied by the interviews. Therefore, only three interviews will be analysed in detail. The three respondents are: the principal officer at Yoker<sup>1</sup>, who played a leading part in the campaign, and two Renfrew activists, one of whom has since been elected to what is now Renfrewshire Council. The focus in these interviews is on the extended narrative as illustrating the concept of the ‘institutional thickness’ (MacLeod 2002) of social capital inherent in the campaign process. The concern is to present a more rounded picture of the respondents and their relationship to one another. To some extent, these interviews also give an ‘external’ critique of Yoker (certainly of one of its more public faces) or at least a semi-detached perspective (i.e. from Renfrew), which is useful in forming a more rounded

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<sup>1</sup> It is inevitable in an area as small as that under study that the same respondents will be interviewed from a number of different angles; this has both merits and demerits. The advantages are that, as people are encountered over an extended period, the study becomes qualitatively deeper and the interview process becomes almost a form of participant observation (on both sides). A superficial knowledge is avoided and a more rounded study is possible, as well as the avoidance of the researcher merely extracting information over a short period for a limited purpose. Better personal relations can also be established and the interviewer can feel more part of the process. The obvious danger is that this closeness can remove some objectivity, that one can be told what it is thought one wants to hear and that ‘the other’ (someone not part of the circle) will be regarded less sympathetically. A small sample can also result in a skewed perspective which may not be ‘typical’, and misleading and wrong inferences may be drawn. However, the study is not quantitative and typical views are not being sought; the views of the actors are essential and if the range of actors is limited, that reflects the local reality and will give a more authentic in-depth understanding of how local processes work.

view of the advocacy process. What is striking, however, is the extent to which community interconnectedness persists over time, the importance of personal relationships and the *latent* ability (equivalent both to Foucault's 'hidden discourse' and Putnam's networks) of individuals and groups within communities to respond to external stimuli (especially what are perceived as threats) and of the community collectively to respond imaginatively to an external threat impacting on the common good.

### **The minute record**

The Advocacy project has a unique character; its first mention occurs in the minutes on 8 June 1989 (Yoker Resource Group: *Management Committee Minutes*, a continuous sequence), when a letter from Donald Dewar (then the local MP) cited the 'significant environmental implications' of a proposal to site a waste incinerator on a site in Renfrew - the threat was 'noted' and no further action was taken. By October 1990, the minute noted action to be taken by Clydeside Action on Pollution (CAP) in the form of a march to Yoker Ferry Green (where 600 had participated, as noted in the November minute). Thereafter, the campaign appeared as a regular item in the minutes, with the entries indicating an increased measure of involvement: 'a supreme effort to maximise (Yoker) attendance' at a meeting in Scotstoun (May 1991); the need for 'a more coordinated approach on technical information and group campaigning' noted in June 1991; and approval of the incinerator proposal by the Secretary of State (the virtual climax of the formal planning process) also in June, with the assurance to the local MP that there would be 'restrictions on levels of toxic omissions'. Approval did not, however, signal the end of the campaign. By August 1991, there were indications of the campaign operating at various levels; the minute of 29 August expresses concern at the low attendance at a public campaign meeting in Yoker, and the need is articulated for a 'wider' campaign and more active participation by the Yoker community at large. At the same time, and on quite a different scale, a lobby of Parliament (at Westminster, the Scottish Parliament did not then exist) is discussed and the campaign is noted as having been discussed at length in the *Evening Times*, the mass circulation Glasgow evening newspaper. By December 1991, it was agreed that a Yoker Coordinating Committee

should be formed and a joint local authority campaign be initiated, to involve Glasgow City and Clydebank and Renfrew district councils<sup>2</sup>.

By the time of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of 29 January 1992 (the first mention of the campaign at an AGM), it was noted that the proposal for an incinerator at Scotstoun (an area to the east of Yoker, where the proposal was for an incinerator dealing mainly with clinical waste) had been dropped, but that the Renfrew incinerator was still a very live issue. The campaign took a radical twist in February of 1992. In order to give the campaign a more radical turn and to confront the development company more directly, the minute of February notes that shares in the development company, worth £200, had been purchased by CAP. This initiative was an important development in the nature of the campaign; it would give the campaign, or its nominees, at least the right of attendance at the AGM of the company. It is also an interesting insight into the real power inherent ('hidden') within communities; local authorities would be legally unable to purchase shares in this way as a campaigning tool. Thus, this move indicates not merely the more flexible (non-sovereign/non-dominant) approach open to local community groups, but arguably is an indicator of a more flexible attitude of mind and a less squeamish approach towards using unconventional methods to achieve their aims (it can equally be argued that the purchase of shares is highly conventional, although not in this context and by this agency). These shares were eventually distributed among the community at large, thus atomising and dispersing the ownership and making it more difficult for the company to 'nobble' prospective opponents. At the same time the minute notes an attendance of over 500 at a public meeting in the area and the authorisation of the environmental development officer (an employee of the group) both to attend joint campaign meetings in Renfrew and to prepare material for an exhibition to be held at the Scottish Green Show at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (Glasgow's principal exhibition venue).

There are no more entries in the minutes until January 1994, but at the AGM on the 26th it was noted that the campaign is still active, and that the share price and capital

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<sup>2</sup> There is no real evidence from any of the respondents that this aspect of the campaign was pursued with any vigour. Whatever may have been the views of local elected members in the areas most closely affected, the difficulty at a formal level was that one of the authorities (Renfrew) was the relevant planning body and, once the Secretary of State had approved the incinerator proposal, its concern would have been to ameliorate what it perceived as the most negative effects of the proposal and secure the best 'deal' for the local area. The onus would, therefore, have been on it to act as 'honest broker' and not be seen to be pursuing a campaign which, technically, had failed.

value of the company has now fallen (from £70 million to £3.5 million); the four hundred local shareholders clearly had a disinterested view of their investment and there is no record of any dissent at the decline in value of their holding, regarded as positive by the group! By August 1994, it was noted that the share price has continued to fall and representatives of CAP have continued to attend the company AGM in London (see below), resulting in ‘good publicity’ from the campaign’s perspective. This remained the case until May 1995, when the group was noted as still continuing to send delegates to company board meetings. The minute record has not been pursued further; the item gradually tailed off in significance. The incinerator was never built, as much because of share price, commercial concerns and changing perceptions as the campaign, which must have had an influence, although how much is impossible to determine (see footnote 3 on page 170).

### **The Interviews**

The intention in this part of the chapter is to focus on three of the interviews which were undertaken as part of the study of the processes involved in the Yoker community’s resistance to what was perceived as the threat of the siting of the proposed toxic-waste incinerator at Braehead. In all, seven individuals were interviewed, but it became clear in a perusal of the data that the particular relationship between three respondents made a close and collective study of their histories especially relevant. The more particular methodology used to do so is discussed in the Methodology chapter, but it is useful at this point to discuss briefly why the study was done in this way. All the respondents had a relationship which pre-dated the onset of the incinerator campaign: one being a current resident in Yoker (A), one a former resident now living in Renfrew (B) and one a long-term Renfrew resident (C); all had a background in housing- and tenant-based community involvement and all became central to the subsequent campaign during the whole of the eight years it was to run (and have remained active in community and voluntary activity subsequently). A methodology was devised, therefore, to analyse these three interviews simultaneously, in order to detect both common themes and approaches and, indeed, where there might be significant differences. It was not a discourse analysis as such, but the language used was remarkably similar and it is clear from the interviews that a common approach was taken, with each individual making a distinctive contribution.

The campaign began in a rather low-key and prosaic way. All three respondents mention the fact that the original advertisement by the development company announcing its intention to develop a toxic-waste incinerator was placed in the newspapers on Fair Friday of 1989. This is significant in two ways: firstly, Fair Friday is the traditional beginning of the Glasgow summer holiday season when newspapers are normally less read than usual (people are too absorbed in enjoying themselves to peruse the papers with their customary attention); secondly, and more significantly, all three respondents saw this action as a *deliberate* ploy by the developers to ‘sneak in’ notice of their intentions when people’s attention was otherwise engaged. From the beginning, therefore, the developer was seen as acting in an underhand way, which encouraged an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. (None of the respondents mention the letter from Donald Dewar MP recorded in the minutes (see above); the manner of placing the newspaper advertisement has clearly stuck more in the memory.) The campaign proper began in a very traditional way, with the organisation of a petition by a group called Renfrew Against Pollution, which with the advent of the Yoker participation became known as Clydeside Against Pollution (CAP), the subsequent umbrella group for the rest of the campaign. The Renfrew respondents in particular stress both the unusual nature of the campaign (for the town) and its non-party-political character (B):

The highlights [of the early campaign] were obviously the demonstrations that we held; these were obviously new in Renfrew, normally a sleepy wee town that way, not active politically, or anything like that.

And, more overtly to stress the non-political character (C):

I was the chair of the Labour Party in Renfrew, so there was a connection there politically, though at no stage was the campaign party-political and most of the other people [involved] were just people who were concerned...

These statements are all the more remarkable given that the campaign was to last for eight years and to involve as many as 7,000 people on the streets. Although, as mentioned above, there was a common thread of community involvement among the three respondents (principally focused on housing issues), it is also clear that the campaign itself galvanised the wider community in a unique way (B):

...there was suddenly a common threat appeared, that united everybody in the community. I've lived all my life in Renfrew and I've never known an issue to unite people in the way that this threat did...

However, as well as inducing community action, the respondents recognise that the campaign itself made a qualitative difference to their area (B):

... it was important because it gave them a sense of their own worth, not just wee cogs in a wheel somewhere; here they could play a major part in how their lives were going to be altered.

And, in terms of community empowerment (B):

... [they] didn't need to kow-tow, they didn't need to be subservient to big business or any organisation that had a bit of power or a bit of influence.

The respondents see this as a function both of individuals and of the community as a whole. (One of the respondents, not involved politically at the time, is now a serving member of Renfrewshire Council.) It is also true that the respondents have a very realistic view of the campaign and how it achieved its objectives. Ostensibly, the incinerator was not built because, in the end, legislation had changed and 'there was no commercial imperative to build' (as one respondent remarked). However, that was in 1997 after eight years of the campaign, and as the same respondent (A) commented:

The reality was that if the campaign hadn't been as strong as it was in 91-92, they would have proceeded to build and actually confirmed that they would have built at that stage and what happened was that the campaign's strength delayed them getting started, frustrated their attempts, and probably resulted in tighter scrutiny...

In view of this comment, it is useful to explore further the character of the campaign itself. One of the interesting facets of the early campaign - as revealed by the Yoker respondent - was the initial reluctance of the community in general to become involved. It was necessary for the campaign organisers to point out that the presence of a toxic-waste incinerator in the vicinity would in their view have a detrimental effect on house prices; this may seem an odd tactic in an area which had a preponderance of council and privately-rented housing, but there had been a significant change in housing tenure in the 1980s (the sale of council housing - the adjacent Knightswood was a very high-demand area - and the change from privately-rented to housing association had changed public perception of housing tenure considerably) and the appeal to self-interest was very successful. This is very reflective of the pragmatic nature of the campaign (A):



I wasn't prepared to get into a technical argument, or trying to debate it, even with my own community. At the end of the day, it would hurt their own pockets ... (and it was my intention) not to put that kind of campaign over in a sentimental way.

This rather hard-nosed and modernist view of the world is perhaps a cautionary reminder of the need to avoid over-romanticising community resistance as a heroic and progressive (non-capitalist) struggle against ideologically hegemonic opponents; methods and ideology may worryingly coincide. The appeal was widened to include the perceived threat to job location (the reluctance of prospective employers to locate near an incinerator<sup>3</sup>) and to highlight the likely increase in air pollution. An amusing comment on the latter fear is that when the local councillor persuaded the city council Environmental Health department to set up air pollution monitors in the area (see below), it was discovered that air quality in the area was remarkably good (presumably because the proximity to the river dispersed any pollutants quickly); it had been the intention of the campaign to stress the poor quality of local air because of existing industry and the extent to which this would be exacerbated by the incinerator - this line of argument was, as the respondent unsentimentally remarked, 'just dumped'! The Renfrew respondent (C) made it clear that they adopted a 'commonsense' attitude to the proposal; the nature of the threat was not fully understood, local people had an unarticulated but intense fear of what was not understood fully and it was therefore opposed. There was hostility to 'experts' reassuring them on behalf of the developers; these were not regarded as disinterested and the community wanted to satisfy itself as to the nature of the threat (C):

... you don't just lie down to these things. You might be wrong at the end of the day, but you've got to be prepared to take on a perceived threat.

The threat was perceived as being both to individuals and to the 'wellbeing of the town'. The community simply did not *trust* the developers nor their experts – they had no real expectation based on their then experience of the developers that their expectations would be met, nor even that they were telling 'the truth'; it needed to discover its own truth in its own way.

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<sup>3</sup> The site proposed for the incinerator is now (2003) occupied by the major Braehead shopping centre and an *Ikea* warehouse, both major customer magnets. It is difficult to believe that either would have located there if the incinerator proposals had gone ahead.

The threat from the incinerator development provided a catalyst for widespread and sustained action involving many people over a long period. Various principles are illustrated here:

- the active role of distrust (no evidence of mutual expectations being met),
- the need to develop local knowledge and hence power (through cooperation and ‘revealing’ the workings of external power), and
- the differing nature of the two discourses, the one expert and articulate, the other commonsense (not articulated) and initially lacking in the technical knowledge in which the expert discourse was expressed.

Support locally was widespread and this was stressed by all the respondents. On the Yoker side, it was remarked (A) that support was:

A hundred percent. I had never seen (such) a turnout at the public meetings ... and it wasn't emotional, it was meaningful.

It should be noted that the Yoker Sports Hall, an Urban Aid-funded project, provided the only large-volume space in the area suitable for large-scale public meetings, an illustration of the importance of the availability of physical resources (simple capacity in a sense) as well as human structures for the conduct of such a campaign. One further insight into this issue (of resources) was mentioned by the Yoker respondent: the principal connection between Yoker and Renfrew was the historic ferry making the short river crossing between the two. In the early days of the campaign, the service was under review; it lost its capacity to carry vehicles and it finished earlier at night than it had done previously. This curtailed the capability of people on either area from attending late-night meetings (or indeed continuing the discussion in the historic Ferry Inn on the Renfrew side) and broke the historical continuity of an important psychological connector between the areas. However, the defect was balanced in part by the existence of a liaison committee to ensure continuity of communication between the areas and by the commitment of key individuals, such as the three respondents. It has already been noted that Renfrew was considered as a town not used to public campaigning; one of the respondents saw the capacity for public action as being more deeply embedded in Yoker (B):

... in some instances there were more Yoker people there than Renfrew (people) and that maybe comes down to the level of community organisation in Yoker, that they can do that (because) there are community vehicles there, which really aren't as *robust* [*my emphasis*] within Renfrew.

This notion of 'robustness' is a tribute both to the depth and the persistence of community empowerment within Yoker. However, the same respondent was of the opinion that Renfrew was perceived from outside as having a strong 'sense of community', so the strengths of the two areas can be regarded as complementary. In Renfrew, the view of one respondent was that areas with established tenants' associations were more active (better informed) than those without (B):

... it [*support*] was perhaps just where it was flared a bit, where the belluses [*bellows*] were used a bit more in the town, through community groups and tenants' associations.

This comment reveals the importance of both personal and non-personal contacts in the formation of community networks; without the existence of the tenants' associations and community groups (in existence for quite different purposes), the campaign in Renfrew would have been much more difficult.

The issue of trust, both between the community at large and the representatives leading the campaign, and in the efficacy of the campaign itself, was dealt with by the respondents very briefly and in a very matter-of-fact way. None felt obliged to explain it at any length and all simply stated it as a given. A typical response was (A):

I believe that the people who were conducting the campaign were held in high regard and generally the people were very thoughtful [*sic* = 'thought well'] of the leadership; there was never any adverse publicity, never any adverse remarks about it.

On the Renfrew side, there was mention of the fact that some people ('begrudgers') thought that other, more perennial, issues were more important, e.g. employment and housing, but generally (C):

... (criticism) was infinitesimal compared to the general view that this campaign must go ahead as strong(ly) as possible and get rid of that company from that site.

The respondents were equally emphatic that the campaign was regarded as truly representing the community's interest (B):

I would say (that) because of the tenacity and capacity of the leadership, that inspired the rest and they [*the community at large*] developed a great deal of trust in the leadership of the campaign.

An interesting set of relationships was that between the two councils and between them individually and the campaign. Renfrew District Council, in particular, was perceived as acting in a semi-judicial way (because of its function as the relevant implementing planning authority) and perhaps over-striving to appear to be neutral (C):

... the officers [*of the council*] possibly took it to extremes: things like removing stickers in support of the campaign from taxis and refusing to put up posters suggesting that we had won the campaign in council premises, because it would suggest the council was biased towards the campaign.

The respondent believed this to be motivated in part because the developers were perceived as operating a ‘dirty tricks’ campaign, complaining against one newspaper because it had publicised the campaign, reporting campaign organisers to the police as ‘agents provocateurs’ intent on encouraging street violence (this tactic was ignored by local police, who knew the reputation of the people involved) and making what appeared to be a personal threat to one respondent. In the face of this, the council wanted to play everything ‘by the book’. On the Yoker side, this led to extreme frustration (C):

... they [*Yoker*] thought if it had been Glasgow City Council it would have been much more behind the campaign; behind the scenes that possibly was the case in Renfrew council (as well), but it wasn’t evident at the time and I think that Yoker found that frustrating.

Indeed, this feeling of frustration was expressed even more forcibly by the Yoker respondent (A):

I think there was a certain amount of doubt – [*pause*] – in [the mind of] the elected members ... because Renfrew Council was doing absolutely fuck all, and Glasgow City Council said they couldn’t interfere because it was a Renfrew problem, right; and they didn’t want to be seen to be intervening in it, although we were getting aggrieved at the shit that was being produced across there [*in Renfrew*].

However, the local member for Yoker was still able to take an active and very supportive role in the campaign (such as getting the use of council resources to measure air quality; see above). The role of the local Yoker MP (Donald Dewar, the member for Garscadden, ‘the most effective MP we had’) was also acknowledged; he was able to raise questions in the Commons and, as a senior member (A):

... (asked) the right questions, keeping everyone informed; because of his position, he also got the best answers and he made sure that everyone received them.

The campaign operated simultaneously on a number of fronts and this laid the foundations for the sophisticated form it would eventually take. The Renfrew members of the campaign saw Yoker's role as pivotal because of the depth of its experience and resources, but the campaign was suffused with a level of trust and cooperation based on fulfilled mutual expectations, and this gave it its strength. There had been a previous campaign in Yoker against a Rachman-style<sup>4</sup> landlord, which had led to the formation of the local housing association and the establishment of a housing cooperative. The community had also sponsored and managed a wide range of Urban Aid projects responding to community need and had the advantage of the Resource Group as a focus of its needs-based activity. It was the strong contention of the Yoker respondent that the strength of the campaign in that area was based very firmly on what had been achieved in the past by community action and that the positive attitude in the area engendered by that had driven the campaign (A):

And the people were seeing their environment changing; the face of the housing was changing, the streetscapes were changing; they were seeing grass where they'd never seen it before, and stuff like that. So, all these things were tied in and helped as well. It wasn't a case of: Here's a campaign, let's go out and talk to people. I mean, we had the structure and the mechanism in order to draw people in at that time.

The final section of this chapter will focus more sharply on the personal role of the respondents, and on how they were regarded by their sternest critics, the development company itself. The Yoker respondent was rather self-deprecating when it came to his assessment of his own role, but the comment that he saw the campaign essentially as a *Renfrew* campaign is an interesting one. It was part of a reply in which he was keen to stress the importance of keeping very strictly to the issue at hand, i.e. the incinerator at Braehead. He saw the danger of the campaign becoming a part of a wider 'green' movement and thereby having its particular energies dissipated and its relevance to the communities immediately concerned diluted. However, as was mentioned earlier when discussing the archive record, the environmental development officer at Yoker (a locally-based employee of the group) acted as the liaison officer on a day-to-day basis between the campaign in Yoker and that in Renfrew, but also was responsible for

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<sup>4</sup> Rachmanism: 'extortion or exploitation by a landlord of tenants of dilapidated or slum property, esp. when involving intimidation or use of racial fears to drive out sitting tenants whose rent is fixed at a low rate.' (*Collins Dictionary* 1979:1203)

publicising the campaign at the Scottish Green Show. Connection with the wider green movement was maintained in that way (and there was presumably a two-way flow of information), but the relationship was somewhat hands-off and the campaign remained focused on the single issue. The group was, however, conscious of the wider issues and was aware that there was no clear strategy, even at Government level, of what to do with waste in the long term. The comment on this was very honest (A):

... one of the problems at the Scottish Office with Her Majesty's Pollution Inspectorate was that they didn't have a strategy, and it's a major problem. I mean, the bottom line was that [by] getting involved in a wider campaign there was a feeling that because [of the lack of] a wider strategy, nobody knew what to do with the waste. [...] What we didn't have was ... an alternative.

However, the group was adamant that waste had to be *visible* (not incinerated and dispersed as an invisible emission into the atmosphere) and this remained the guiding principle throughout the campaign. Part of the reason for this single-minded approach was the attitude of the Yoker respondent based on his personal analysis of the situation and his view of the representatives of the development company, though this was not stated explicitly by him<sup>5</sup>. The attitude of the Renfrew respondents was similar, somewhat downplaying their own roles. One respondent (C) had a good deal of free time during the early days of the campaign and was therefore able to get involved with administrative work, acknowledging the level of support both on the ground in Renfrew (c. 40 people willing to leaflet) and from the organisational ability of Yoker. The campaign was thus well organised and administered and could respond flexibly and quickly in response to the changing circumstances. This respondent also revealed the role of the wider green movement; it provided a range of outside consultants and expertise able to be drawn on particularly for public meetings in the town. He remarked particularly on the *width* of the campaign in this respect (somewhat at odds with the Yoker version of events). The other Renfrew respondent (B) ran a traditional cobbler's shop, long established in the centre of Renfrew. He had an established range of contacts and the shop acted as an information point, a meeting-place and operational base. He had an amusing anecdote about the role of a sweetie-jar on the counter in which odd change was collected:

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<sup>5</sup> The respondent did indicate details of various personal meetings with representatives of the development company and of their attitudes and actions. It would be unethical to include these in the thesis since they cannot be verified, but the outcome was that he developed a deep personal antipathy to them and this in part drove his enthusiasm for the campaign.

Many, many hundreds of pounds came out of the old sweetie-jar; in fact, I meant to keep it for posterity [laughs]. Here was the means of bringing down a company the size of Caird!

He also stressed the debate that went on in the campaign about the wider issue of waste and confirms the interest in the wider green movement:

... people's vision started broadening; this wasn't just one narrow issue. We started thinking: What do you do with the waste? ... (it) made them more aware of the environment; an absolutely invaluable campaign as far as the environment was concerned for the people of Renfrew.

There is no necessary contradiction between the Yoker memory of involvement with the green movement and that of the Renfrew respondents; while people's vision was broadened and wider issues dealt with, and while the involvement of the green movement was important, the concern of the Yoker respondent was to keep the *campaign* closely focused. In any case, different approaches are inevitable in any group of people and it is clear that the personal expertise and qualities of the three respondents were important and complementary in the furtherance of the campaign. The combination of organisational ability, the space to administer the campaign effectively and the benefit of a credible and well-established physical point of reference all contributed to its strength.

One interesting aspect of the campaign, and in many ways the most critical, was the relationship between the respondents (and the campaign in general) and the developers. It would have been possible to have interviewed a representative of the development company directly, but this would inevitably have given a hostile view of the campaign, at some distance in time and possibly on what a large company based in London would have regarded as a peripheral affair, even although it affected its interest badly at the time. It was decided instead to interview the three respondents on their perception of how they were regarded by the company, making them reflect further on their own role and how effective they thought they were. The Yoker respondent began with a frank and pithy assessment of how they were perceived (A): '... I think I scared them'! This assessment was based on the fact that he considered that the company's representatives had seriously underestimated the capacity of the individuals engaged in the campaign and indeed of the strength of the community's opposition. All the respondents mention the arrogance of the company and how ineffective they were in countering the campaign (A):

I think they saw me as nuisance value and very early in the campaign ... they appointed a PR officer who went into – wait for it – pre-5 schools and spoke to the children about how good their incinerator was going to be [*mutual laughs*]. I just fucking laughed my head off, I really did!

One Renfrew respondent considered that the company's attitude seriously affected their ability to present their case (C):

Caird quite clearly thought we were obsessed, that we were wrong-headed, that we didn't understand what they were doing, and I could actually have made a better case for Caird's proposals than they did.

The same respondent stressed that the campaign was always based on sound technical advice, not on scare tactics, and that this seemed to put the developer's case off-balance. The campaign was also broadly based – Yoker, Renfrew, Glasgow City Council (at local member level), the wider environmental movement (for technical advice) – which the developer did not expect. However, the most important turn in the campaign was when local activists decided to buy shares directly in the company (A):

... they saw you as a community activist who was probably a nut-job, until I bought 400 shares in their company.

The idea for this revolutionary move originated in the Yoker respondent's early research into the background of the company. He noticed that there had been a substantial rise in the value of the company's shares, based on the fact that the site would be the only one in the UK where such an incinerator would be located and that planning permission would be unlikely to be required (because of the pre-existing use). Having met representatives of the company and having been antagonised by their arrogance, he decided to investigate them more thoroughly than he might otherwise have done. Once the campaign got under way and delays had started to emerge, the share price began to fall. Shares were then purchased and, apart from giving the campaign access to information about the company it might not otherwise have had, it had an important psychological effect on the company's perception of the campaigners' seriousness. The effect on the company was noticed by one respondent (C):

They were quite taken aback; they thought because of their power and their influence and their position that it was a case of: Do as I say. When somebody questioned it, it rocked them.

Once the decline in the share price had begun, the company found it increasingly difficult to raise capital and the inherent difficulties in the site began to manifest themselves; it was heavily polluted because of the previous use and required



considerable capital expenditure to make it useable at all. If that was not available, the site had in effect a negative value. The company's wealth was based on the putative future use of the site and it had no available capital of its own. Once the share price dipped sharply a classic 'bubble' was burst. This made the struggle even more bitter and protracted – the company *had* to develop the site to get any kind of return. The campaign then decided on even more direct tactics: to attend, as shareholders, the company's AGM in London (A):

... they've invaded my environment, I can invade theirs!

Apart from a feeling of being in a completely alien environment and on one level overawed by their surroundings (NatWest House), the campaigners considered they had acquitted themselves very effectively. The move was completely calculated: there was local expertise in accountancy and financial management (through the housing association movement), in law (firms specialising in advice to voluntary agencies) and from previous campaigns (for example, against slum landlords). The move was completely unexpected by the company, which was however expecting a large crowd of people waving placards (A):

... I can say that the first AGM I went to out of five gave me a euphoria, a lift, a buzz – an orgasm for want of a better word [*laughs*] - that I'd never experienced before; to find myself on a level par with those bastards who, by the way, were frightened of what was coming. But what I didn't do was get carried away; because what they were expecting that day was SB with 200 demonstrators. And what they got that day was SB with a chartered accountant and a technical adviser at my side.

The attendance at the meetings had no direct formal effect on the company (although it did have an important indirect effect in that the campaigners were able to sow further doubt in the mind of important shareholders to whom they talked informally afterwards). Several meetings were attended over a period of years until finally both the long period of attrition by the campaigners and commercial reality rendered the proposal unrealistic and unviable.

Various lessons were learned during the course of the campaign, including a deep insight into how the world of business worked (A):

I would say that the biggest lesson that I learned was that ... [*pause*] the systems which are there are manipulated by a minority who have access, technical ability and, I would say, friends who have the ability to work the system for them.

This is a graphic comment on knowledge of the existence of the various dimensions of power as discussed theoretically earlier. But they learned also not to be intimidated by power or its trappings; indeed, the campaign gave them its own euphoria of power and their strength was enhanced by the fact they had no financial interest. They saw the campaign as based on honesty, good communication and *collective* action. The campaign had a part for everyone in the community, even if the crude intention was occasionally to divert possible opposition (A):

(Even if) action isn't effective ... it's something worthwhile giving someone who has low ability or esteem something to do anyway, as long as it's contributing towards global goals. If you don't occupy people, they tend to become ... well, the enemy's never in front of you, it's always behind you ...

The Renfrew respondents admired the commitment and the depth of community and voluntary activity in Yoker and there was regret that the solidarity of the campaign had not been built on subsequently (B):

And we looked at that, we looked at the model of Yoker, saying: Why don't we have (such) a resource in our community, which is pride in our way?

The contribution of Yoker was valued, but it was the 'common enemy' that provided the focus (B):

The wee local enmities that were created over decades between folk on (either side) of the river ... here was a real threat, a common enemy, and that united people absolutely unbelievably.

The final word must rest with a Renfrew respondent (C; my emphasis):

... here you have a tangible result; you beat them with your unity, your determination ... *and your collective action.*

### **Interim summary and conclusions**

The chapter set out to explore in some detail the involvement of three key players in what has been called the Advocacy project. The essential character of the campaign to prevent the construction of the toxic-waste incinerator was set in the early contacts among the three chosen respondents, who all draw on previous experience in unrelated areas (mainly housing and tenant activism) and on pre-existing (if 'hidden' or latent) community networks. The campaign was seen from the beginning as a contest in the

exercise of *power* and very quickly it assumed the character of mass protest with one clear objective.

In the early part of the campaign, support had to be galvanised by characterising the proposal as a threat to housing and jobs, but it was also true that there was a deep measure of distrust between the developer and the respondents and this distrust, used as an offensive tool against the developer, was matched by a strong element of trust in the relationships at community level, both between the community and the leadership of the campaign and among the leadership itself. This distrust does not correspond to ‘active distrust’ on the model of Levi (Grote 1998) – which is a positive quality *seeking demonstration of the expectation that the trust will be justified* – but is a more fundamental distrust of the unknown predicated on fear: it is a *negative* quality. Equally, the trust vested in the community representatives was founded on past experience, knowledge and positive *reputation*. The network between the three respondents (itself a signifier of a deeper underlying reality), putative as it was, was based on prior knowledge and experience on a personal level in a quite unrelated field (housing). It was thus not quite an example of a network depending on *use* (Putnam 1993); what was remarkable was the tenuous nature of the Yoker/Renfrew link based on *past* experience and *personal* knowledge. Nor were there any real ‘norms’ which could be utilised in the campaign; the network developed and strengthened as experience was gained and trust deepened as the struggle progressed. It *was* a struggle against a form of hegemonic power and the campaign exemplifies Foucault’s 1976 formulation of the power of ‘dispersed and discontinuous offensives’ characteristic of the local discourse.

Support on the ground was massive, sustained and targeted. The ‘thickness’ of the community capacity of Yoker (cf. MacLeod (2002) and ‘institutional thickness’) to mount such a campaign was a persistent feature of the study, in contrast to a committed but less deeply rooted (and ultimately unsustainable) Renfrew support. The campaign ultimately succeeded, more by a process of attrition than by a spectacular victory. This was achieved by deep personal commitment on the part of the respondents, by the resilience of the community structures and by the ability of the campaigners to mount an imaginative and effective campaign. The developers had found formidable adversaries, whom they consistently underestimated (an echo of the existence of different ‘elite’ and ‘local’ discourses on a Foucauldian model). The campaigners’ prevalence in the end was due both to the personal qualities of the campaign leaders and

to the depth of communal commitment and ability. The eventual emergence of collective norms of engagement (among the campaigners, who had a single agenda), the existence of a history of mutual knowledge and experience easily forged into a network acting as a resource, and the salience of trust among the principal actors and invested in them by the wider community, all contributed to a good illustration of the importance of both the existence and the ideal of social capital at the communal level. It was also a powerful tool to be used against an ostensibly more powerful adversary and it proved both resilient and sustainable as a resource during the life of the campaign. What was remarkable was the failure of the local authorities in either Glasgow or Renfrew to engage meaningfully with the communities in any process of *collaborative working* on Healey's model (Healey 1997); their discourse was entirely formal and proper and the need to appear disinterested acted in favour of the *developer* not the community. While not quite an exercise in governmentalism (Raco and Imrie 2000), it had echoes of the 'private' exercise of power (Lukes 1974).

Equally, there was no hint of the social capital gained being used as an individualistic tool, much less any suggestion of community apathy ('bowling alone' – Putnam 1995) once the goal was clear. What the experience of the campaign seems to demonstrate is:

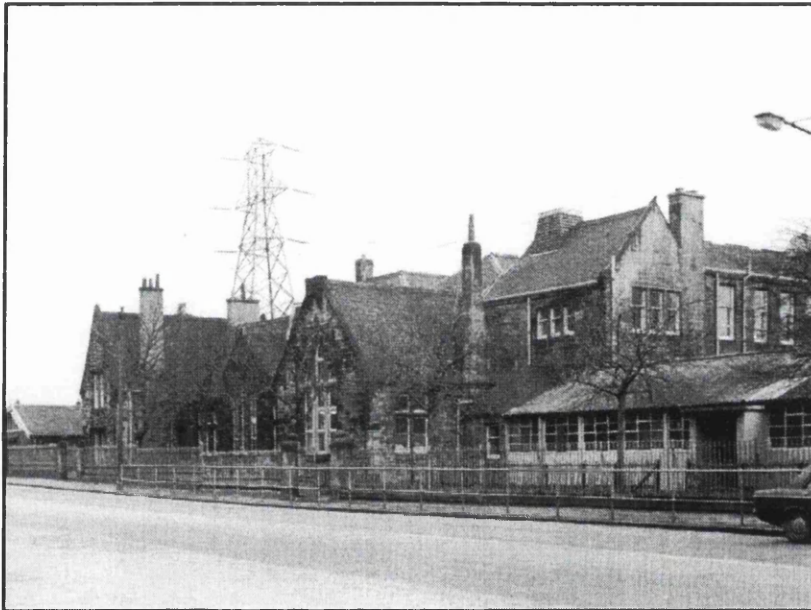
- (a) that social capital has a resonance far beyond any neoliberal attempt to colonise the concept;
- (b) that it is useful as an aid to understanding how local processes work; and
- (c) that it is largely independent of formal structures and in a latent form *can persist over a long period* even when not actively used.

There is an embeddness and an embodiment of collaborative working based firmly on past positive experience which can be applied in other arenas provided there is a persistent positive memory within the community. Social capital will not necessarily *produce* partnership working, but it is a useful base from which to start. In Chapter 8 the mechanics of partnership working will be examined in more detail.

## Chapter 8

### THE OLD SCHOOL PROJECT

#### *Local Exercises in Governmentality and Partnership Working*



**Plate 8.1: Yoker Old School (1876) in the 1960s, from the southeast (Dumbarton Road).**

It seems to me that partnership is decided by those in ivory towers, who speak to others in ivory towers and decide that we [*i.e. they*] are going to do things in partnership; but it doesn't seem to involve, to my mind, people at grassroots level. You could ask your average person in Drumchapel, or Castlemilk, or Easterhouse what partnership-priority status meant to them and they wouldn't have a clue what you were talking about.

*Interview with community respondent.*

#### **Introduction**

The intention of this chapter is to understand how Yoker, through its collective local voluntary agency (the Yoker Resource Group, referred to hereafter as 'the group'), has

responded in various ways to its changing environment. The chapter focuses on the interaction between the local community, as represented by a number of key actors, and representatives of Glasgow City Council, and centres round negotiations over the transfer of the ownership of a redundant school building from the council to the group, to be used for community development purposes<sup>1</sup>. The negotiations were a signifier of a deeper set of relationships and attitudes which will collectively (in conjunction with preceding chapters) allow for reflection on and analysis of the ‘capacity’ of the area and the people within it to deal with a changing environment, and to test the nature and quality of that response. The narrower function of this study is to illustrate the relative degree of partnership working within the embedded social capital inherent in the area as it encounters a powerful external agency and the extent to which that experience demonstrates both the existence of a form of governmentality and the institutional thickness and resilience of the community itself.

### **Particular Methodology**

The methodology of how the fieldwork was undertaken has been described in detail in the Methodology chapter and will not be rehearsed here; it is worth noting, however, that the set of interviews on which this chapter is based were undertaken before any of the others. Not only was the researcher relatively naïve in terms of interview technique, but each of the respondents, although they all knew him, were encountering him for the first time in the guise of academic interviewer and were uncertain of what to expect. Perhaps more than any other set of interviewees, they were regarded as ‘knowing subjects’ (see e.g. Prior 1997), but from the beginning what was sought was a synthesis of their views regarded collectively (by the researcher), although they were all interviewed as individuals (Prior 1997:64):

... social science research has to confront a dimension of human activity that cannot be contained in the consciousness of the individual subject. In short, it has to look at something that lies beyond the world of atomised individuals.

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<sup>1</sup> It is a sobering reflection that the views discussed in this chapter were first noted in late 1996/early 1997 when the negotiations were first undertaken; now, in 2003 as the thesis is nearing completion, funding for the project has just been agreed and physical work has begun, but the question of ownership of the building’s title is still unresolved. A cameo insert will bring progress up to date.

Another binding factor mitigating the atomised nature of the interviews was the *project* itself; the ‘task’ was the one unifying feature of the individuals concerned, including those not directly involved in the somewhat clandestine nature of the negotiations. All the interviews were undertaken in a venue chosen by the respondent and the results were transcribed and coded to reflect the concerns of the study. The resultant narrative has been organised into a more linear sequence constructed entirely by the researcher but keeping within the spirit of the respondents’ views.

### **The Project**

The project chosen for analysis in this chapter is concerned with the attempt to acquire, renovate and develop an old school building for a particular set of community uses (including an important revenue-earning component). The building is important from several perspectives:

1. As an old school it is well known in the area and is a symbol of some kind of continuity;
2. It has already been the focus for community involvement, both as a Neighbourhood Centre and as the base for Yoker Youth Library;
3. Because of the difficulties over the youth library’s closure (Chapter 6), it represented both a ‘lack of trust’ on the part of the City Council and an aspiration by the community to restore it to community use and to re-establish some of the trust and capital lost;
4. It represented an opportunity for the community to establish (or entrench) its position as a more sustainable local actor (in financial and resource terms);
5. It is seen both as catalyst and symbol for future development; and
6. It is also seen to some extent as a challenge to the council in policy terms (the council does not normally transfer buildings to community ownership) and as a signifier of a potential new relationship (partnership) between the community and the council.

For all these reasons, the building is important not merely as a physical envelope for proposed community activities, but as a powerful symbol of a new relationship between

the community and the City Council (and others, crucially). It is, to a large extent, an ‘elite’ project in community terms.

### **The Building: Status and some pre-history**

The community attitude to the building is illustrated in a number of quotations by the respondents, such as that by the group’s finance officer:

I also have a personal commitment towards the building, basically because I think it’s a great building and it would be a shame to lose that type of architecture and ... milestone, if you like; that may not be the right word ... landmark, that’s the word I’m looking for - and that type of landmark for the west of Glasgow, never mind Yoker.

However, as well as having this strong sense of the building almost as icon, the project is interesting as a topic for study in a number of other ways. Firstly, it was not in the early stages a proposal in which large numbers of the community were involved, and discussions took place largely ‘off the agenda’. This is normally thought of as a device whereby power is retained by the ‘powerful’ (see the ‘three-dimensional’ view of power in Lukes 1974) – ‘the covert or hidden dimension that excludes issues from public decision making’ (Stewart and Taylor 1995) – but in this instance it is more akin to an elite discourse, in which the local managers initiated an ‘off the record’ dialogue with officials of the City council, with the local elected member retaining an observer role, as he preferred:

... at the moment, I have not as much direct involvement, because I would prefer to see it being resolved by the community group in negotiation with the appropriate departments.

It is an interesting project also in that it has no ‘history’ in any minute or other official record (by contrast with the other projects under review); because of the form in which the discussions were conducted, negotiations were discreet as far as most people in Yoker were concerned and the drama (as it developed) was acted out largely off-stage. Secondly, the building itself is an interesting one: it fronts the area’s main arterial highway - Dumbarton Road - just after Yoker Cross (one of the few reference points in the regular and rather monotonous townscape of Yoker), it is built of yellow sandstone in a predominantly red sandstone area and it marks the transition from the predominant four-storey tenements to the east of it to the more open, mixed-use (‘borderland’) and smaller-scale building to the west, over the Yoker Burn and on into Clydebank. It also stands on the border between working-class housing (to the east, near the shipyards and



engineering works) and a more obviously middle-class housing area centred on Millbrae Avenue. The original part of the school had been built in 1876 (by *Renfrew* School Board) as Yoker's first elementary school; the building was greatly extended in 1910, to deal with continuing rapid expansion of the population in Scotstoun and Yoker (the 'landward' part of Renfrew parish) - see the quote from *Both Sides of the Burn* in Chapter 1). In 1945, the school was reopened after a period of wartime closure, this time with a secondary department, and this remained the situation until 'junior' secondaries were closed in the late 1960s. The school itself finally closed in the 1970s.

The building, as the principal centre for education in the area, is therefore a familiar component of the Yoker scene, and that role was to be continued after its formal closure as a school. Its subsequent use was as Yoker Neighbourhood Centre, under the aegis of the City council's Community Education division. Although it functioned as a general community facility, entry required formal membership and norms for membership and use were determined by the council. Informal conversations with local activists have established that it came to be regarded as being operated for the benefit of a self-contained management committee, along established and traditional lines, with a focus on a limited range of activities, which in turn were determined by the finance, personnel and role allocated by the council. The Yoker Resource Group was formed in the 1980s as a more radical counterweight to the Neighbourhood Centre committee and, significantly, was allocated the less prestigious (and visible) rear former school annexe as its base (still operating as the Yoker Resource Centre). Relations between the two groups were always strained, although they came increasingly to serve different constituencies, and could be regarded as representing two complementary strands of community activism: one more conservative and conformist (with a more 'social' outlook), the other more radical and independent (with a more 'campaigning' and 'service' outlook). This bi-polarity, in both physical and functional terms, was to remain until the Neighbourhood Centre's demise; in the minutes of the Resource Group, the relationship was always expressed in the language of cooperation and joint working, but the very reiteration of this commitment belied a very real difference of approach that was never resolved.

The Neighbourhood Centre gradually declined in importance as a community facility and most of its functions (dependant on direct council funding) had closed by the late 1990s, apart from Yoker Youth Library (a key community project itself under

threat). The group had realised about this period that the decreasing level of funding from the local authority, which had to concentrate increasingly on what it regarded as its core activities, implied that it had to attempt to generate a revenue stream of its own in order to continue to provide a range of services to the local community. These services were not seen by the group as a *substitute* for the services of statutory agencies (the group never saw itself in competition with them), but rather as giving a local flavour and adding value (in a wide sense) to statutory provision. It was eventually closed, leaving both the building vacant and a considerable amount of local resentment ('distrust' or 'negative social capital'), as discussed in Chapter 6. The group considered that a way to keep the building in use and, coincidentally, to allow the council to redeem some of its lost trust, was for the council to transfer the building to the ownership of the group at a nominal cost and for the group to use the building as a base for a range of services, some of which would be rent- or other revenue-producing. Some of the detailed aspects of this proposal will be illustrated by quotations from the actors concerned, but it should be noted that the proposal was not as straightforward as it might appear, partly because it was against accepted council practice and policy. The 'Old School' Project (as it came to be called) was to some extent a litmus test of the changing relationship between the group and the City council<sup>4</sup> and for this reason it seemed a suitable subject for a more intensive study.

The issues surrounding the building were therefore important, even crucial, in different ways for the different actors. For the council, it became an issue of policy and the maintenance of established practice (the financial cost to the council was negligible and no important budgetary issue was involved, except possibly a putative lost capital return), while for the community it would prove to be an exasperating exercise which underscored the very dependency the proposal had aimed to reverse. The discourse can be seen as being 'collaborative' in nature; it was the community of Yoker, through its central management, in formal discussion with the local authority as represented by a departmental representative acting within departmental and council policy (and through internal dialogue within his department representing the view of the council). There was clearly the intent to use an existing network within an existing and known circuit of

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<sup>4</sup> Local government had been reorganised in 1996; the council was therefore 'new' – with potentially new policies - although many of the personalities (especially local agents) remained unchanged

power (with the local agents respectively acting with delegated authority, implicit or explicit) with a putative stock of social capital and trust. The difficult and hybrid nature of elected representation (balanced between constituents and council) could also be observed, as was the relative lack of knowledge on the part of people not directly involved in the discussion (the extent to which the whole exercise could be glossed as illustrating Lukes's second or covert dimension of power is moot; the intention was not so much to conceal on the part of an elite as to carry on negotiations in a neutral environment). The outcome was that there was no formal resolution; the proposal remains 'on the table' and the building remains empty. The process of negotiation and the difficulties underlying resolution are illustrated in the interviews. (See the Coda to bring the discussion up to date.)

### **The Respondents**

The respondents were chosen to illustrate a range of involvement with the project. As before, the range of respondents is limited, reflecting the relatively small number of people actively involved. It was an 'elite' group and the discussions were all 'private'; no minute record was kept and the exercise was largely unknown to the Yoker public generally, nor did it figure in any 'official' business of the council. It was inter-personal, discrete and restricted – not quite 'classified', but not widely spoken of. On reflection, the reasons for this are not clear; the 'need to know' group was not actively enjoined to secrecy, but the discussions remained below the surface, known only to the participants. The principal initial contact was the administrative officer of the Yoker Resource Group (respondent A), whom I had known professionally over a long period, but with whom I had had only sporadic contact over the previous six years while I had worked in Drumchapel. His task was more than simply administrative, since he was also widely perceived as being at the centre of the extensive local network, had remained a local resident and was a passionate advocate for his area. He had also gained a great deal of practical knowledge within the housing association movement, in local campaigning and advocacy, in negotiating Urban Programme and other quasi-governmental finance, in negotiations with local government departments and with the private sector. He was thus very much a local actor, had extensive knowledge and hence power, was part of

and could access local networks and enjoyed the trust both of people in ‘external’ agencies and, particularly, of the local community.

As an initial point of contact he was both knowledgeable and deeply committed to the project (thus providing a firm starting point) and knew of the various actors (which I did not). I explained that I wanted to interview as wide a range of respondents as possible, with a range of views about the project. Some suggested themselves, such as the chairperson (B) of Yoker Resource Group (the ‘formal’ face of Yoker, by one reckoning) and the principal official within the City Council (C) who was directly concerned with the negotiations over the building. Another was the local ward member for Yoker within the City Council (D), who could be regarded as representing both ‘sides’ in the negotiations. I allowed my Yoker contact to suggest other possible interviewees, so as to eliminate personal bias as much as I could, at least as far as the choice of interviewees was concerned. This question of ‘bias’ is a difficult one; my position as a local government officer with a long working relationship with Yoker had made me sympathetic to the broad vision which I perceived the Yoker group to have, and I was also aware of, and largely sympathetic to, the position of council officials. I was aware, however, that the aspirations of both did not totally coincide and that partnership working, as I conceived it, was as much predicated on the tension between different perspectives subsumed into some mutual enterprise as it was on mere consensus. I wanted, therefore, different perspectives, but I could not pretend and did not desire to be ‘neutral’. The investigation was qualitative, which implied a nuanced analysis of a range of views. Three other interviewees were chosen: a local voluntary worker (E), not currently involved in the project, the finance officer of the group (F), who was tangentially involved, and the chief executive of the local housing association (G), who represented local expertise, but was not a direct employee of the group. This gave a range of views, at a range of distances both from the project and from the principal actors. Arguably, this is still an elite group; the wider local community is not represented, but the nature of the project justified that omission.

### **The Interviews**

After some initial discussions about reasons for involvement or non-involvement in the project (only one respondent claimed no involvement at all), the first category for

analysis is that of *empowerment*<sup>5</sup>. This should be regarded as a general term including not merely empowerment as such, but the operation of power as perceived by local actors through the medium of the interviews. There was a clear distinction made between the importance of the building as such (its physical development) and the deeper significance of what its development might mean for the local community (see the quotation earlier in the chapter). So, some saw the building almost as a metaphor for the regeneration of the community as a whole (F):

... we lost the library in that building [see Chapter 7]; it was taken over by the council and then shut down after a year. We've now lost official control of the sports centre; it's still there and it's still being run by the council, but its funding's a bit shaky – we don't know where it's going to be after a year. So, we have to look for a project to generate, not just income, but to generate interest and to generate facilities for the local community.

There was, equally, a perception that development or regeneration did not depend merely on the development of physical resources or facilities, but that it was necessary both to inspire local people to enable them to develop themselves (B):

One aspect, distinct aspect, of community development is people development. Now, that's when certain aspirations of people are realised through their involvement within a community and from there they get the hope and they get the urge and they get the wee bit lift-up, if you like, and they go on to do greater things within the framework of that community.

This quotation (from the chair of the group) echoes very strongly Wilson's view of community development as involving more than simply the material. Community development was also seen in a very positive light by the local elected member (D):

I think in a sense what I am saying is that it's [i.e. *the proposals for development in Yoker*] maybe the antithesis of what community activity is about – community activity's about agitation, about demonstrations, about confrontation, and I would see community development, as I say, about being the antithesis of that. It's a *positive* thing; it's not simply ... the community protesting about things and relying on others to effect whatever change they require, but rather [that] they themselves influence these changes and take part in them and have some control over them.

This important distinction between (mere) community *activity* and community *development* is an interesting one; activity could be glossed as the traditional or

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<sup>5</sup> The consideration of empowerment and the use of social capital or collaborative working in a chapter primarily illustrating *partnership* working is not incongruous; it reflects faithfully the format of the interviews and, as part of an ascending sequence, partnership implies an acknowledgement of power relations and the operation of networks.

expected role of communities (although neither agitation or advocacy should be downplayed), while development implies a more profoundly empowered role, with a strong implication of both an endogenous and collaborative aspect.

It is reasonable to conclude from this set of comments that there is a positive perception of the concept of community empowerment from the community side, but there are two other theoretical concerns that it is useful to explore here; the extent to which the respondents perceive or are aware of the notion of ‘circuits of power’ as seen by Clegg and others, and arising from that the extent to which actors are prepared to act as advocates or go-betweens in the power-negotiations between agencies. A stark statement of how power is perceived to operate may be seen in this view (C):

... every community group thinks that the council wants to put them down; that’s the one thing they have in common. They feel that the council treats them worse than anyone else.

As a counterpoint to that, an equally wary comment was made from the community side (B):

Where it’s going to go from now on, particularly with central and local government proposing to be decentralised more and empowering local communities more is a different thing; and I would say the general attitude [*within the council*] I’m meeting is: ‘How are we going to evade this issue?’, rather than implement this issue, with council officers in particular.

However, both views are misleading and do not adequately represent the total approach of either person. The same council officer was also able to state, in a much more understanding way (C):

It’s because you think: Yeah, they have approached me in a reasonable way, they’ve made a good case, it makes sense, I can see the worth in what they’re trying to put forward. And yes, it may lead you to readjust your idea of what the priority should be and you can make a case even within your own organisation as to what [you should do] ... [*reflects*] these people came down and I think there’s some value in this, so what can we do to put it [*i.e. what they want*] in that direction? It does happen, you know.

This view was repeated widely through all the respondents, none of whom had any difficulty in discussing this mixed concept of advocate and agent and all of whom recognised, implicitly rather than explicitly, that local power circuits operated which placed obligations on all actors at least to recognise the position of others in any negotiation and to convey that to their own ‘side’. This willingness at least to attempt to recognise competing views was repeated when respondents reflected on the plus- or

zero-sum view of power (Wilson 1996). Some saw the council as being concerned to conserve its own power-base in a stark zero-sum context (G):

I think there is a perception in the council that a gain for the local group could be regarded as a loss for the council; I think that's the way the council evaluates things. The council likes to keep control of things, keep the power within the council; so the loss of that power, they see that as a loss for them and a gain for the group, whereas it maybe should be looked at as a nett benefit.

But from the perspective of the council (as represented at the negotiating officer level), there was again the understanding of a more complex set of relationships (C):

Well, if you want to view it as a loss for your own, then there's no partnership, is there? The whole point of forming a partnership is to achieve some mutually beneficial goal. Unless you can do that, then you just don't have a partnership.

A considerable note of caution in terms of community empowerment, certainly in terms of the control of buildings and finance, was expressed from the official's perspective, drawing on his own wide experience (C):

Now, if their funding and their ability to run it had come to an end, and they had gone to the private sector ... that sportsbarn [*a community-run facility in the area taken into council management*] would now be owned by the Clydesdale Bank or something – and who would have benefited out of that? ... However, because we deal with so many people on a city-wide basis, we do see the failures and we do see the consequences of the failures, and it's not pretty...

The general impression from the interviews as far as *empowerment* is concerned is that most respondents are aware of the importance of community development, of why the building mattered and of the changed (and changing) nature of the relationship of the community with the council. There is also an implicit awareness of how local power-circuits operate and of the need for reasonably disinterested negotiation between community and council. Practical difficulties are, however, recognised and it can reasonably be deduced that from the community side there is some sense of frustration that its aims are constrained by the greater power of the council both to determine the extent of funding it would make available to the community and indeed the whole future of the building under discussion.

The view of what might constitute *social capital* comes through clearly in the community's view of itself and its own capacity. As the chair of the group stated (B):

... there's enough expertise in the people that serve in the variety of sub-groups here locally ... in order that people like myself, like Sandy [A] and other folk that have got a wealth of experience, can look at the 'bigger picture' if you like.

This expertise is exemplified in the group's involvement over a long period in a variety of enterprises (three of which are considered in chapters 6 to 8). However, this depth of experience does not owe its strength merely to longevity; several respondents see it as acquired and learned in the course of interaction between groups locally and various development agencies (D):

... development agencies ... who have the big financial resources, getting access to them and steering them towards what you believe to be in the best interests of the local community; in the process of doing that there is a learning process that many, in my experience, that many community activists achieve ... extremely well; and that's the positive aspect of it, that's the way I see community development.

An essential ingredient of this process of negotiation leading to greater community development and hence of what can be called empowerment or the use of social capital is the importance of communication, which can be glossed as the development of networks, an essential part of the process according to Putnam. These lines of communication could be vertical, between the community and the council and other agencies (D):

To me, it is really the enhancement of those kinds of communication, those lines of communication; it's not just to do with refurbishing buildings or providing a local recreation centre, or providing funding to a local crèche, or something like that. To my mind, it's setting up a *framework* [my emphasis] whereby the people on the ground know what they want and are able to ask for it, by an effective means to communicate that to a local authority.

Interestingly, the necessity for horizontal communication within the community and the development of strong local networks was hinted at only obliquely in this set of interviews (it comes out much more strongly in the Advocacy project, discussed Chapter 7). Indeed, the negative was stated by the council official (C):

Yes, then community development's a good thing. But I don't necessarily know whether that means it's *bolstering tribalism* [my emphasis] or whether it's developing or advancing society generally on a wider front. I don't know what that means; I think there may be many interpretations of that.

This statement perhaps reflects the view that a dense community network can be inward-looking and a barrier to cooperation and partnership. The view was expressed even more starkly as an inability to perceive possible difficulties (C):

However, individual groups think (only) of their (own) projects: Yes, we can deal with this, we are successful; the thought of failure doesn't come into their heads.



The reality, however, of what might appear to some as tribalism was recognised by the local councillor (D):

But, conversely, in some other ways the community has the resources, because the community has the tangible thing very often – you know, the ‘will of the people’ [*laughs*]. And that’s not to be discounted, you know.

The salience of trust in the development of social capital was widely recognised and the persistent view of the community respondents belies the opinion that they might be too inward-looking (B):

To hark back to the original questions again, it’s not a case of who’s winning or losing or whatever; to go back to the cake bit again, there isn’t unlimited funding there, and as you’re going into a venture, a partnership with an individual, a business partnership with an individual, there’s going to be that trust if the two of you are willing partners – if the two of you are kicking the ball into the net, then the common goal is there.

Or, as put even more succinctly by the local councillor (D):

I think in an informal way it comes down to that wee word, the word everybody talks about, *trust*.

There was a feeling among many of the community respondents that previous levels of trust had to some extent been eroded by the gradual withdrawal of council funding and the closure of facilities. The following quotations illustrate the point (D):

Well, unfortunately for the council, as we’ve come to learn from bitter experience in recent times, I think certainly a change of attitude is required.

Or (B):

... there’s an element of distrust from the community and there’s an element of distrust from council officers as to what the community group here is capable of achieving and has achieved and is accredited with.

Or (C):

Usually, if it goes wrong you just have a lot of resentment along the way. So, we might have to try and get it sorted out and do it properly at the beginning, than do it later on.

The councillor, however, expressed a more optimistic view, and the group's principal officer considered that there was no actual distrust, but that some council departments might fear the capabilities of the community. So far as the potential for partnership was concerned, based on the existence of community networks, the chair of the group considered that (B):

I believe that the structures have always been in place; I'm harking on about government, or local government, or otherwise. I mean the structures have always been in place in terms of the capability, if you like, of forming capable, realistic, meaningful partnerships with the community.

Since the purpose of this initial set of interviews had been initially to explore the attitude of the respondents towards partnership, the densest set of responses relates to that topic. Other insights to the community's attitude to the circuits of power (especially in the Youth Library project) and to the depth of social capital and trust (in this project and in the Advocacy project) have already been explored, but the complex nature of how partnership might be constructed is at the heart of the study. The final fieldwork analysis (Chapter 9, relating to the formal partnership in Drumchapel as a comparative study) will explore a fully worked-up formal partnership, but analyse it in turn in terms of the density of community networks and how far a history of formal partnerships has developed a genuine capacity within that community to perform as a full partner, in comparison to Yoker. Although partnership working should lie at the heart of the relationship between individuals and groups within communities and between the community as a collective entity and other agencies, it very often does not. It is not significant whether this refers to an informal arrangement (see footnote 3) or a formal arrangement; in either case the relationship can be a mechanistic one, over-reliant on structures in the case of formal partnerships, or simply failing to realise the potential of joint working in the case of less formal transactions. The goal of partnership working is *transformation* (Hastings 1996), that is a profound change of attitude on the part of both (or multiple) partners, which will result in a working relationship that is creative, developmental and progressive. There are, however, many constraints to this; as the group chair observed of the attitude towards communities of some within the council (B):

They've been too engrossed with what's happened from a central position; it's a bit like not being able to see the wood for the trees – to appreciate the opportunities that lie, and the energy that lies, within communities. [...] It's more to do with attitude, and certainly there's a big benefit if there's a realistic approach to partnerships and it's a case of marrying, if you like, between community groups and officials and departments of the council.

The same feeling was expressed in an even more pointed way by the group's chief officer (A):

... (and) elected members, who are listening to council officers rather than making their own mind up; and, really, (the goal is) working out the new type of partnership and relationship, and just the value and worth of the voluntary sector.

Neither of these comments is within a context in which there is overt hostility to the council or where there is not a desire for partnership working, but both are born out of a sense of frustration with the way working relationships have developed and a failure to appreciate the depth of community enterprise or commitment. There are indeed negative views and a feeling of scepticism (or downright cynicism) that the nature of partnership is understood at all. As it was expressed forcibly by one of the community respondents (F):

It's about communication; it's about grassroots initiative, but ... [*pause*] I'm not sure it exists in any meaningful fashion just now, even though you have so-called 'Partnership Priority Areas' and such like. It seems to me that partnership is decided by those in ivory towers, who speak to others in ivory towers and decide that we [*i.e. they*] are going to do things in partnership; but it doesn't seem to involve, to my mind, people at grassroots level. You could ask your average person in Drumchapel, or Castlemilk, or Easterhouse what partnership-priority status meant to them and they wouldn't have a clue what you were talking about.

From the council perspective, the local member was able to rationalise the council's difficulties in terms of creative tensions between the community's ambitions and the council's ability to deliver (D):

... there will be tensions, because often the community will want, maybe want, one thing which is perhaps at some variance with the council's overall policy or, more commonly what will be the situation, the community group's ambitions will be much greater than the council's contribution or resources will allow. But that can be healthy.

This comment was echoed by the council official (C):

'The best relationship?' [*exasperation*] That's a difficult one, because there are always conflicts there; competing desires, demands – not always an appreciation from either side as to the limitations or restrictions placed on each of the parties.

However, there was a far more wide-ranging view of the benefit and the potential of partnership or joint working. The responses were in answer to a question about the appropriate balance between policy (in a formal sense) and the use of scarce resources (a concern of Hastings 1996) and most respondents perceived a subtle relationship between them (B):

I don't think you can really separate these two ... It's like the cart before the horse. Aye, because you've got scarce resources, you've got to cooperate, but I think cooperation is more important

than either of the two elements of the question as posed. And I think both of them go hand in hand. It makes more sense for a council, or people involved with councils, to develop policies that are of mutual benefit; it's going back to the partnership thing again.

From the community perspective, a narrower, but still positive view of partnership could be summarised as (A):

So to me, it's a partnership between the resources that the council have and the resources, involvement, commitment and enthusiasm that the local communities can have as well.

In this view, the council can be viewed almost as a 'sleeping' partner, providing the community with the financial and personnel means of development, but perhaps taking a less active part. The reason for this view lies in what was an unexpected outcome of the survey, namely that the community often saw development and partnership in very entrepreneurial terms: 'business-like' is a term frequently used. Again, this does not seem to imply there is any animus either to a public-service ethos or to wider cooperation with the council or others in providing such public services to the wider community. It seems to stem from the group's realisation that a higher proportion of its income has to stem from its generating a greater revenue stream locally, on its terms, to be used not for profit but to generate surpluses that can be recycled for local benefit. To this extent, Yoker may not be typical<sup>6</sup>, and the attitude may depend on a particular mix of individuals and groups locally, combined with their own local history; *that* is a more typical feature of communities generally than any attempt define a 'typical' community.

In the end, there are two ways of approaching partnership between a community group and the council. There is the fear that partnership may in fact promote greater separation, as summarised in these two quotes from a council perspective (C):

I'm not sure I necessarily understand what they mean by community development. Does that mean that people develop to become 'The Yoker Team'? Or is it ...? Or what? Does it mean that people begin to build fences round their area, saying: We have developed ourselves as Yoker; we will declare, you know, unilateral independence from Glasgow [i.e. *the City Council*]? I don't think that, if that is the way it seems to be pointing people, is particularly helpful or useful.

But (D):

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<sup>6</sup> Indeed, it must be stressed that Yoker should not be regarded as any kind of 'type', the lessons from which can simply be replicated elsewhere. Any general principles emerging from the study may indeed be useful in this respect, but the Yoker blend is unique and particular and would never see itself as a crude model for anywhere else.

I think a lot of these things would have happened anyway and the partnership is something of a red herring; because, as I've said, there were already common goals which were set there and people were already working to them, albeit perhaps not in such a formally structured way as the Regeneration Alliance would seem to suggest.

This latter comment clearly echoes some of the earlier discussion about formal and informal partnerships, and the need to avoid too heavy a reliance on formal structures, but coupled with the first comment it suggests a basic concern, even fear, about partnership or conceding too much autonomy to the local area (Clegg 1989). But from the council side, in the person of the local councillor, and from the community side, in the person of the chair of the local group, there is a more optimistic view (B, in the community view):

And what you're looking for at the end of the day is the best result for all concerned; so, therefore, I'll not say the opposing party. If the external agency had a really strong case, then somewhere in between there, there is a middle road, there's an element of compromise. So I would look to be, if you like, in a mediator role, a go-between, liaison officer – call it what you will – to meet those ends.

And (D, the local councillor):

I mean, it would imply for instance that ... I have a kind of executive role and (that) a piece of my executive power would erode by giving it away to somebody else, and I think that's a misrepresentation. Councillors don't have in any sense an executive role, they have more of an advocacy role and so I think the implication of that is that the partnership approach is one where there is no loss to any (side) – if we can agree about the same objectives, and can gain the same objectives, we both gain rather than anyone losing.

It is in the similarity of these two statements and the recognition that partnership is a dynamic process involving creative action by the participants that the seeds of genuine cooperation are to be found.

### **Interim summary and conclusions**

The Old School Project, the subject of this chapter, is unusual in that it is a project that exists mostly in the minds of those who have been engaged in discussing it<sup>7</sup>. There is certainly a building there, but it has been unused and slowly deteriorating. The community continues to maintain and secure it as far as it can, although it does not own

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<sup>7</sup> Or was until very recently; work on refurbishing the school has now (in August 2003) begun. A *coda* will update progress and contain some final reflections on the process.

it nor have responsibility for it in any formal sense; the City Council, which does, seems content to leave it in limbo while having no definite plans for it. In another sense, of course, the community does own it; the building has been central to the life of the community for over one hundred and thirty years, in various guises, and the present representatives for the area have very clear plans and proposals for it. Their desire for formal and legal ownership is motivated in part by the desire to secure a capital asset, but there is also a more symbolic reason. The community sees the building as a symbol of how they envisage the future; in partnership with the council, but more on their own terms and with the freedom of independent action in the areas in which they choose to exercise it. The project to develop the building has no formal ‘history’, as mentioned earlier, but it remains as a potent symbol of the future and the discussion is still ‘live’, if unresolved.

Partnership as discussed in this chapter has been almost a ‘virtual’ exercise until recently. The ‘project’ existed only in the minds of those involved in the negotiation process and *without any formal structure*. Initially, there were two ‘forces’ at work: the council was perceived by the community as having the *power* to make the project happen, but the community was perceived as an ‘agency’ with which the council could (and in some sense *had to*) do business – it had its own local knowledge, track record and power. However, the agendas did not coincide. The council had the resource in a formal sense (it owned the building legally) and formidable financial and technical resources; the community had the vision and the capacity for collaborative working. In some sense, the community was striving for both resource *and* policy synergy (Hastings 1996). Although policy may seem to be the junior partner, an important principle – formal ownership – was at stake. In a narrow sense, the council has the *legitimate* title and will not concede it. Although it is possible to see a circuit on Clegg’s model at work (Clegg 1989), there is a tendency for the formal organisation (the council) to retain control of the process (and see the coda for an update on this). But there is also evidence of networking, still a high degree of trust (moderated by the council’s reluctance to concede control) and some unspoken norms of engagement (Putnam 1993). The community lacks capacity in financial and technical terms to proceed on its own, nor does it desire to do so, but it is constrained by the lack of genuine commitment to the

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project by the more powerful partner. This has now changed, but the dilemmas have not all been resolved and there is some evidence that partnership working is still not inculcated within the council.

The intention of this chapter has been to explore the processes involved in the discussion to date, analysed in terms of various theoretical concerns of the thesis, particularly relating to issues of partnership (although in a real sense this is the ultimate goal and not a first step) and all respondents were able to identify tensions and differing perspectives of partnership between the community and the council; however, there was a strong sense of the benefits of partnership for both sides and it was seen as a dynamic process subsuming both policy and practice within the context of mutual benefit. Both from the community and the council side there was displayed the capacity for a complex analysis of what partnership might involve, with the councillor exemplifying the ability to see both sides of the argument at the same time and to use that as a strength in his negotiations with both. The community saw the council increasingly as an enabler and had a surprisingly ‘entrepreneurial’ view of the future; however, there was still a strong commitment to public service and the community did not see it as supplanting the council in any major sense. The council had more of a fear of separation, of the community ‘doing its own thing’, but was also aware of the benefit of partnership working, whether formalised or not. There was a general appreciation of the ‘plus sum’ view of power and of trying to achieve a mutual set of objectives. The chapter achieved its objective of exploring the processes involved in partnership working, within the focus of a single project. To obtain a wider view of a more formal partnership in action, it is intended in Chapter 9 to examine the situation in Drumchapel.

### **Coda: Developments to date**

The most recent developments affecting the Old School continue to illustrate some of the theoretical and practical issues outlined in the chapter proper. The Clydeside Shipbuilding Task Force, established by the Scottish Executive in 2002 to tackle some of the issues surrounding the fear of a continued rundown in the remnants of the shipbuilding industry (only yards at Govan and Scotstoun remain), has at last realised funding for the conversion of the old school premises. However, there have been difficulties: the Building Services division of the City council, acting as agents for the

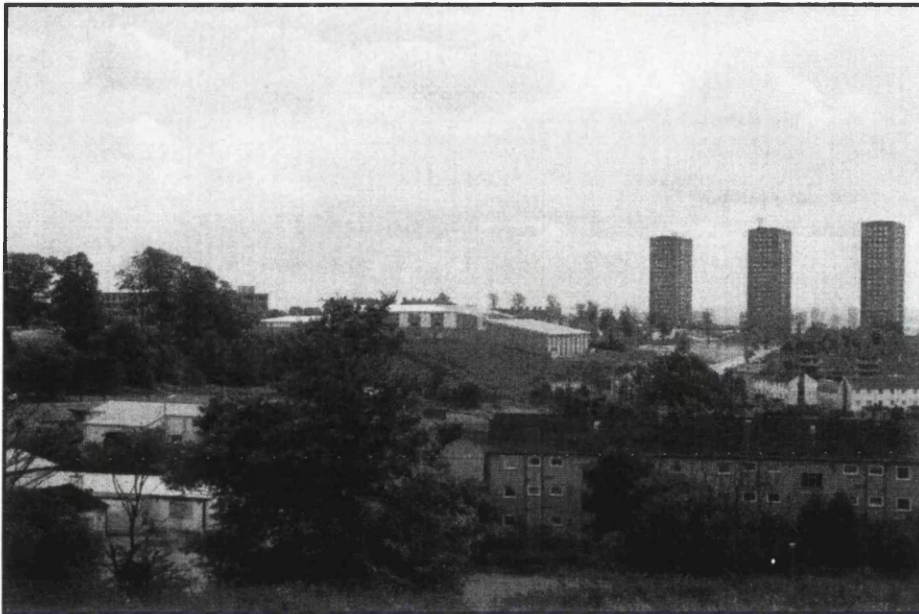
Resource Group as client, have a problem in accepting the community as the ‘real’ client, whom they regard as the Regeneration and Development department of the Council. (Funding comes from a variety of sources, including the Scottish Executive and the European regional Development Fund.) This has led to clashes of personality, frustration for the group and delays in the project. It illustrates the difference between a formal partnership arrangement and real partnership working, between ‘surface’ and ‘deep’ structures. The second phase of the regeneration and conversion work has recently been agreed, and a process of information and consultation with the wider community begun. It appears as though the building is set to continue its role as a potent community asset and symbol.



## Chapter 9

### THE DRUMCHAPEL STUDY

#### *A Comparative Study of a Structured Approach to Regeneration*



**Plate 9.1: Drumchapel from the northwest (Kingsridge); note the undulating nature of the topography – the high flats are untypical and most houses are low-rise.**

[The vision is] To enhance the development of Drumchapel as an attractive and sustainable suburb of Glasgow where people wish to live by virtue of the quality of life afforded to them in terms of housing, education, training, health, employment, shopping and leisure opportunities.

From the 'simple and clear' vision for Drumchapel in Section 2 of the *Drumchapel Social Inclusion Partnership – Bid Submission* February 1999.

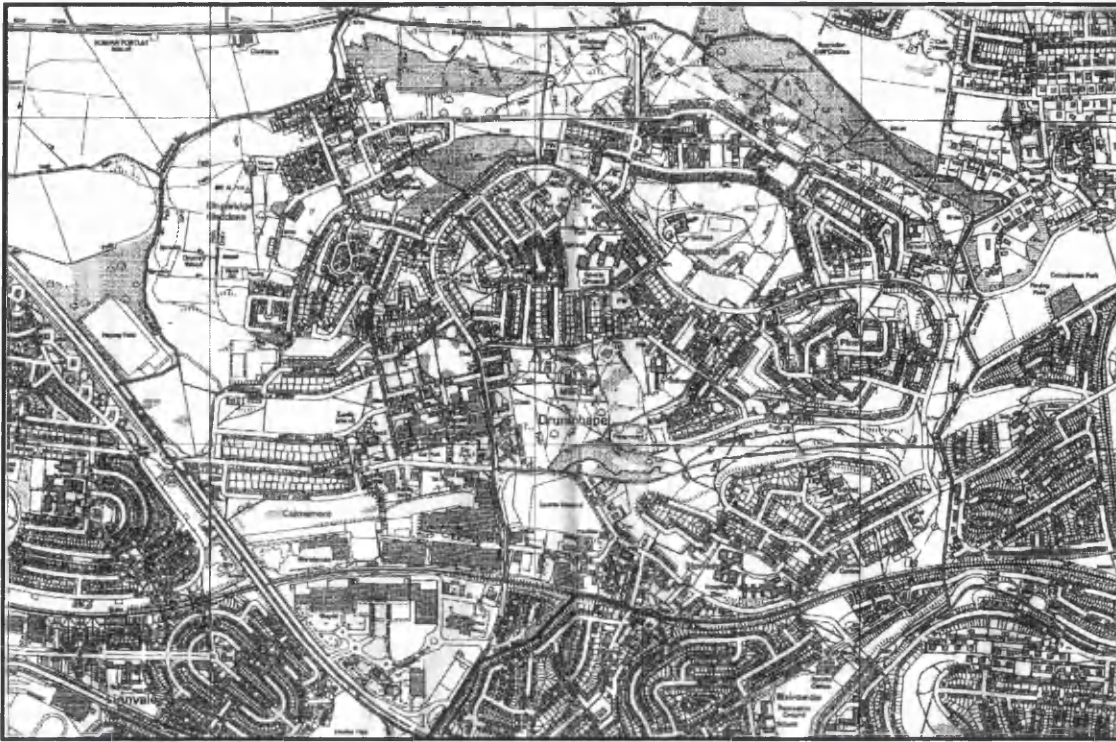
#### **Introduction**

This final fieldwork chapter is intended to illustrate the process of partnership working in the Drumchapel area of the City, the reasons for which may be summarised in two ways:

1. As an attempt to gauge the extent to which the *practice* of formal partnership working has become embedded within Drumchapel, with a particular emphasis on the community *as partner*; and
2. As a ‘control’ and contrast with the study in Yoker, an area without until recently any history of organised or ‘official’ partnership working (‘unstructured’), unlike Drumchapel (‘structured’).

The study is not intended as a complete account of the partnership process in Drumchapel, much less its extended history (see for example Millard 1996 on the effects of decentralisation in Drumchapel); the intent is focused on the experience and perception of partnership working in the area currently. The principal approach has been to concentrate on a narrative based on two in-depth interviews with local activists (see below), together with a brief analysis of the partnership Bid Submission. The two areas are relatively close to one another (from Yoker Cross to Drumchapel Centre is about two miles, although there is no direct public transport link between them) and there is some networking between the communities. Yoker has been subject to less physical change and movement of population than Drumchapel; South Yoker is also much smaller in size, with a population of about 4,000 in 2001, compared to Drumchapel’s 17,000 (although the Dumbarton Road Corridor area is about equal in terms of population).

The real intent of the chapter is to gauge the extent of *participatory thickness* in Drumchapel, given its past history; this may be defined (cf. MacLeod 2002) as, within a defined local area (‘sub-national space’), the extent to which there is an ‘embedded’ network of relationships at community level, relationships which do not merely exist in a contiguous way, but which ‘underpin and stimulate’ a diffused process of active partnership working and participation, locally recognised and available as a resource to individuals and groups. This diffused process will have a strong temporal aspect - drawing on the past, predicating the future - and will be internalised within local praxis (‘immanent’ in a Foucauldian sense).



**Map 9.1: General map of Drumchapel SIP area; note the position on the northwest periphery of the city adjacent to open country, with Clydebank to the southwest and Bearsden to the northeast.**

### **Drumchapel – The area profile**

The Drumchapel SIP Bid Submission (1999) provides a snapshot of the main social and economic indicators of the area at the time of its submission. The population was 17,095 (compared to 35,000 in 1971, its peak); this significant decline is described having an effect ‘in terms of destabilising the community, leaving those who are most vulnerable and socially excluded’. The area is the fifth most vulnerable in Scotland according to the *Scottish Office Deprivation Index*.

Indices of poverty are:

- 70% in receipt of Income Support, Job-seekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit (double the Scottish average and 50% more than the Glasgow average).
- Housing Benefit claimed by 80% of council tenants, 13% of adults in receipt of Disabled Premium on their income support and 83% of households with no car.
- 40% of households with children headed by a lone parent (Glasgow 27.5%, Scotland 16%).

- Young people (under 25) accounting for 40% of the people (33% in Glasgow). Low Educational attainment (69% obtained 5+ Standard Grade at level 1-6, compared to a national average of 90%) and high truancy (27% of possible attendances, compared to 12% nationally); on leaving school, 37% did not go on to higher or further education, training or employment, compared to 13% nationally.
- 16.2% of all adults (22% of males) unemployed (11% and 14% for Glasgow), with just over half having been unemployed for more than six months. Of 20-24 year-olds, 17% unemployed (Glasgow 13%). Those who have a job are more likely than average to be in part-time, temporary, low-skill or low-paid work (it is likely that many have simply opted out of the labour market).
- The linkage of poor health to ‘social and economic inequalities’; 35% of the people with a long-term illness (15% for Greater Glasgow); 10% of babies born with a low birth-weight (7%) and 53% of parents with children smoke (34%). The Standard Mortality Rate (=100) is 138 for all deaths, 135 for cancers and 113 for heart disease. Child psychiatry referrals are 472/100,000 (347 for Greater Glasgow) and for general psychiatry, 1,234 (946).
- Although 2,300 homes have been refurbished, 3,600 are still of poor quality and ‘require significant investment’.

The document is right to counter what can be seen as these negative indicators with some more positive aspects, described as *opportunities* (Frame 9.1). By contrast with an ‘unstructured’ area like Yoker, the partnership can be regarded as planning *strategically*. Equally, failure to achieve targets can destroy local trust and confidence. However, deprivation statistics are *indicators* based on pre-determined criteria, describing a state rather than a response and ignore local capacity in coping with the more negative aspects of an area, nor the ability to use these indicators of *need* as a springboard for further action.

**Frame 9.1**  
**Drumchapel – The Opportunities**

1. *The New Neighbourhood* This is a new housing neighbourhood for owner-occupation to be developed within Drumchapel (as a result of clearance and demolition); through the New Housing Partnership (NHP); 850 new homes for sale will be provided, as well as 300 local housing cooperative homes for rent 'in adjacent areas'.

2. *Drumchapel Business Village* This development is a partnership between the City Council, Glasgow Development Agency, Drumchapel Opportunities (a locally-based training and employment agency), the SIP and the private sector. It will provide 140,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of industrial floorspace on a site of 12.5 acres (the site of cleared playing fields), with the potential to create 400-500 jobs. The first phase was completed in summer 1999 and the whole project is due for completion in 2004.

3. *Great Western Retail and Business Park* The final stage of this existing major retail business park was due for completion in the summer of 1999 with an additional 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of retail warehousing space, with an additional 100-150 jobs<sup>1</sup>.

4. *Drumchapel Sports Complex* The sports complex is to be a joint development of a major indoor and outdoor centre by the SIP, Drumchapel Opportunities, the City Council, Glasgow Development Agency, the Robertson Trust and the Sports Council. It should be completed in 2001 and will create 20 jobs (now open).

5. *Drumchapel New Community School* This new school is to be one of two pilot projects submitted to the City council and seeks funding of £200,000 a year for three years for 'the existing and proposed integration of services' aimed to change the attainment levels of children 'facing cycle of underachievement and social exclusion'.

*Source: Drumchapel Social Inclusion Partnership – Bid Submission February 1999*

## The Bid Submission

The *Drumchapel Social Inclusion Partnership – Bid Submission* (February 1999) is the foundation document for the whole partnership process; it was produced after the area was designated as a social inclusion partnership (by the Scottish Office/ Executive) and after the establishment of the interim partnership board and the holding of a community conference. The 'simple and clear' *Vision for Drumchapel* in Section 2 is (italicised in the original):

To enhance the development of Drumchapel as an attractive and sustainable suburb of Glasgow where people wish to live by virtue of the quality of life afforded to them in terms of housing, education, training, health, employment, shopping and leisure opportunities.

<sup>1</sup> This park, on the site of the old Goodyear and Beattie's Biscuits factories (large-volume traditional employers of both men and women), is physically detached from the rest of Drumchapel. Anecdotally, it has been the perception that the 'Glasgow 15' postal address (i.e. Drumchapel) has been a disadvantage when applying for employment there, in spite of explicit assurances that it would provide work-opportunities for local residents; equally, its name *Great Western Business Park* reveals no Drumchapel connection.

From the community perspective, the two most important statements are (my emphases):

1. Encouraging the growth of community activity *through the concept of active citizenship*; and
2. Facilitating the maximum participation of *all sections of the community* in the process.

Neither statement places the community at the *forefront* of that process, nor do they indicate the terms within which that participation would be determined. ‘Active citizenship’<sup>2</sup> certainly implies more than just participation on terms decided by others, and the bid’s aim is to *encourage* and *facilitate* community involvement. The document then continues with *The Partnership’s Objectives*, which are listed as:

- Empowering the community;
- Enhancement of educational opportunity;
- Alleviating poverty;
- Improving health and well-being; and
- Engaging with young people.

Empowering the community is defined as giving ‘local people the support and opportunity to play a full part in *developing and influencing* the delivery of services in the area’ (my emphasis). The fact that this objective is placed first on the list is highly significant, since it places the partnership’s strategy firmly within a community context. The objectives stress the equipping of the community (‘the residents’) with the skills to access opportunities or to obtain and retain employment, and the ‘development of support systems’ for those who fail to obtain employment. Health is seen as primarily a quality of life issue, while engaging with young people is seen as a process of encouraging them to ‘engage in a process of community participation which will reduce social exclusion’.

In a significant section headed *The Opportunity Afforded by the SIP*, the document states that:

Drumchapel has been the subject of numerous ‘initiatives’ and ‘projects’ in the past. Despite individual successes this approach has not led to measurable long-term improvements in the quality of life for local people.

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<sup>2</sup> This is not an uncontested concept and it recalls Putnam’s (1995) arguments about the decline of active citizenship in America; the issue is whether it is defined in terms of a neoliberal, small-government discourse or of a more open-ended view of partnership working (see also Healey 1997 and Raco and Imrie 2001).

This statement can be construed as implying that these previous ‘initiatives and projects’ have had no lasting effects, or that their effect has been only temporary. This proposition needs to be tested and it does refer to quality of life and not to empowerment<sup>3</sup> as such. The document stresses that a ‘new way of working’ is required in order to make the maximum use of the opportunity that the SIP offers, summarised under three headings:

1. Community Empowerment;
2. Partnership Working; and
3. Sustainability.

Community empowerment is described primarily as ‘providing opportunities for residents to influence the services they receive’, which is to be achieved through both formal structures and by ‘developing innovative ways of encouraging participation’. By ‘partnership working’, the document means the recognition of the ‘added value’ of ‘joined up thinking’ in making ‘more effective use of existing resources’ and of developing different ways of working and a ‘change of culture within some organisations’<sup>4</sup>. To conclude this section, the partnership commits itself to sustainability, to avoid a repetition of the ‘widescale disillusionment’ of previously unsustainable initiatives. This statement can be seen as both strength and weakness: strength because the SIP needs to establish its own credibility and identity, and weakness because it is precisely the same agencies (including the community itself), *differently configured*, who have undertaken this new approach. Section 4 (p. 4) details the proposed *Programme of Activity* for the partnership. If partnership is process (see MacLeod 2002), it is also practice. If, as the partnership bid asserts, previous projects and initiatives have had only a marginal or temporary effect, then the surest way that the new partnership can demonstrate its sustainability and effectiveness is not only by how it involves the local community in all its processes but also how it is seen to meet local need on the ground in terms of projects actually realised (see above). The document

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<sup>3</sup> *Empowerment* must also be understood in the same sense as *embeddedness*; the suggested temporary effects of previous social inclusion interventions do imply that they have not met the objective of sustained empowerment.

<sup>4</sup> For a further discussion of the difference between resource and policy synergy, see Hastings (1996). Generally, resource synergy (and, by implication, involvement in the delivery of services) is in this view easier to achieve than the development of *policy* on a genuinely cooperative basis.

concedes that ‘little progress has been made in creating sustainable improvements in the quality of residents’ lives’ and that the key contribution of the SIP will be to *create* a situation ‘where existing services are better coordinated leading to measurable improvements in quality which are responsive to local needs’ (see Table 9.2 for the principal current providers of services).

Based on the aims developed earlier in section 2, a number of *strategic objectives* have been determined. It is proposed for analytical purposes to concentrate on those aspects relating specifically to the role of the community. The first strategic objective (1, p. 6) is concerned with empowering the community and this is further defined as meaning that:

We [the partnership] will create an environment in which local people will be provided with the support and opportunity to play a full part in developing and influencing the delivery of services in the area.

It can be argued that this is a modest enough objective, particularly in an area with a long history of partnership and with a relatively dense community and organisational network, but it is probably realistic. If people are ‘to play a full part’, then outward show and appearance are significant<sup>5</sup>. However, substance remains fundamentally important and no amount of confident performance will disguise an inability to deliver tangible benefits. Within this general strategic objective, it is further intended (1.1):

To develop innovative mechanisms to encourage members of the community who are excluded from existing community structures to influence the activities of the partnership.

This is clearly inclusive language aimed at involving as many members of the community as possible, but – significantly – it is stated that ‘no existing mechanisms are available’ and further that ‘large sections of the community’ are excluded from existing networks. This suggests strongly that, in spite of the long history of involvement in partnership of one kind or another, networks have either atrophied or have never

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<sup>5</sup> See the consideration of the power of *performance*, as opposed to text, in Thrift 2000 (in Sharp *et al.* 2000: 270-1). Not merely is performance essential for a full understanding of a piece, but the performer can *subvert* the text in the course of a performance; a role which appears to involve a power-less character can be transformed in performance into one which is power-*ful*, this power being released in the course of an intense dialogue between the performer (‘interpreter’) and the audience. In addition, the performer has a power beyond the control of the author or the textual role. At the local level of partnership, local actors (*sic*) can gain, and be seen to gain, power as their performance develops.



properly developed<sup>8</sup>. Progress towards this objective is to be measured *inter alia* by means of an annual community conference. Objective 1.2 immediately follows by stating the intention:

To establish and support a community/voluntary representative forum to provide a formal link between the Partnership and community organisation(s).

The objective recognises that there is a wide range of existing community/voluntary organisations, but also that no ‘umbrella’ organisation exists to represent their (presumably collective) interests and that resources to support them are ‘patchy’ (for an account of the Community Organisations’ Council (COC), c.1987-99, see Millard 1996: 195-209). By the mid term, it is proposed to have developed ‘representative structures pro-actively influencing the partnership’ and, ultimately, to have in place ‘sustainable community structures’. Drumchapel Community Forum (DCF) has subsequently been established, both as the principal vehicle within the partnership for community representation (through nomination rights to the partnership Board) and also as the principal means (potentially) whereby the capacity of the community may be developed in order to fulfil that role. In a foreword to the *Annual Report* of the Forum, the local MSP – Bill Butler – expresses the view that it is ‘playing a central role in ensuring that the interests of the community are fully represented’ and also that ‘five Forum representatives sit on the SIP board giving the community an appropriate degree of influence in the setting of organisational and spending priorities’ (DCF Annual Report 2000-01). The inaugural meeting of the forum was in December 1999 and, in his statement in the Annual report, the Chairperson describes its vision as:

To establish the community as a confident, effective and pro-active partner at the heart of the regeneration of Drumchapel.

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<sup>8</sup> Putnam (1993), in his discussion of the operation of social capital, makes it clear that, once formed, it must be *used*; failure to maintain civic networks and interaction will, like distrust, destroy accumulated capital.

Table 9.1: Service Providers in Drumchapel

Service Provider	Function(s)	Additional Information
<b>1. Glasgow City Council</b>	Housing, education, social work, environment and leisure, cultural services.	Strategic and local planning authority <sup>6</sup> .
<b>2. Scottish Homes</b>	Housing associations and co-ops; grant-aids private development.	Investment since 1991 = £54m; expects to invest £6-8m 1999-2002.
<b>3. Scottish Enterprise Glasgow</b>	Govt agency resp. for: a. promotion of economic development; b. management of govt training programmes; and c. the environment.	At the local level, it supports Drumchapel Opportunities (see below).
<b>4. Drumchapel Opportunities</b>	Principal locally-based economic development agency <sup>7</sup> .	Mission to: 'assist Drumchapel to become a sustainable community through the economic inclusion of its people and the economic regeneration of the community'  Employs 35, turnover £2m p.a.
<b>5. Employment Service</b>	Provider of central government employment programmes.	Local office with staff of 10. Programmes include Welfare to Work, New Deal and Employment Zone.
<b>6. Greater Glasgow Health Board</b>	Principal agency for health care for the area.	Commissions local services from GPs, etc. Area has 19 GPs in 6 practices (mostly in Health Centre), 5 pharmacies, 15 dentists and one optician; expenditure was £9.5m in 1996-7, + £50,000 to the SIP.

Source: Drumchapel Bid Submission 1999; author's compilation.

He stresses that the forum is community-led and suggests that it is in 'powerful position' to influence, not only SIP expenditure, but 'hopefully in the future' to influence other expenditure, e.g. that of the Health Board (DCF Annual Report 2000-01). This is clearly a worthy aspiration, but it does suggest that any previous success in collaborative working has been ineffective or perhaps that the structures (networks) established to achieve this have not been robust enough over time.

<sup>6</sup> Although there was a small pre-existing development around Drumchapel station, Glasgow Corporation (as it then was) was the original developer of the large housing scheme in the 1950s and has been central to all the management and renewal projects in the area ever since.

<sup>7</sup> Drumchapel Opportunities, established since about 1990, is a company 'limited by guarantee'. It is essentially a charitable organisation organised and trading along company lines; its board is nominated from within the community and other relevant agencies.

The document concludes with what it describes as the commitment to the implementation of the partnership strategy of the partners. Their respective level of representation is shown in Table 9.2.

**Table 9.2: SIP Board Representation**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Representation</b>
<b>Glasgow City Council</b>	3
<b>Greater Glasgow Health Board</b>	1
<b>Scottish Homes</b>	1
<b>Business Support Group</b>	1
<b>Community/Voluntary Sector</b>	5
<b>Drumchapel Opportunities</b>	1
<b>Scottish Enterprise Glasgow</b>	1
<b>Strathclyde Police</b>	1

*Source:* Drumchapel SIP, etc.; author's compilation.

The document recognises that 'community participation must be at the heart of the partnership' and that the delivery of services must be 'responsive to local need'. Interestingly, the document (p. 22) commits the partnership to moving beyond formal structures 'to consult and involve those ... excluded from existing community structures'. From the community perspective, the document concludes on a positive note. Figure 9.3 shows the organisational structure of the Drumchapel partnership, with the focus on the Board. Such a representation cannot show the dynamics or effectiveness of its constituent parts, nor of how well they relate to or interact with one another. It presents an idealised and static view of partnership but is useful as a directional map.

# DRUMCHAPEL SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP

## The Partnership Structure

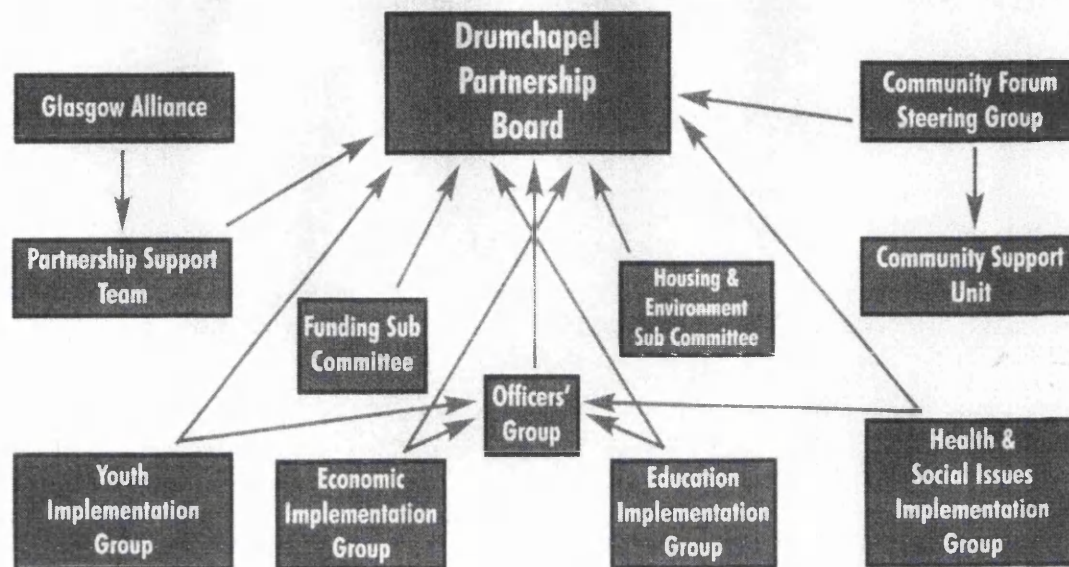


Figure 9.1: Organisational structure of the Drumchapel Partnership

The Bid Submission is a valuable statement of the intentions of the partnership and it does place the community at the heart of its processes; however, it is predominantly an *aspirational* document which sets out a *strategy* (effectively a road map) for the future. The past, that vital component of any temporal analysis of the area, is seen almost entirely in terms of *failure*. Community empowerment becomes inscribed entirely in the discourse of the *new* partnership, the SIP, and hence implicitly repudiates the past. Embeddedness becomes aspiration rather than fact and the Community Forum becomes a function not of continuity but a new creation in terms of the current SIP structure. Its effectiveness will be measured in terms of that function but its sustainability is not guaranteed beyond the SIP or outside its terms of reference. This inference does not so much *deny* any continuity with the past, but merely underscores the salient point that the determinant of the form of community participation is the morphology of whatever is the current vehicle of (governmental) policy intervention, at present the SIP.

The bid document represents an ideal or official view of what is needed in terms of the regeneration of Drumchapel. No matter how much people are consulted in its compilation, the template being used has already been set (on general principles outlined in *Progress in Partnership*) and discussion will be centred round adjustments and alterations rather than round fundamental issues of representation and agenda-setting (see Atkinson 1999: 60-61). To that extent, the document cannot represent Wilson's economic (or social) development 'from the ground up' (Wilson 1996). It *can* be argued that, in a community of 17,000 people, it may not be practicable to ascertain all of their views and that there needs to be some correlation between any set of proposals and the ability of agencies (including the community) to deliver them. However, Drumchapel is an area with a long history of both community activism and participation (see Millard 1996 on the Drumchapel Initiative and the COC) and this embedded history (and consequent legacy of trust or distrust, as well as capacity) should have had some impact on the process.

### **The Interviews: The 'insider' view**

The first interview is with the project manager of the locally-based Drumchapel Partnership<sup>9</sup>. The current chief officer has been in post since about 1998 and has had long experience (since at least 1990) of working in the voluntary sector in the area, principally through a legal and money advice project sponsored by the COC. He is employed formally by the Glasgow Alliance and not by the partnership board (although he is answerable to it) and sees his role as providing primarily advice through the 'partnership support team'. The board (see Table 9.2 for membership) comprises the community, the voluntary sector, the principal public service agencies and, tangentially, the 'private sector'. (At the time of interview in autumn 2000, there was no privatesector representative on the board.) It determines general policy and programmes for the SIP and administers the partnership fund, the successor to the Urban Programme in the area. However, the role of the board and its project manager is more wide-ranging than simple administration or advice (my emphasis):

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<sup>9</sup> It is argued that there is a real issue about the identification of 'the partnership' (strictly speaking an intangible mode of working) with either a local office (building) or even local personnel. The essence of the thesis is that, to be meaningful, the idea of partnership must pervade every agency and be seen to be

... the partnership has set itself a series of strategic objectives ... and in order to achieve those objectives it is going to have to bring about a significant shift in the way that public sector agencies both allocate their resources and also how they do their work in Drumchapel. It is trying to encourage them to move towards a joint approach, both at a strategic and at an operational level ... A part of our remit – a major part of our remit – is to liaise with the partner agencies to bring them together through mechanisms such as the implementation group ... [so that they] can look critically at their own patterns of expenditure and their own priorities in the area, so the [board] can seek to influence how major public sector bodies such as the Health Board and the health trusts actually provide services to Drumchapel ... otherwise we do not fulfil one of our big goals<sup>10</sup>, which is *to create a sustainable, long-term improvement in conditions locally*.

This quotation illustrates two of the most significant – and difficult – aspects of the partnership’s task: (a) to induce a ‘significant shift’ in the way that the partners (collectively, but with specific reference to the agencies controlling resources) approach partnership working, and (b) to ameliorate local conditions so as to produce ‘a sustainable, long-term improvement in conditions locally’. In the view of the respondent, the essence of the approach of the partnership in terms of social inclusion is that it (ideally):

... looks at the individuals, families living in Drumchapel, it looks at the whole cluster of problems which individuals and families have and seeks to bring down the barriers that are causing them to be excluded.

He sees this ‘cluster’ as being not only *external* (poor housing, unemployment, physical isolation), but *internal* as well (low aspiration, dependency, ‘internalisation of stigmatisation’). He sees the partnership as an opportunity to *create [sic]* an integrated approach in a way that has not been done before. In response to a question about the goal of the SIP, expressed in the sense that Drumchapel would become ‘a properly functioning part of general society’ (my words)<sup>11</sup>, the reply was pragmatic and to the point:

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all-embracing, in both spatial terms and in *practice*; therefore, to associate the idea with any specific location or limited set of individuals may be counter-productive.

<sup>10</sup> The identification of the use of (scarce) resources as a major goal of the SIP is to reinforce the salience of resources, seen either as ‘simple capacity’ or having at least equal status with policy synergy.

<sup>11</sup> Even to phrase the question in this way is problematic, since it implies that the area is not ‘properly functioning’ but it does not define by what criteria this might be measured. If the area *were* ‘properly functioning’, this could be as much about issues of power or control or conformism (i.e. within a discourse of governmentalism) as about some measure of endogenous worth or perception. The respondent’s reply puts the issue in a very pragmatic context.

Really, I think people in Drumchapel are entitled to aspire, as they did originally when Drumchapel was set up, to enjoy the same options in life, the same possibilities as people anywhere else in Central Scotland.

An important point here is that aspirations are placed firmly in the realm of the practical, so as to bring Drumchapel to the ‘average’ of attainment in terms of population mix, occupation, housing tenure or age structure. If partnership is to be the means by which these goals are to be achieved, then what might constitute it? The reply to that is also practical, but reflects some of the general themes of the thesis (my emphasis):

So there is a continuum. It is the stage of relationship-building, of trust- and confidence-building exercises that we need, to demonstrate to agencies and the community that *working together works*.

There is an echo here of Wilson’s ‘iceberg’: relationship-building (empowerment from the inside out) leading to trust- and confidence-building (social capital), leading to partnership working as demonstrated practically. However, there is an important difference. It is the (formal) *partnership*, the SIP, which provides the structure within which this virtuous cycle operates: it animates and resources the process. In that sense, the process is not endogenous and there is no guarantee that it is sustainable, existing outside and beyond the formal structures. From the community perspective, its traditional (and problematic) relationship has been with the local authority; within the partnership there is the need to develop close working relationships with other agencies (such as the Health Board) traditionally regarded as more distant. He cites the example of the police, not normally seen as a working partner, which has transformed its relationship with the public in the area:

I think that has had quite a lot of positive effect, even outwith the field of community safety. It lends an air of seriousness to this [process]. Look, there is an agency that has not historically been all that involved in this sort of work [that] is all of a sudden heavily involved and they are delivering on it in terms of their staff time, in terms of their commitment, in terms of their technical expertise – and that is, for example, working with young people, which is one of our strategic objectives, youth inclusion.

Clearly, this is a good example of mutual benefit, even transformation (see Wilson and Hastings), but it begs the obvious questions: why did it not occur *before* the SIP<sup>12</sup>? Citing an example in Newcastle, the respondent pointed out the potential conflict where one partner (in this case the City Council) saw the objectives of the partnership as being in conflict with the overall city strategy and (by implication) unacceptable to it; an instance of the negative use of coercive power (ref.) quite contrary to the spirit of the partnership. As he observes:

It is difficult to see how you can actually talk the rhetoric of social inclusion if, when it comes to the crunch on a big major issue about housing redevelopment in an area, you actually say: Well, we [the council] know we said that, but really we know best – our plan is better – and we are just going to do it. Now, on the other hand, to be fair to Newcastle council, if somebody came up with ideas for the Pathfinder [a local employment initiative] which were totally impractical, the council is obliged to say to them: No, you cannot do that.

The solution should be to ‘stop the clock, delay things a bit, have a proper consultation’ to see if a mutual resolution is possible; even if it were not, the *manner* in which disagreement is handled is all important, particularly for the maintenance of trust. Crucially:

It is difficult to see how you can regenerate an area if in the process you alienate a significant part of the active population.

The history of partnership in Drumchapel has a pedigree going back to at least the mid-1980s, as with all such histories, there is an embedded memory of positive and negative experience. (The effective collapse of the former Community Organisations Council (COC) in 1996 must have left the ‘organised community’ with some negative legacy; equally, the long history of social and physical change since at least the early 1980s must have left some sense of weariness among long-term residents.) However, the evidence of the chief officer is that some residue of trust and good relations has always been present and that there is a long-term commitment by local residents to ensuring the provision of good local services. This experience and commitment has resulted in the maintenance of some residue of social capital, particularly since there has

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<sup>12</sup> There is an equally good and personal relationship between the community police and Yoker Resource Group, where the discourse is familiar and relaxed, without compromising the integrity of either agency.



been a turnover of experienced representatives with newer activists coming forward. On the issue of the strength of local networks, there was a more ambiguous reply:

So that, I think it is fair to say that there is a strong feeling that we have lost – and we have to find – a whole generation of community activists.

There appears to be a ‘gap’ in representation, with an older generation of over-45s still active and a newer group of people under 25 involved in youth and leisure clubs, but with little experience of representational participation. The gap appears to be among those in their 30s, in men rather than women, and among owner-occupiers, seen as representing an increasingly important section of the population (and not seen as ‘some isolated pocket of prosperity in the scheme’).

Before the SIP bid was submitted, the support team organised a consultation exercise on each of the strategic themes of the bid, involving representatives of voluntary groups and of the ‘community structures’ (representing a more formalised side of community activism). The interim SIP board, which agreed the submission, had representatives on it from a wide variety of these interests. Although the template for the board structure was a standardised model suggested by the Glasgow Alliance, it appears that this was agreed locally and that, apart from general pre-set requirements from the Scottish Executive on financial administration, there is a commitment to letting local SIP boards set their own agendas; indeed (my emphasis):

... I think it is fair to say that both the Executive and the Alliance left social inclusion partnerships to determine their own ways of working and their own priorities, and indeed if anything there is a feeling that ... if anything we now want to try and find ways of doing things together with the other SIPs. [...] And also we are encouraging the community reps to talk to one another across the city, so *they will start to develop their own networks*, their own contacts, in the same way that the public sector agencies clearly already have. So that, having gone through this process, devolving functions down to a local level, there may well now be a natural process of trying to find common threads across the city.

The implications of the nature of this approach will be argued in more detail later, but it is sufficient to say that to be truly sustainable and become embedded within the partnership process the aspirations of the community must to some extent be autonomous (i.e. to exercise their own power, cf. Foucault). That is, they must not *depend* upon the goodwill of other agencies (the local authorities, the other development

agencies or the private sector<sup>13</sup>) for their existence, or indeed for their *resources*, human or material<sup>14</sup>. The more that communities in partnerships develop a sense of common purpose and share resources and expertise across the city and beyond, the thicker and more effective their contribution (MacLeod 2002). However, on the principle of the plus-sum view of power (Wilson), this will be most effective as long as the partnership approach continues to apply on both an intra-communal and inter-agency basis. There is a recognition that this more outward-looking approach needs to be balanced by a continuing emphasis on building *personal* capacity (especially for those most disadvantaged) – for example through job training and the development of assertiveness – and in treating the local community with respect:

... the natural inclination of people is to have an argument, everybody is prone to that. ‘Oh well, we had better have an argument, we need to get our point across, nobody is listening to us. How do we do it in a way that is not aggressive?’ As an example, how do we, if we are a public sector agency, learn to listen? How do we get across to people – ‘Here is why we cannot do that’ - but say it in a way that [does not] discourage them [or] flatten them and make them think it is a con trick. It is a way of conveying information back to say: ‘Well, we have listened, but here is why we cannot do quite what you want us to do’.

The partnership team also recognises that, while it is required to operate within a bureaucratic structure, there is a need to adapt the format of meetings as the SIP evolves and perhaps to encourage a less formal workstyle. The chief officer sees his role as supplying a mediating function (he is, coincidentally, a trained mediator); this emphasis on consensus is not simply a ‘soft’ cultural construct:

... because they want to retain your commitment to this partnership. The onus is on you [i.e. on the mediator] to find a way of explaining to them why they have misunderstood or why the circumstances have changed rather than simply say: I am not doing it. If you do that, it is totally destructive and that is how we will end up in a spiral towards failure [my emphasis].

Using some of the earlier discussion on trust (see Chapter 3), this can be glossed as trying to obviate the growth of negative distrust and the encouragement of a general

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<sup>13</sup> The role of the private sector tends in practice to be minimal in local partnerships. There is room for bilateral arrangements in securing local employment (e.g. job placements), or in contributing commercial expertise. In practice, however, the main scope for local partnership lies in the discourse between the community and local service providers from public or semi-public agencies.

<sup>14</sup> This is not intended to imply that they would be entirely self-sufficient; if so there would be less need for partnership. It is meant to imply that they would have sufficient depth in both personnel and finance to have much more room for self-generated action than is the case at present and to engage with other agencies from a more relatively power-ful or ‘equal’ position.

situation where the partners have a reasonable belief built on experience that their mutual expectations will be met in a spirit of realism and compromise.

How is ‘success’ in the partnership to be measured? The chief officer recognises that success ‘is a cumulative process’, based on a number of ‘successes’. The launch of the SIP brought positive publicity to the area (essential to counteract any negative residue from the perceived ‘failure’ of previous initiatives and projects); there was widespread consultation and consequent support in principle for the process; the public sector agencies and the community were brought together in a positive way:

So there is a series of successes there and I suppose my view is pragmatically to build up a series of successes and results which actually demonstrate the efficacy of this approach and also gradually change the outside world’s perception of Drumchapel, as well as [local] people’s own perception of Drumchapel. It is not hopeless; you can actually do something, gradually raising people’s expectations ...

Significantly, he sees the need for some sort of ‘exit strategy’ for the SIP *after* a period when it had become:

... a flourishing suburb of Glasgow which has some distinctive features, which has a relatively highly-skilled population, which has developed its own civic infrastructure locally ...

Thereafter, there might be a need for some residual support structure to sustain and support that success. The aim is at once modest and formidable; experience in the area does not support optimism that it can be achieved easily. But there is faith (trust) in the process and it is well resourced; there are profound physical changes taking place in the area and the population will be more ‘balanced’ in terms of economic indicators. One real measure of success might well be that:

... people like me [‘professionals’] could come and live in Drumchapel and think nothing of it, any more than you would think of living in Bearsden. Maybe Bearsden is a bad example, because it is not a particularly mixed population. I come from Stranraer originally, in Wigtownshire. So, ideally, people should not feel any different living in Drumchapel from living in Stranraer.

It is interesting that the original concept of Drumchapel, in the 1930s and 1950s, was that it might become a *township* – implying a subordinate role in relation to the city (and hence suburban), but with a certain horizontal spread (providing a wide range of social and economic services) and vertical depth (encompassing a wide population profile in terms of both age and economic status). The aims of the SIP as stated by the

respondent may to some extent be linked to this earlier vision, on a more modest scale, but perhaps more sustainably.

### **The Interviews: The ‘outsider’ view**

The second principal interview is with another respondent with a long history of voluntary action in the area, but from a different perspective to the chief officer. This respondent (JO) was a long-term local resident, is an entrepreneur with a number of local interests and has always remained active in community affairs. However, his voluntary work has been especially with Drumchapel Community Business (DCB), which was established in the early 1980s as an Urban Programme project at its site in Dalsetter Avenue (south of the shopping centre). In 2001, it opened an additional ten small workspace units and remains a viable and important part of the local economic infrastructure. It was always to some extent outside the formal community representative and functional structures established under the Drumchapel Initiative, having an ‘arms-length’ relationship with Drumchapel Opportunities and no formal relationship at all with the COC. Therefore, it has always had to some extent ‘outsider’ status, but it has survived the demise of the COC and remained to develop a new relationship with the SIP and with Drumchapel Opportunities. The history of DCB’s relationship with these formal community structures and his own differing community networks have partly defined the respondent’s current critical views of partnership and participation.

The respondent’s approach to the SIP was tentative: ‘really trying to suss out what [its] role [was]’ Approaches were made informally, in conjunction with another local businessperson and directly to the SIP principal officer<sup>15</sup>. One of the reasons the respondent gave for his lack of formal involvement with the SIP was that, as a local entrepreneur, he could foresee possible conflicts of interest with projects for funding on his own behalf (i.e. separately from DCB), while being part of the partnership structure even if he ‘declared an interest’. He saw difficulty in the structure of the partnership, but

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<sup>15</sup> Indirectly, this approach illustrates both a strength (contact can be established locally and face-to-face) and a weakness (trust needs to be built with an established and sceptical potential partner) of the local partnership approach.

relationships between DCB and the enterprise agency *have* improved since the days of the Initiative<sup>16</sup>, but he remains suspicious, not so much of *motives*, but of actions:

But SIPs is not a new idea for Drumchapel; SIPs is the EEC [*really the Scottish Executive*] and its social inclusion programmes. But they have made it look as though it's a novel idea to replace the Initiative, and people seem to think it's this new idea for the handout basis [sic]; these guys turn up looking for £30,000 for discos - stuff like that - and it's causing total war.

This is an interesting comment from several perspectives:

1. It illustrates his concern about simply replicating former approaches under a new guise (new partnership = old initiative);
2. It shows his concern with the dilemma facing all grant-making bodies – the need to be seen to be doing *something* – even if the subject of the grant is seen as relatively frivolous (discos); and
3. It shows above all his concern with practical and pragmatic solutions (admittedly on his own terms) – such as youth training in IT and another stated concern of his to acquire a redundant training centre – and with the need for a fundamental rethink of the partnership approach.

These themes will recur throughout the interview and their importance lies not in their (self-referential) validity or otherwise, but in the fact that they represent an alternative view – of a powerful, if partly detached, local actor. To reinforce his view of the need for a radical and more pragmatic approach, he says of the SIP:

I see it as another funding body in the area, another bank, a distributor of funds. [JC: *But you said it should start from a different base.*] I think it should start from a different agenda, from its own agenda; that would mean again bringing in people to see how many sick there were, how many unemployed, how many children of school age. This scheme has suffered a real ... blast. So, we don't know what we are catering for. What [are] the needs?

This objection to the operation of the SIP can reasonably be countered by reference both to the Bid Document and to the Baseline Study, and can therefore be construed as representing a failure of intelligence or of a lack of contact, but it does also suggest a

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<sup>16</sup> During the period of Drumchapel Initiative (fl. c.1986-96), Drumchapel Opportunities (DO) had been established as a locally-based charitable company tasked with generating local enterprise under a neoliberal capitalist ethic; as such, it jarred with previously-established 'economic' agencies operating under a more 'municipal socialist' model (such as DCB).

strong desire for the SIP to be *seen* to be setting a local agenda based on *need*. The approach is not negative, indeed it can be seen as strongly visionary:

Do you sponsor a child, like the dream-maker idea; if they want to be a fireman, if they want to be this, if they want to be that? Do you see them right through that sponsorship and keep an interest in that scene right through. [...] I would even go as far as giving them holidays abroad and stuff like that, cultural stuff to give them a bigger spread [*of experience*]; take them *away* [*from Drumchapel*], take them out and let them see things. [JC: *Obviously, your vision of Drumchapel is of it as part of a much bigger world.*] Aye, take them out and let them mix, get them mixing.

This is indeed a plus-sum view in the Wilson model, arising out of need and has a strong spiritual dimension. He considers that in practice so many local needs require to be dealt with that a ‘sticking plaster ... that’s you better now’ approach is a danger. In some ways, he takes a ‘hard-nosed’ approach, but shot through with deep commitment:

I think the only way it can be done is through the schools. [People should become more] self-reliant and have some pride in themselves, too; have some pride in themselves, not to feel as if they’re socially excluded. You know what I mean? Why should they be socially excluded? What are they doing wrong? Snap! [*expression of frustration or realisation*]

The implication here is clearly that if people are labelled (e.g. as socially excluded), they will assume the characteristics of that label and the ‘solution’ to their *problems* (if they are so regarded) will equally be defined in terms of that perception. The danger is that this ‘self reliance’ would produce an atomised and neo-liberal economic outcome (cf. Fine 2000 on social capital) - an ‘escape’ from Drumchapel into a wider economic world, with little communal benefit. He does have a profound distrust of local *agencies*, whether part of local government or locally autonomous, both because of the need for them to maintain their own structures and establishment, to the detriment of local need as being the priority, or indeed as an aspect of governmentalism (Raco and Imrie 2000)<sup>17</sup>. He has a somewhat *real-politik* if ruthless view of the dilemma of community empowerment:

I don’t think people should be ruled heavily, but it does need structures of some kind, to keep it clean, to keep it away from ... You see, in Drumchapel the biggest problem they have is giving [local] people the power to employ people and to sack them. A management committee, that is a

<sup>17</sup> The SIP office has relocated to Mercat House in the shopping centre; this may make organisational sense, but this location is a powerful signifier of the *failure* of community involvement – it was the base of the COC - and in any case puts the visible ‘face’ of the partnership behind the powerful gatekeepers of Social Work reception and in the furthest remove of the building, on the top floor.

bugbear – they can't sack them; they keep them going, they don't sack them. They employ themselves; they're off sick for eighteen months and [use up] all the Urban Aid money. That's theft, and they walk away quite happy.

This dilemma is in some sense the reverse side of Putnam's networks of reciprocity. The density of interconnections is so great and so close that there is no necessary detachment when difficult decisions require to be made; everyone knows or is known by everyone else and the 'reciprocity factor' of a negative decision may be to lay up a store of negative capital for the future for those taking the difficult or unpopular decision. The 'theft' of resources need not be understood literally, but it does imply to some extent a fundamental lack of responsibility. He illustrated his point by reference to a former community project aimed at furniture recycling (for people without much capital):

A lot of these community support structures miss the point. Furnishaid, a great project, should have worked well, [but] went on its arse. Clash of personalities. But the Drum suffered for that; people that needed furniture suffered for that. [JC: *Does that kind of thing have a negative impact?*] To the funding bodies it does; but Rehab Scotland stepped in and now they want to do furnish-aid. And they will do it; and I would let them do it because they will not be locally controlled. And they'll employ the right management structure. It's better to have an outside agency [working on behalf of Drumchapel than to have a lot of local agencies].

This can be glossed as a realistic assessment of local people's current *capacity* to undertake the management of projects rather than a fundamental criticism of their ability to do so assuming an appropriate level of competence. However, it does raise an important issue: in a quest for empowerment, locally-based projects disposing of relatively large amounts of finance and employing numbers of personnel are run by a management committee of local residents. These committees often have little experience of management and there is a culture on the part of the supervisors<sup>18</sup> of either minimal intervention or of draconian enforcement if the project is seen to have 'gone wrong'. Far from enhancing empowerment, this approach can result in either a continuum of dependency (on external management) or on the development of negative social capital (based on expectations not being met).

Perhaps because of his realistic assessment, he considers that there has been a diminution of community spirit in the area, but agrees that there is the prospect for good

and improving relationships between the SIP and the community (and by implication that the SIP's community empowerment objectives will be met). He has a radical view of what is required to achieve this and remarkably states that:

... I don't know if I want people involvement; DCB board has people involvement and we bring in experts. I don't know if we need experts and some people involved in some kind of *board [i.e. sitting together with equal status]*, rather than the top table [*the board*] and them down there [*everyone else*]. Sit round a table [together] with an agenda for this month and say: What do you think?

Again, this statement needs some analysis. It is not saying that there is no place for community involvement, or that the (elite) role of the 'expert' has to be accepted in unconditionally (although he does appear to place great faith in the manager as expert), but rather that a token representative but inexpert approach is not as *efficient* in achieving agreed objectives as a more professional management team. There is also the criticism that this approach appears more short-term and contingent than strategic and freestanding, but it does imply an underlying strategy ('We need a bigger picture.') and is predicated on implementation (with realistic targets aimed at meeting real need). As a final comment on the partnership, he considers that the infrastructure is largely in place, but that the SIP needs a clear strategy *which it can implement* and that there must be a sharing of ideas and resources over the whole city (especially with other SIPs). In summary:

In any business, you have to know what your needs are. ... I don't feel you can keep partnerships going forever. You [just] need to keep creating. Do you need a partnership? I don't know. [*sighs*] There definitely has to be something there. [...] I think we should give grants [to people with ambition]. The partnership should be about *vision and support and encouragement [my emphasis]*. It shouldn't have to do it all itself. It's too much for one [organisation] to do. They should be getting results back and checking on progress. It should be a happy partnership, relaxed, with no pressure.

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<sup>18</sup> The term 'supervisors' used here is intended to signify some external agency, charged with developing a local project, which has ultimate responsibility for how the resources are managed.



### Drumchapel and Yoker – Concluding remarks

It is appropriate in the last fieldwork chapter to (a) summarise any lessons learned from the Drumchapel study, (b) compare these with the conclusions from the Yoker fieldwork and (c) to summarise the findings.

(a) Drumchapel is an area with a relatively long history of municipal policy intervention; although it never fully realised its potential as an integrated township, its real decline stems from the deindustrialisation of the 1980s, combined with the ‘inflexibility’ of its housing stock in meeting either internal demand or aspirations for greater tenure choice. Early housing policy interventions in the 1980s – prompted in part by rapid population decline – culminated in the establishment of the Drumchapel Initiative in 1987, followed by the SIP in 1999. Although Drumchapel has a long history of community participation, its ‘embeddedness’ is fragile. The collapse of the COC in 1996 severely weakened the capacity of the area for endogenous development and the template for regeneration in government and local authority initiatives which *determine* the shape of community participation. The study cannot conclude that there is *no* continuity of participation (both respondents have long histories of participation), but that it appears to have been reinscribed according to an ‘external’ pattern. Conversely, the area has had access to considerable financial and other resources over at least twenty years (although it is still ‘work in progress’). Community empowerment/participation can be said to be diffuse and have longevity, but to lack depth or *thickness* (MacLeod 2002) sufficient to allow it to function as a true partner.

(b) Yoker, by contrast, has had - until the DRC SIP – no integrated policy intervention. It was designated as an APT by Strathclyde Region in the early 1980s and qualified for the Urban Programme, but most policy intervention was project based without any overall strategy or structure. Yoker Resource Group has been central to many of these project developments geared to meeting community need, but it has been under-resourced and subject to external policy variations and time restrictions. It has little ‘structure’ and although it has the capacity to respond to both internal and external challenges, its programmes must relate to the availability of external resources (particularly financial); although it is internally powerful (in terms of ability and trust), it is weak in resource terms and in its structural ability to influence policy. It is most often in the role of petitioner rather than true partner. Yoker has not suffered the same physical change as Drumchapel, but it has a long history of responding to severe socio-

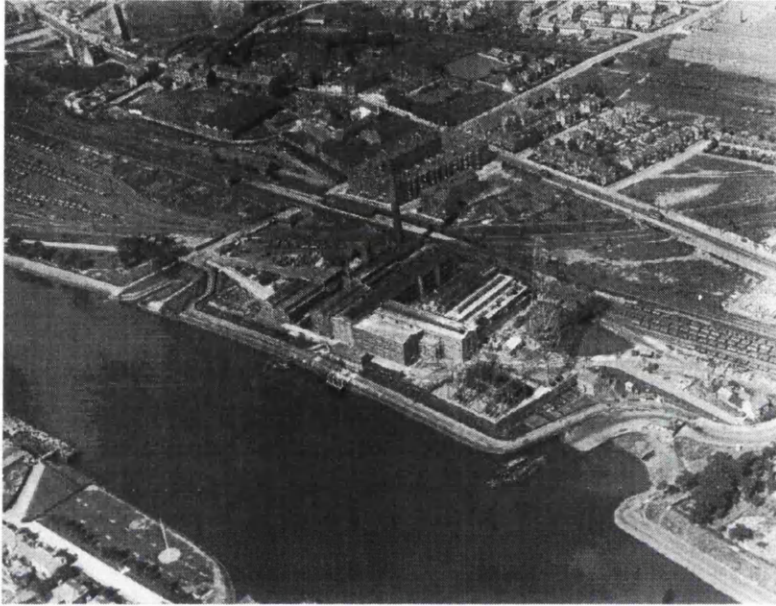
economic change. It may be characterised as having a deeply embedded community capacity, strong social networks and a high degree of trust and ability, but to lack structure and fiscal independence.

(c) The study of Drumchapel has demonstrated the relative strength of a structured approach to regeneration counterpointed by the surprising degree to which the community has failed to develop a strong and consistent identity *as partner*. The context of community participation, though drawing on long-term experience, is *determined* externally and the discourse of partnership remains aspirational (see Edwards *et al.* 2001 on the continuing dominance of the state). There is no guarantee that the present format – the Community Forum – will outlive the SIP. Equally, the present level of resourcing (Hastings's (1996) 'resource synergy') and joint policy ('policy synergy') is dependant on external agencies. Drawing on the Yoker experience, there is a need to develop an autonomous but interdependent form of community participation and partnership which can *survive* change in policy formulation and occupy a space which will make it a *necessary* partner in any future intervention. A partnership must be predicated on its ability to respond to community *need* as the determinant of policy (Wilson 1996) and be managed within a discourse of democracy (Healey 1997). Equally, the concept of *interdependence* cannot be overstressed: autonomous agencies combine with one another to meet *mutual* aims (resource *and* policy synergy) in a structure which eliminates perceived inequalities (*as partner*) as far as possible. If any partner is privileged, it must be the community. However, as Drumchapel demonstrates, formal partnership does not equal continued empowerment; therefore, an embedded culture of informal *partnership working* should be the basis for sustained regeneration.

## Chapter 10

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### *A Summary of the Study and the Conclusions drawn*



**Plate 10.1: Aerial view of Yoker riverside in the 1950s; note the river, the Ferry dock at bottom right, Dumbarton Road running diagonally top left to right and the industrial area in between.**

In contrast to sovereignty, government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc.; and the means that the government uses to attain those ends are themselves all in some sense immanent to the population.

M. Foucault, quoted in *The Foucault Effect: studies in governmentality*  
(Burchell *et al.* (eds) 1991: 100)

We, the Scottish Executive, are committed to building a Scotland where everyone has access to the opportunities and benefits of a fair and equal society. Our aim is to tackle the inequalities between communities by narrowing the gap between the disadvantaged and everyone else.

We want a Scotland where every person can contribute to, and benefit from,  
the community in which they live.

The Scottish Executive: *Better Communities in Scotland: Closing the Gap* (2002: 7)

## Introduction

The function of this chapter is in two parts – related but distinct – firstly to provide an overview and summary of what has been written in the previous nine chapters and secondly, as conclusion, to attempt to synthesise notions developed in the theory chapters with what has been observed in the field; not to employ one to *prove* the other but to aim at a conceptual synergy so that the one is illuminated and enhanced by the other. However (Harvey 1973: 286):

These conclusions cannot be arbitrary. They have to be present, albeit in a disguised and latent form, in the material already presented. A conclusion should not be permitted to introduce new material, but it should be permitted to re-constitute the old.

Therefore, whereas the summary is intended to refresh the memory of what has already been written, the conclusions must not just re-present the previous text but present it in a way leading to a theoretical understanding of the research topic and a new insight of the processes involved ‘on the ground’.

## General summary - Introductory perspectives

The thesis began by placing the topic – of regeneration – firmly within an urban context, partly because of the background of the researcher, but essentially because that represents a challenging forum within which to meet and argue about the issues. It is also a central concern of much contemporary public policy. The chosen study area, Yoker in the northwest quadrant of the city of Glasgow, is a ‘typical’ urban neighbourhood, a village in some sense, which has ‘experienced the cycle of industrial decline, economic restructuring and the redundancy of previously-acquired skills’ (p. 1) in common with many similar areas. However, the notion of typology is rejected; the area is unique, not just in its experience but in the range of its responses, and in the processes which have involved local individuals acting collectively in the pursuit of regeneration, leading to (or towards) the resolution of a range of problems ‘economic, physical, social and environmental’ (Roberts and Sykes 2000). Following Massey (1993), this small area is seen as a suitable arena for geographical research because it condenses (and hence perhaps intensifies) social and political issues observed within a changing and dynamic matrix.

A notable (but not unique) characteristic of Yoker is the way that the local community has responded to these changing circumstances over at least the last twenty years; this response has been predicated on the *needs* of the community as they have emerged in time-space and the Yoker Resource Group has emerged and endured as the most persistent and dynamic vehicle in this process. Apart from its designation as an Area of Priority Treatment (APT) by Strathclyde Regional Council in the 1970s, the area has not enjoyed the policy interventions of many other of Glasgow's deprived areas (cf. Drumchapel). SIP area status in 2000/01 (an intervention by central and local government) has for the first time introduced a comprehensive spatial policy mechanism, but current urban policy - both aspatial (directed towards the improvement of individual or family circumstances based on atomised poverty indices) and spatial (directed towards area-based improvements) - has its origins in changing economic circumstances since at least the early 1970s.

Reflection on the workings of urban policy in the period since prompts three cognate but distinct notions:

1. The concern that policy has arguably ignored deep economic and structural deficiencies and that the ostensibly more holistic partnership-determinism of the SIPs may equally be characterised as 'plastering over' what remain as fundamental structural deficiencies (Amin *et al.* 2000, Eisenschitz and Gough 2003, Pacione 2000);
2. The belief that social exclusion as an impetus for social policy requires a much more rigorous and radical analysis and that its existence may be a *function* of modern capitalism (Byrne 1999) or at least not be ameliorated by the format of current policy intervention; and
3. The doubt (based on fieldwork and experience) that successive interventions by local and central government have led to any sustainable discourse of partnership working.

Policy intervention has not eliminated poverty (nor indeed physical deprivation such as poor housing) and there is a growing appreciation that the problem is both complex and structural, frequently concentrated in definite (often 'inner-city') areas. The very discourse of what constitutes both the articulation of the problem and solution/policy implementation over time may (indeed *will*) change; current policy appears to recognise

the need to involve the community more *as partner*, but this concern could be as much determined by governmentalism (Raco and Imrie 2000) and concerns to shift ‘blame’ from the centre to the local, even to the individual (Fine 2000) in a neoliberal understanding, than to create genuine partnership. Problems have remained persistent (see the comment on the comparative statistics in Chapter 1) and may be characterised as:

- Unemployment or precarious or low-waged employment;
- Poor health;
- Low educational attainment;
- Inadequate public or private services; and
- A damaged or deteriorating physical environment.

All of these collectively constitute *social exclusion* and with other concerns (including youth issues and anti-social behaviour) have become the focus of what in Scotland are called Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs). The focus of the study is not these partnerships as such but the wider notion of partnership working as a base for communal social and economic development. A more radical view (see Byrne 1999<sup>1</sup>) sees these problems as deeply entangled in the structures of modern capitalism, incapable of resolution without radical economic reform.

### **The role of theory in the study**

A consideration of the theoretical underpinnings of local partnership working provided a solid base for the more pragmatic case-studies outlined below. However, the sequence from ‘theory’ to ‘practice’ was not linear, nor was the fieldwork intended to ‘prove’ the theory. But there is an important correlation between the two. Just as a perusal of the literature helped in formulating key concepts – power, social capital, the discourse of partnership – the contemporary fieldwork in turn raised issues which stimulated further and deeper reading. For example, although social capital was seen in a vague way as an important concept in local partnership working, participant observation and interviewing of local respondents strengthened the conviction about the salient role of power in the whole process. Concepts such as ‘submerged knowledges’, the realisation

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<sup>1</sup> ‘... the origins of social exclusion lie with the creation of a new post-industrial order founded on the exploitation of low-paid workers within western capitalism, and that social policies have actually helped to create an unequal social order’ - *from the blurb on the rear cover of Byrne (1999), second paragraph.*

that ‘social exclusion’ was more than a surface phenomenon, the appreciation of the role of governments and issues around agency and structure all helped to form a more rounded perspective. Theory and fieldwork had a contrapuntal or structured relationship as the one helped to shape the other and was in turn shaped by it. Both produced a sharper (if complex) view (Donnison 1998) and helped make some sense of a deeply entangled world.

### **The case-studies**

In the same way as the theoretical approach to the study developed, the case-studies have had a history of incremental and organic development and have assumed their final form only later in the research process. They fall into two broad groups: (a) fieldwork in Yoker and (b) the Drumchapel exercise. The three Yoker studies have been set out so as to follow (‘shadow’) the order of the three preceding theoretical chapters. However, the correlation is not exact and they are intended primarily to reflect a (limited) range of what the Resource Group has been concerned with over the study period.

The *Youth Library* study is a powerful illustration both of the utility of a voluntary project (as well as its vulnerability) and of the downstream effects of the operation of institutional power by an external agency; as such it signifies not so much community empowerment as the exercise of *power* in a starker and more palpable sense. The *Advocacy* project explores the collective response of Yoker and neighbouring communities to an external threat and the complex ways in which the principles of *social capital* and collaborative working were evidenced over a protracted and ultimately successful campaign; the study is a snapshot featuring three characters (out of many more) who have retained a sharp memory of the campaign and to some extent retain it as a point of reference. The *Old School* project has grown and matured with the thesis. It illustrates the growth of a process of *partnership working* – positively and negatively – over a long period which reflects the longitudinal approach to the whole study. The case-studies are *illustrations* but the remainder of the study on the ground remains concealed or subsumed within the thesis itself as the habitus of the researcher.

The *Drumchapel* study is quite different in character. It is intended as a comparison and contrast to the other three based on the different but cognate characters of the two areas, principally on the fact of Drumchapel having a long history of formal policy intervention in contrast to Yoker. Generally, by the exploration of the discourse

of some of its formal documents and by an extended consideration of the thoughts of two local participants, a picture of the area's experience of and approach to its regeneration has been built up in a limited but useful way. Together, the case-studies reveal both the complexity of individual 'projects' within a much more diverse and wide-ranging corpus of activity by a local development group (within one relatively constrained area) and also the difficulty in attempting to portray what might be 'typical' of its work. The choice is highly selective but it does illustrate that there is a relationship between what has been characterised as theory and examples of actual practice and that the one can inform and converse with the other through the perception of the researcher.

### **The Conclusions**

The study set out to explore the nature of the partnership process within the context of urban regeneration; no conclusion was foreseen, the pathways were not always clear and there were some frustrating detours (such as the work on the Disability project) before anything like a goal could be discerned. However, one thing has remained clear all the way through: the study has at its heart the drive to understand the persistence and commitment of a group of people as they fought to make sense of a changing and often hostile environment in their bid to *serve* (not a fashionable word) the community in which they live. A secondary objective was to set this narrative within a broader theoretical and epistemological context and the surprise has been the extent to which this has proved an illuminating and absorbing exercise; considerations of 'theory' and 'practice' have developed in a contrapuntal way – sometimes in a rather confusing and messy way – but the deep interconnectedness between the two has been striking and the one is indeed 'immanent' to the other in a continually changing but mutually beneficial relationship.

Therefore, as the study has progressed, it has become clear that not only is there an inseparable relationship between the three theoretical concerns – social capital is constructed on a base of power and the dialectic between the two can help to produce true partnership working – but that these theoretical notions *do* inform and illuminate the practical narratives in the case-studies. The intention of the study to 'understand' both theoretical and practical issues can be realised only by considering their binary



nature; as narrative, it may be an artificial construct (only *my* reality), but overall it provides a reasonable account of (part of) the ‘real world’ and how the ‘virtual world’ of the theory can make sense of it.

**(i) The base: Power**

The first ‘theme’ or group of research questions in the study related to issues of power and empowerment within a local communal context and were:

- (a) To explore the central notion of power in order to arrive at a view which would incorporate notions of capacity – a measure of ability to act – and legitimacy – a measure of the authority for action.
- (b) Arising from this, an attempt to explore some of the mechanisms through which power was exercised in a general sense and the nature of power (e.g. issues of sovereignty/dominance) to arrive at a view of the shape of power-in-partnership, the concern of the thesis.
- (c) To consider power not as an end in itself, but as a signifier of cognate social and economic relationships and – critically – providing a base on which further relationships might be constructed.

*(a) Legitimate power and the notion of capacity*

The use of the concept of power is a fundamental building-block of the study, but the concept goes much further: power is not merely an *element* in the study, since power relationships are pervasive and implicit in all transactions at the local level and *capacity* (another key concept) needs to be carefully distinguished from the actual ability to realise goals. The classic community power debate and its distinction between capacity as either simple or legitimate still has some legs and whereas it may have become more fashionable to agonise over whether governance is legitimate or not – from what source does it derive its authority? – the issue of simple capacity – in fact a complex phenomenon – is fundamental. The relative capacities of the agents of local government on the one hand and of local activists on the other are strongly illustrated in the Youth Library project in Chapter 6.

The study is concerned not to arrive at an ontological definition of what ‘power’ *is* but at a working understanding of what characterises its operation at the community

level. Central to this view is the notion of capacity (using the historic community-power debate as a starting point), drawing on the work of Hindess (1996) and Lukes (1974 and 1986); concerns with the pluralist or the elite exercise of power, whether it is atomised or relatively concentrated, echo contemporary concerns on the ground over the origins of local power, but are useful mainly in introducing the notion of the dimensions (or ‘faces’) of power – is it open, covert or institutionalised? Classically, these issues were important in the context of political power and as mechanisms for the resolution of conflict; in the local context, it is better to see these perspectives as representing the basic ‘mechanics’ or workings of power. Crucially, power inheres not just in individuals but is also produced in society as social power (Mann 1986, Stone 1993) – resource as well as constraint. Based on Giddens’s notion of structuration, this has been glossed as *power-in-structure* – empowering individuals within the construct of community. Following the discussion in Cloke *et al.* (1991), structuration is seen as a mechanism for understanding the binary nature of power in society as a balance of determinist and voluntarist views.

Hindess (1996) develops the notion of power further and sees it not just as insensate force, but as a function of consent and therefore *legitimate* in relation to the pursuit of collective goals (Parsons 1969). Consent gives agencies the right to govern or to exercise power reciprocally and provides the basis for collaborative working, a primary concern of the study. From Dowding (1996), we are able to distinguish power in terms of outcomes or as social power involving the concepts of ‘incentive structures’ influencing behavioural choice. Although the study generally privileges the role of agents at community level, it does not disregard structure or the unstated power relationships underlying action. The debate on capacity remains critical to the whole issue: to what extent are people or organisations able in practice to achieve their objectives? The question of *legitimacy* can be resolved to the extent that a formal regeneration partnership has a discourse of implied consent predicated on mutual objectives and agreed procedures. The thesis initially accepts a ‘one-dimensional’ view of these arrangements: they mean what they say. In this context, there is no need to seek a ‘private’ dimension to partnership (as suggested by Lukes’s understanding of the dimensions of power); that would be both time-consuming and give no guarantee of a useful conclusion. However, whether there is a more covert dimension to it is a much more profound question and the study must take a pragmatic position. Even if the

process were as it presents it is still necessary to probe and examine it to arrive at a considered conclusion, and if necessary to adopt a more radical perspective based on the fieldwork conclusions.

*(b) The mechanisms, circuits and discourses of power*

Capacity in many ways represents a ‘static’ approach (since it assesses only *relative* ability to use power, or the existence of ‘latent’ power); a more dynamic understanding is to consider *circuits of power* (Clegg 1989), where within organisations (structures) power is delegated to agents who in turn exercise discretion in their dealings with respondents and in ‘reporting back’ to the superordinate power (hence the circuit). These agents have a measure of autonomy and fundamental to the debate on local power is this ‘dialectic’ of power and structure (see above). Crucially, the local exercise of power tends to be *episodic* and within a defined set of relationships; there can be no ‘friction-free’ exercise of power and organisations wishing to operate strategically must form ‘necessary nodal point[s]’ with other agencies. Clegg sees these circuits as ‘arenas of struggle’, but the intent of the study is to move away from the dominance/resistance couplet towards a different view of power. The case-studies assess the roles of different actors within localised circuits.

In part this can be achieved by considering Foucault’s theory of power as expressed in his 1976 lectures. His identification of what he called ‘dispersed and continuous offensives’ at the local level avoids an analysis of power as an ontological concept and concentrates rather on how power is *exercised* (especially in its ‘capillaries’). His notion of *subjugated knowledges* equates with the *savoir des gens*, the foundation of local power-knowledge, often discounted by more elite discourses. The study is concerned to elucidate the depth (‘thickness’) of these local knowledges (MacLeod 2002). Power seen as a form of contract bound up with notions of dominance/oppression is particularly relevant in discussions of formal partnerships, as is the concept of normality as a kind of peace in the midst of a continuing power struggle. Historically, power is concerned with questions of right and sovereignty and is permeated by ‘general and global’ discourses; bourgeois power is about *control*, not therapy (or regeneration), and any autonomous local discourses require engagement in a dialectical way with these more formal, articulated and dominant views. The link between views of sovereign power on the one hand (even if democratised) and mechanisms of coercive power on the

other (used to maintain democratic cohesion) is a necessary reminder of the constant need to analyse even well-intentioned local policy. Local power should be ‘non-disciplinary and non-sovereign’ or *facilitative* as glossed in this study.

*(c) Power entangled in economic and social relations*

Power is ‘entangled’ in the relations of everyday life – economic, social and communal – as developed by Sharp *et al.* (2000). Power is seen as a terrain of *entanglement* both metaphorical and spatial: the workings of power are seen as acting, reacting and interacting in a complex way within the historic framework of dominance and resistance. The authors develop this into the notion of *resisting power* and although this concept is seen as useful in broadening the understanding of power, the study suggests that it must be seen in another mode, as power *from* resistance (or reaction) transformed into a dynamic resource. This understanding of power is exemplified in the case-studies.

Empowerment is a vague and generalised concept which is both difficult to define (with which of the various understandings of power is it to be equated?) and impossible to measure (achievement of pre-set standards says little about process or ability) and it is arguably easier to recognise the effects of disempowerment on individuals and communities (see the Youth Library study and the frustrations of the Old School project in particular). However, this need not be a recipe for either nihilism or despair: the issue is how to arrive at an outcome which matches a realistic expectation of what can be achieved and which acknowledges the capabilities and contribution of putative partners. The salience of power is inescapable, but a radical stance, fundamentally questioning both the motives and methods of partnership, would be to presume too much *a priori* although the final conclusion of the study might tend in that direction. Therefore, a more reformist approach has been adopted, based partly on experience and partly on the development of the study itself, particularly in the field. This stance demands an analysis which is critical but does not reject the fundamental notion of partnership itself. Within the context of a one-dimensional view accepting the broad discourse of partnership, a questioning of actual processes or outcomes as a measure of its realisation independently of the stated *intent* of its protagonists is not precluded.

Both Clegg’s idea of *circuits of power* and Foucault’s notion of the power of *hidden discourses* (cognate but distinct concepts) are useful in understanding the

entangled operation of local power. The conceptual link between them is based on their concern to explain the context of the role of *people* (agents or residents) in local power transactions and the ‘mechanics’ of how they operate within particular matrices. Both concepts share a number of crucial characteristics:

1. They are concerned with the actions and practices of people, although both acknowledge the salience of structure;
2. Both are concerned with non-elite practices: the actions of subordinates versus superordinates, or the power of non-elites stemming from their distinction from elites;
3. Both are to some degree ‘hidden’; agents are ‘visible’ but not the structures they ‘represent’, while local residents are ‘invisible’ or ‘unheard’ only relative to more elite discourses; and
4. Critically, each acknowledges the inherent *power* of agents or local people.

In the local context, just as there is no one source of power, so there is more than one circuit and the general principles outlined by Clegg have wider application than merely within formal organisations. As the transactional relationship between super- and subordinate agents subsists within the complete context (‘the structure’) of formal organisations – a structure which they reproduce and modify and from which they derive both legitimacy and capacity – so the relationship between community activists<sup>2</sup> and their wider local society depends for its legitimacy and capacity on the setting within which *they* operate. This locational<sup>3</sup> setting is crucial and highlights the complementary nature of agency and structure in this context – agents have no legitimacy or capacity *outside* these settings (which are still independent from one another). Foucault’s insight is that local power derives from *its* setting and is hence autonomous and endogenous.

Combining the notion of the power of hidden discourses as manifest within local circuits of power with the concept of the interaction between agents and the

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<sup>2</sup> This is used here as a generic term and does not imply even residence in a particular area; community organisations can employ (‘buy in’) skills in the same way as formal external organisations – what is important is that they share norms and identities with those they ‘actively’ represent.

<sup>3</sup> Location both of place and ‘within’ an organisation.

organisations, communities or structures they represent allows us to contextualise Giddens's ideas on structuration. Individuals (and groupings) derive power from these structures which they in turn reproduce in a subtle calculus of interaction which will modify their character over time. In the context of a formal partnership, practices will develop which, while they derive their power from the partnership structure, will modify it in response to pragmatic circumstances; in some cases the structure will be flexible enough to accommodate and acknowledge these changes – that is, the structures will be self-organising and correcting (Wilson 1996) – in others the structures will be 'rigid' and either a mismatch between discourse and practice will occur or there will need to be a periodic quantum shift to align the two more closely (or the arrangement will shatter – arguably illustrated in the history of policy intervention in Drumchapel). The closer partnerships correspond to Wilson's concept of community development based on need and are less dependent on formal structures ('sovereignty by other means') with prescriptive norms and procedures, the more elastic and adaptable (and hence 'sustainable') they will be.

#### **(ii) The matrix: Social capital and trust**

The second 'theme' or research question related to ideas of *social capital and trust*:

- (a) Following the issues of power, to consider the background against which social relationships at the local level may be constructed or produced in terms of networks and the operation of trust, both critical in any view of local partnership.
- (b) To place these networks within a practical local governmental context providing a framework for collaborative working.

##### *(a) Social capital, networks and trust*

Providing as it does an account of the norms, networks and the form of trust required for collaborative working, the concept of *social capital* appears to offer an explanation of what is required for true local partnerships. At base, it requires a view of the plus-sum notion of power (Wilson 1996). However, social capital as concept is neither simple nor uncontested (Putnam 1993); perfectly rational actors can produce (from a cooperative perspective) an irrational outcome; these 'dilemmas of collective action' raise the issue

of *enforcement*, but some explanations for action (such as game theory) *under-predict* the extent of collective action in practice. One of the principal benefits of formal institutional organisation ('a partnership') is that *transaction costs* - monitoring and enforcement but also formulating policy and releasing resources - are reduced. In disadvantaged areas, community groups often have few capital resources and must engage with 'external' more powerful capital-rich agencies in order to develop; equally, external agencies to achieve *their* stated objectives require to prove their reliability and trustworthiness to local groups and a process of mutual transaction will ensue. The key concept is 'generalised reciprocity and mutual trust' (Putnam 1993).

The benefit of *networks* is that they allow trust to become transitive (see the Advocacy project), since social capital is generally a *public*, not a private, good (although this concept has been given a more postmodern and neo-liberal interpretation stressing more the individual's role; cf. Putnam 1995). Notions of *community* and *trust* are at the heart of understanding how local groups interface with other agencies in order to achieve common objectives and social capital is deemed to *produce* the possibility of achieving certain ends *that would not be achievable in its absence*. An important component in the exercise of social capital is the role played by trust (Levi 1998), seen not as personal attribute but as a property or product of the social system. Trust can be both formed and reinforced through social and governmental structures and it may even be beneficial to see it as *normatively neutral* (the concept of 'active distrust') until beneficial outcomes are experienced.

In its classic formulation (Putnam 1993) social capital is dependent on *norms* (of mutual behaviour), *networks* (of civic engagement) and *trust* (that mutual expectations will be met). Both *reciprocity/trust* and *dependency/exploitation* can hold society together, but at different levels of efficiency and institutional performance. Pre-history will usually determine which model any given society or group conforms to, but the *civic society* offers a normative ideal to which partnership should adhere; it may be characterised as path-dependant but the past cannot *determine* the future. However, the concept of social capital is highly contested, both as theoretical construct and signifier of practical policy (De Filippis 2002). Allegedly, growing numbers question the effectiveness of democratic institutions or simply opt out of traditional social-capital groupings, but the danger is that the concept of social capital is used almost as a universal nostrum for social ills. Moreover, neo-liberal rational-choice notions of the

individual make it potentially politically reactionary and problematical both methodologically and theoretically (Fine 2002). The ‘nonquantifiable’ (or intangible) ways in which groups are produced and *relate to one another* are important and the notion that the interests and gains of the individual are synonymous with group and societal gains is untenable. Social capital theory is arguably complicit in the entryism of mainstream economics into the social sciences to justify rational-choice world-views, but within the context of this study, there has been no intention to avoid grounding the practice of social capital formation in the sometimes harsh and always entangled world of local power relationships (see Sharp *et al.* 2000); equally, its utility as an analytical tool is confined to the consideration of ‘the partnership process’ in urban regeneration and while no validity is claimed for it outside that process it does help to ‘make sense’ of some of it.

*(b) Collaborative planning – bringing government and community together*

To counter notions of the ‘fuzziness’ of social capital, the study attempts to describe some of the processes whereby ‘community’ and ‘government’ interact, to establish what principles might guide and constitute governance at the local level through the vehicle of *collaborative planning* (Healey 1997). There are two useful points of departure in looking at local governance:

- (a) the need to articulate *rules of behaviour* with respect to the collective affairs of a political community; and
- (b) the need to describe *principles for allocating resources* among the community members.

Together, these two concepts encapsulate the purpose of a social inclusion partnership, which has both a corporate and transactional, and a practical nature. There is a complex interrelationship between government, the economy and civil society and there is a desire for more openness and accountability in government and a need to undertake considerable institutional reform, moving from the *hard infrastructure* of institutions, laws and resources to the *soft infrastructure* of capacity-building among communities (and individuals) – or ideally a dialectic or dynamic interplay between them. Governance is therefore the concern of everyone, not just of formal governmental agencies, since local communities are often at the ‘sharp end’ in contested arenas and



the need for them to renegotiate governance (in a true partnership the local state is not marginalized). The key is ‘to transform the machinery of formal government and politics to enable a sustainable and supportive interaction between government activity (and) everyday life’ (Healey 1997: 213). A *policy-driven* approach requires that objectives are articulated, are part of some programme of action and are capable of some degree of assessment and critique. The best model may well be that of ‘participatory discursive democracy’, building heavily on trust, local knowledge and inclusion and avoiding either a rule-bound approach or rigid policies driven by ‘objective’ standards.

The existence of formal partnerships on the SIP model as the preferred mode of community regeneration both solves some problems (of rational-choice individualism or the allocation of resources, for example), but introduces others, the principal of which may be summarised in the (apparently) simple question: *Whose partnership is it?* Whatever may be the intention, the clear collateral ancestors of the SIPs are *New Life for Urban Scotland* (1988) and *Progress in Partnership* (1993), both manifestly government documents – certainly aimed at consensus partnership working but providing a defined template for it as well. Accepting Foucault’s dictum that the prime intention of (formal) government is to ‘filter, hierarchize and order’ (Kelly 1994: 22) those non-elite discourses it encounters in the process of governance, it appears that the structure of the SIP provides it with the ideal vehicle for doing so, in three principal and corresponding ways:

1. It filters out, defines and delineates the very areas and communities which will ‘qualify’ for inclusion within the process through the setting of ‘objective’ standards or criteria;
2. It establishes a hierarchy of participation in the process – (a) itself as a detached but benign ‘hands-off’ supervisor and arbiter; (b) the local authority both as agent of government and as active partner in the process<sup>4</sup>, and (c) the community itself as partner with a strong ‘rights and responsibilities’ ethic.

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<sup>4</sup> In somewhat the same position are the service and other agencies involved in the process; as ‘organisations’ as Clegg would understand them they are of a different order from the community proper.

3. It ‘orders’ the process through its formal documents, its ‘vision statements’, its base-line studies and through annual reports and monitoring procedures – everyone is ‘accountable’.

In order to understand this process, to see it as part of a wider policy shift towards Raco and Imrie’s ‘advanced liberalism’, it is essential to view this *governmentalism* as a manifestation of the inherent character of government<sup>5</sup> inseparable from practice. Although there has been a shift towards the principle of ‘active citizenship’ (paralleling Putnam’s later social-capital formulation) in British urban governance, requiring enhanced legitimacy for local government through its interaction with a reactivated citizenry, this need not be conflated with a reduced role for that government. Indeed, the SIP mechanism arguably enhances the (concealed) role of central government and *broadens* (without diminishing) the role of ‘local’ government understood widely (i.e. including service agencies as well as local authorities) in its interactions with local communities. It is perhaps a paradox of this new governance that (in SIP areas) the interaction with formalised government or service agencies is *intensified* by the process: the remote and invisible requirements of central government ensure a surrogate response from local authorities and service agencies obliged to collaborate with local communities through formal structures determined at the centre<sup>6</sup>. Communities equally must adhere to the formal rules and constitution of the partnership and participate in its local structures. Echoing Clegg, this *circuit* becomes self-sustaining; its controlling organisation is central government whose agents are local government and the service agencies which interact directly with community representatives - through the ‘necessary nodal point’ of the partnership itself - for the delivery of services to an agreed programme. Although the intention of the centre may be construed as benign (the regeneration of communities), this very process has a tendency to reinforce government hegemony and increase both local governmental and community dependence.

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<sup>5</sup> Government seen as *bureaucracy* is almost universally derided, but see de Bono (1979: 22) for the close link between the character of the bureaucrat and the practice of governance.

<sup>6</sup> The penalties for non-cooperation are unstated but severe: withholding of the resources essential for the regeneration process.

**(iii) The product: Partnership**

The third ‘theme’ or set of research questions was concerned with what was classified as *partnership working*:

- (a) On the base of both the operation of power and (in broad terms) social capital to consider critically the operation of formal partnerships, particularly through the lens of governmentality and a critical review of the formal literature of partnership.
- (b) Based on these earlier issues, to consider critically the ‘shape’ of local partnership and what constitutes it.

*(a) The role of government in the discourse of partnership*

In this study, the ideal outcome of the operation of power and the role of social capital within the arena of local practice should be a tendency towards what has been described as partnership working, each component ‘preceding’ and intimately connected with its ‘successor’, not as a discrete form, but as an analytic element. The ‘element’ of partnership is both an important component of the process and the goal of the study and it is essential to distinguish conceptually what may be called formal partnership from the wider (and more important) concept of *partnership working*. Partnership has become part of the normal discourse of government in its relationship with the local, but the concept is neither uncontested nor unarguable and the notion of *governmentality* is useful in analysing a shift in emphasis towards a rights-and-responsibilities agenda, as part of a wider transformation of governance (‘advanced liberalism’) towards ‘activating’ citizens into taking more responsibility *for their own government* (Raco and Imrie 2000). This new role for the active citizen is seen as providing a platform and mechanism for coping with economic and societal change. However, government is itself complex and fragmented and it is arguable that a programme of decentralisation is in fact (in Foucauldian terms) the creation of ‘domains’ of *calculable space*, calculable because norms of participation have been set *by the government*. The crucial question is whether this new governance is still the exercise of sovereignty by other means.

The shift towards a *discourse* of partnership can be seen as having its roots in urban policy since about the 1980s; local government was seen as inefficient and bureaucratic, while the private sector was seen as dynamic and innovative. With *New*

*Life for Urban Scotland* (1988) and *Progress in Partnership* (1993), The Scottish Office (now Executive) has set out the paradigm for regeneration and partnership in Scotland. Much of this discourse is inclusive and holistic, but it operates in a highly-structured way on an area-based model. Areas are delineated according to ‘objective’ criteria and resources are allocated in a formulaic way to be administered by local governmental and other ‘free-standing’ agencies. Communities, through formal representation, *are* involved in the process and its management, but being resource-poor and stigmatised by ‘the hegemonic concept of scarcity breed[ing] pauperisation’ (Wilson 1996: 621) – the poor seen as victims or pathology – the community rarely assumes a lead or even equal role. The need is to combine the policy-driven approach (providing the ‘structure’) with an organic needs- and community-based governance (the active ‘agency’).

*(b) The shape and constitution of local partnership*

Partnership as process cannot be accepted uncritically because of the inherent tendency of government to attempt to order (or organise) this process to achieve its objectives, though these objectives are in themselves ostensibly benign and largely uncontested. However, it is necessary to distinguish between (a) *formal* partnerships and (b) *informal* partnerships – formal partnerships may be characterised as those organised ‘abnormal’ (and episodic) arrangements corresponding to the current SIPs, while informal partnerships (described elsewhere in the study as partnership working) correspond to the unorganised ‘normal’ (and continuous) transactions in the local forum. Regeneration partnerships are essentially interventions by central (or local) government in order to achieve an outcome predicated on the supposed failure or malfunction of a particular area; in that sense they are abnormal occurrences (or events out of the normal cycle) which usually have a fixed temporal span. By contrast, partnership working is (or should be) a relatively normal and frequent event in the life of any community<sup>7</sup> as it negotiates in a myriad of ways and through many agents and agencies the delivery of a broad range of services.

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<sup>7</sup> It needs constant reiteration that ‘community’ is not a single entity; the study has focused on one (albeit essential) community agency but there are others and the multiplicity of agencies and interest groups presents both a challenge to partnership working but also the need to predicate development on perceived local need as defined locally.

The extent to which this can be given a ‘shape’ or described as a ‘geography’ is problematic. The morphology of a formal partnership can best be recognised in an area like Drumchapel, with a developed apparatus of management group, partnership office, community representative grouping and other entities working cooperatively within a defined framework and towards a set of agreed objectives. The outcome of this can be ‘seen’ in a range of completed projects on the ground, perhaps identified with some logo or other device naming the partnership as author. In fact, however, this is a mere surface phenomenon; partnership is *virtual* process – it *cannot* be seen. A two-dimensional representation of a partnership ‘structure’ - showing the relationship of agencies one to another – is simply a flat representation of what may or may not be reality. Yoker, by contrast, has none or few of these characteristics: it is untidy – ‘entangled’ in another sense – lacks ‘structure’, appears to have no programme and certainly has no formal corporate identity. Yet, the study would argue that it has a deeply embedded sense of community, that it can deliver services based on local need effectively and that it has historically exemplified a grounded capacity for partnership working. True partnership within the context of area or estate regeneration must be located firmly in the capacity and needs of the local community allied to the more concrete shape or structure supplied by local government or service agency strategic delivery, which together provide a firm *vision* for progress.

#### **(iv) A consideration of outcomes – theoretical and practical**

##### *(a) Interconnected theory*

The study has developed an approach to the nature of partnership working by developing three principal theoretical concepts: power, social capital and partnership. It is suggested that there is an interconnection between them in an ascending sequence, i.e. that each provides a ‘base’ on which the others are constructed and that each is suffused with notions of the other. Power is considered in its exercise at the local level and as operating through circuits, but it is all-pervasive and is implicit in any theories of social capital or partnerships. A dynamic view of power (power-in-structure) gives rise in turn to the notion of networks and the operation of trust, fundamental to any view of partnership, considered as the ideal but not necessary outcome of the workings of social

capital. No view of partnership can exclude unequal socio-economic relationships and hence the unequal exercise of power, nor can it function fully without a firm network of relationships and the operation of trust. Partnership is entangled in the relations of everyday life and collaborative planning is necessary to achieve mutually beneficial goals. However, formal partnership conceals a deeper need for partnership working which unites these theoretical concerns in a concept useful in interpreting practical relationships on the ground.

*(b) Practical outcomes*

Though empowerment may be difficult to define and disempowerment easier to recognise, it is useful to attempt some assessment of what might constitute it beyond the assertion of the existence of power-in-structure. Classically, four ‘levels’ of disempowerment can be recognised (after Stewart and Taylor 1995):

- Isolation based both on the internalisation of ‘failure’ (individual and collective) and negative imaging and stereotyping;
- Dependency on services, personnel and facilities provided and managed by others;
- Marginalisation, since in the regeneration process power ‘flows around and over the community not through it’; and.
- Exclusion, which is something of a vogue term but is in reality a lack of rights and access to many services and to income, employment and housing, bound up with systemic inefficiency and institutional bad practice.

Within the context of the study it can be observed that Yoker Resource Group does not conform to these types in that it is not isolated in terms of an overarching sense of failure (in fact the opposite), although the area retains some stigma; it does still depend on ‘external’ services, but has itself initiated a service response in many areas; significantly, because of the group’s high profile over an extended period external agencies cannot ignore it in the delivery of local services; and although residents may suffer from lack of access to jobs and services, this is not an inherent failure of the area but a more generalised systemic problem. However, the area does ‘qualify’ as a SIP by objective (government) standards which are not a measure of community *response* (and significantly fail to measure the embeddedness of those responses) and may indeed represent past institutional failure and current poor practice. In a real sense, therefore,

Yoker is empowered in terms of local personnel and structures but is still deficient in (material) capacity and resources<sup>8</sup>.

Yoker may have these positive characteristics, but it has suffered historically from a lack of any special ‘status’ and the sheer lack of material capacity to develop any real strategic approach. Its unique local mix of talent, active or latent, continues to devise stratagems for meeting local need and it can galvanise a large local response (e.g. in the Advocacy project), but its active component is spread very thin – as a network it is strong but slender and potentially friable. The embodied memory of local key players is formidable, but lack of resources and a broader strategic framework inhibits development and leaves them exposed to changing policy discourse, besides requiring them constantly to adapt to external agendas. Generally, this is the stuff of the urban response: change is inevitable, discourses are not fixed and all agents and agencies must constantly adapt, but the local does have its unique power and must have the ability to be an autonomous partner on terms which privilege it and not other more powerful agencies.

### **Concluding remarks**

Given that partnership working has become ostensibly less paternalistic and more accountable (and particularly that it tends to be face-to-face and person-to-person), a range of compromises, negotiations and accommodations will emerge in a spontaneous or ‘entangled’ way. It is unlikely in this *non*-‘friction-free’ environment that any ‘pure’ objectives will be realised and the calculus of these small differences or shortfalls will subtly but significantly change both the structure within which these services are delivered and the people (agents or residents) who deliver and consume them. It is the sum of these small but significant changes which represents the default or equilibrium position of community interaction, although the *content* of this interaction is constantly changing. Paralleling the discourse of power as discussed in the study, partnership working need not be analysed in ontological terms (nor even in terms of discourse or language) but in terms of *outcomes*. There are thus two related but opposed notions: (a)

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<sup>8</sup> It can be argued that Drumchapel, by contrast, is relatively resource rich in facilities and programmes but that the changing discourses of central and local government intervention have destabilised communal input and responses which must continually reconfigure themselves to adjust to the current ‘initiative’ (see Ch 9).

that of the formally delineated and resource-rich, but episodic, partnership and (b) that of the informal, generally resource-poor, but constant realm of partnership working. Can these be reconciled?

By narrowing the focus of the study towards what has broadly been called ‘service delivery’, there is no intention to ignore wider issues of democracy, representation or social inclusion, but *if* the principles underlying good practice in service delivery – an interactive and not passive activity – can be established, they are also an indicator (grounded as they are in power relations, social capital formation and the notion of collaboration) of good practice – *efficiency* – in these areas as well. Using a model of service delivery (Paddison and Jeffrey 1998/9: 59), this would imply the *normative* combination of responsive services with enhanced local democracy (or participation)<sup>9</sup>. In this context, efficiency refers to the optimum use of available resources to achieve mutually beneficial goals; in the context of partnership working, this implies that perceived inequalities require to be removed or reduced to the maximum extent to ensure greatest participation by all parties. It is essential, therefore, that the *capacity* of the various agencies in this process is developed to ensure this end. Carley and Kirk (1998:40) maintain that it is essential that community participation is sustained (even over 10 or 20 years in a ‘difficult’ estate, cf. Drumchapel) and that (my emphasis):

... community development to encourage participation becomes a major project in itself, with sustainable regeneration *indistinguishable* from good urban governance.

Thus, conflating the notion of sustainability with efficiency, it is clear that increased community participation does not excuse government or quasi-government agencies from continued and sustained participation in the regeneration process; this is decidedly not a neoliberal or even ‘small government’ view. Although such sustained partnership working is the desirable goal, this does not imply that the character of participating agencies will be lost and a plus-sum approach will strive for the mutual enhancement and transformation of all the participants.

Another possible way of regarding the exercise of local partnership working is to compare it to the management of *risk* (Adams 1995), at least to the degree that outcomes are unknown and the human factor ranks high. Adams’s characterisation of

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<sup>9</sup>Although local government alone would not determine the precise format of this combination.



risk managers (based on cultural theory) as the *fatalist* (essentially negative), the *individualist* (neo-liberal), the *egalitarian* ('more caution and cooperation') and the *hierarchist* ('more research and regulation') finds an echo all through the study (Adams 1995: 208), but the general bias is towards the egalitarian (perhaps *reformist egalitarian* based on earlier discussion); it is not an unreasonable position. The conclusions of this study, although based on an extended analysis and on a long relationship with the subject over many years, have still a generalised and non-prescriptive feel (a surprise to someone obsessed with policies, programmes and pragmatics). However, echoing Wilson (1996: 628):

To humanise the discipline of community economic development, our research must include the subjective, the intangible and unquantifiable. It must delve into the mystery within the individual. It must tell the stories that connect the particle to the wave, the observer to the observed, the individual to the community.

In its own way, that is what the study has set out to do. Its intention has been to connect theory and practice and to weave a narrative out of that connection. Its very formalism has perhaps obscured the reality to some extent and it conveys only a little of the flavour of the richness of the lives of the people (and agencies) it has studied. If it has managed to give some new insights into their world and revealed some of its complexity through analysis and reflection then it will have succeeded. The study began with an intention 'to focus on *people*; formal structures [would be] considered not in themselves, but principally as the matrix within which actors interact' (p5). The consideration of the 'matrix' has involved an extended theoretical reflection on what might constitute it and be constituted by it, but the voices of people have had their reflections on this matrix recorded and interpreted. In the end, it *is* their place and the Yoker respondents and the wider Yoker community have responded vigorously to changing circumstances over the last twenty years, which has produced an embodied sense of achievement that has sustained them and which will be – in a real sense and recognising their salience in any regeneration process – *sustainable* into the future.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: The Youth Library Project Interview (see Chapter 6)

**Interviews and Issues** As described above [*in an earlier section of the report*], it is intended to interview a number of people historically connected with the project, for two principal reasons: (a) to gain further insights and perceptions of the project other than those of the ‘foundation’ interview and (b) to see if, in spite of these different perspectives, common themes and issues emerge (i.e. to get if possible some sort of ‘triangulation’ of the issues).

The number interviewed is not large and the choice is not random, but radically different views should be represented and the exercise is essentially a *qualitative* assessment of people’s views.

It is suggested that the following are interviewed:

**Library Users (2)** - At least two people (nominated by YRG) who used the library on a regular basis.

**Library Staff (2)** - Certainly the senior librarian (now living in or near Edinburgh) and one other staff member, possibly still employed by GDC, should be interviewed.

**GDC Libraries (1)** - The supervising officer for the UP project, who was closely involved in the mainlining and termination of the project should be interviewed; he may be a hostile witness.

**GDC Councillor (1)** - Again, he was deeply involved in the project and is in addition a chartered librarian. He should have a ‘balanced’ view, but could also be a ‘hostile witness’.

**Questions** Apart from the issues raised by the respondent above, the questions asked of each group will have to be framed differently and additional issues explored. The following questions are intended to draw out different responses as appropriate.

**The Users** To what extent were they directly involved with the library?

Did they have a ‘sense of ownership’?

How valuable a resource was it for them?

Did it give them an appreciation of the needs of others (especially older people)?

What did they feel when the library closed?

Were they listened to?

Do they see the absence of the library as a gap that has never been filled?

**The Staff** To what extent was the library a unique project?

Did it increase their interaction with (a) a specialised group (youth) and (b) the wider community?

Did it give them a different insight into the role of libraries in the community?

How do they contrast working with YRG and a 'normal' library employer?

Were they 'part' of the community'?

Did their perceptions of accountability change when the library was mainlined?

Did it lead to a conflict of interest?

How did they react when the library closed?

Did their experience deepen their awareness as a librarian?

**The Department** What was your professional assessment of the library as a project?

What lessons were learned by the council about delivering services to a specialist group at the local level?

Given funding, would you repeat the project if requested?

Did you regard it as a partnership with the local community?

When the project was mainlined, was it explained to the community what that meant?

How much of an obligation you feel you had to continue the project?

Why was it not possible jointly to fund the project when it ran into financial difficulties?

In the end, who owned the project?

Could the termination have been handled differently?

Do you think the credibility of your department has been damaged in Yoker?

**The Councillor** As a librarian, what was your assessment of the project?

Do you regard it as a model that could be repeated, given funding?

In your view, was the termination well handled?

So far as Yoker is concerned, what impression has the project left?

As local member, did you experience any conflict of interest, especially over the termination?

Was the whole episode a necessary learning process (in reality?) so far as all were concerned?

To what extent did departmental politics override local views?

Did you regard the local demands as in any way unreasonable?

Has the difficulty over termination affected relations between you and/or the Libraries department and the Yoker community?

**Keywords** The keywords for this exercise are: *Circuits of power, empowerment, social inclusion/exclusion, partnership, transformation, accountability and collaborative working/planning.*

## Appendix B: The Advocacy (Incinerator) Project ( see Chapter 7)

**Themes for interview** The project and campaign was above all an example of collective advocacy. A number of themes will be further explored by interview and two key questions will be examined:

- a) In what way did an external/tangible threat galvanise community opposition?  
and
- (b) In terms of capacity-building (cf. experiential capital), what lessons were learned/retained?

A useful sub-theme is to consider (a) these issues from a perspective within Yoker, and (b) the role of Yoker as perceived from outside the area.

*Keywords: advocacy, trust, representation, collective action and 'experiential capital' (i.e. experience gained directly as a result of the campaign and retained as capital within the community).*

### Questions: (A) Within Yoker -

- (i) In what ways was the campaign an important issue to the local community?
- (ii) Did you regard the incinerator as a threat to Yoker? If so, in what way?
- (iii) Was this perception of it as a threat the main reason why you got involved in the campaign?
- (iv) To what extent did the people of Yoker in general support the campaign even if they were not actively involved in pursuing it?  
  
+ (supplementary) Were different local groups/individuals involved in different ways?
- (v) To what extent did people locally trust (a) the officers, (b) the campaign, to articulate their interests?
- (vi) Did the local officers feel they had the support of the local community?

- (vii) Did they have that support because they delivered in terms of progress?
- (viii) How effectively did you/they work as part of the wider campaign?
- (ix) Did you/they have to establish your/their credentials with other campaigners?
- (x) How were they regarded by the development company?
- (xi) In the end, what lessons were learnt from the campaign?
  - + (supplementary) Were you able to apply the lessons learnt in other ways?
  - + (supplementary) Did you ever use the knowledge gained to assist other communities faced with similar problems?
- (xii) What value do you put on (a) collective action, (b) building up credibility and trust and (c) effective action bringing results?

**(B) Outside Yoker -**

- (i) How did you regard Yoker's participation in the campaign?
- (ii) Was it effective?
- (iii) How well did the Yoker representatives perform as team players?
- (iv) Did you regard them as speaking for everyone in Yoker, or were you aware of different views?
- (v) How did you see your own role in the campaign?
- (vi) Could the campaign have succeeded without Yoker's participation?
- (vii) Was Yoker's contribution qualitatively different from that of any other area or *group*?
- (viii) How were they (and you) regarded by the development company?
- (ix) In the end, what did you learn?
- (x) Did the campaign increase your own level of confidence in dealing with similar and other situations?
- (xi) What value do you put on (a) collective action, (b) building up credibility and trust and (c) effective action bringing results?

**The Interviewees**

- (1) Foster Evans, the chair of Clydeside Action against Pollution and a non-local resident.
- (2) Cllr Bill McGuinness, SNP representative on Renfrew District Council and active in the campaign.
- (3) Cllr Craig Robertson, Labour member of Glasgow City Council and ward member for Yoker.
- (4) Archie Bell, environmental officer with Yoker Resource Group and actively involved in liaising with the wider campaign.
- (5) Sandy Busby, senior officer with YRG and a principal player in the campaign.
- (6) and (7) Two local residents, preferably one active in the campaign and one involved to a lesser extent, perhaps only attending one of the public meetings.

In addition to the above interviewees, I intend writing to Donald Dewar (now MSP and First Minister), who initiated Yoker's involvement, and to Caird Ltd, the development company, to see if I can get a more direct view of the campaign from them.



## Appendix C: The Old School Project Interview (see Chapter 8)

**Schedule for Interviews** *Introduction:* Explain the purpose of the interview; intended to be semi-structured, in that the same range of questions will be asked of all interviewees (explain who will be interviewed), but that respondents are free to structure their own answers and expand on them as they think appropriate. The interviews will be taped for the purpose of transcription; the answers are confidential, to be used only for the purpose of academic research and respondents will be quoted directly only with their permission.

For the present, the material will be collected purely as data and will not be written up as a narrative, although it will be included ultimately as a case-study in an academic dissertation.

**The Questions** have been kept as simple and open-ended as possible. They are intended to illustrate three themes: (1) the relationship of the respondent to the project, (2) the respondents' views on community empowerment (especially 'bottom-up, top-down' relationships, cf. Wilson) and (3) the respondents' views on partnership (especially the issue of resource vs. policy synergy, cf. Hastings). I will be trying also to get some idea of how the respondent is positioned in a 'circuit of power' (cf. Clegg) and whether they see the process as a 'plus- or zero-sum' game (cf. Clegg and Wilson); for this reason, the questions on power will be more closed than the others.

### **Theme 1: The Project**

Qu. 1: How did you first become involved in the project?

Qu. 2: What is the nature of your involvement?

Qu. 3: How important do you consider this to be as a project?

Qu. 4: How important do you consider your involvement to be?

### **Theme 2: Empowerment**

Qu. 5: The Group see this project as essential to the future development of the area; do you agree?

Qu. 6: If you agree, do you see your role as helping them to achieve this?

Qu. 7: If you do not agree, on what grounds did you come to this decision?

Qu. 8: What do you consider is the best relationship between a community group and the Council?

Qu. 9: What does the term 'community development' mean to you?

### **Theme 3: Partnership**

Qu. 10 What do you understand 'partnership' to involve between community groups and the Council?

Qu. 11 Do you see a goal of partnership as enabling the various agencies to cooperate as equal partners, as far as possible?

Qu. 12 What do you think is more important: to cooperate over the use of scarce resources, or to develop policies of mutual benefit?

Qu. 13 Do you consider the agency you represent as determining your approach, or are you prepared to act as an advocate for the 'other' group, if you consider it to have a strong case?

Qu. 14 Partnership implies mutual benefit, but do you see a 'gain' for the other group as a loss for your own, or as a benefit all round?

Qu. 15 Do you have anything else you would like to add?

**Thank you.**

**JGC/PhD/YCINT.doc Feb98 c500ww**

