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Social capital and voluntary sports clubs: Investigating political contexts and policy frameworks.

by

Andrew Adams

Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of

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Abstract

This research project is an examination of the role of voluntary sports clubs (VSCs), within a modernised political and policy process, in creating and sustaining forms of social capital. From 1997 onwards, consecutive New Labour administrations concerned with social inclusion and civic renewal have established a pivotal position for social capital in many areas of social policy. In this context increasing political expectations and policy demands are being made of VSCs to contribute to this broader social regeneration agenda. Social capital is a contested term between the democratic, rational and critical strains of the concept, not least because each of which has its own conceptual framework. In order to tease out the distinct differences between the competing strains of social capital, and inform on its potential formation or destruction in VSCs, the concept of the political opportunity structure (POS) has been employed as an analytical tool.

A qualitative case-study research method, within a critical realist methodology, was chosen for primary data collection. This was based on a two-phase approach to capture the perceptions of both VSC members and external stakeholders in relation to the meaning, value and output of VSCs. Based on semi-structured qualitative interviews: thirty-one for phase one and twenty-six for phase two, three case studies were generated.

This study shows that social capital is a powerful comparative and reflexive concept that can facilitate a critical picture of how social relations operate at the micro level of the VSC, and how these inform on a range of other social processes and conditions. New Labour's modernisation programme was clearly indicated as a key structural process that highlights the importance of structure and top-down processes in developing social capital in VSCs at grass roots level. This research project shows how implicit tensions between modernisation and mutual aid, when embedded in a voluntary based organisation and serviced by a simplistic interpretation of social capital, tend to lead to policy misdirection at best and at worst the entrenching of contradictory processes that may destroy the very edifice that is targeted by much social policy.

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List of Abbreviations

ACU	Active Community Unit
ASA	Amateur Swimming Association
ABI	Area-Based Initiative
CCPR	Central Council for Physical Recreation
CLO	Chief Leisure Officer
CSOs	Civil society organisations
CDPs	Community Development Projects
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CCC	Anonymised County Council of study
CSN	Community Sport Network
CSP	County Sport Partnership
DfES	Department for Education and Science
DCMS	Department of Culture Media and Sport
EAZs	Education Action Zones
FA	Football Association
HAZs	Health Action Zones
LAAs	Local Area Agreements
LA1	Local Authority 1
LA2	Local Authority 2
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MUD	Moral Underclass Discourse
NCVO	National Council of Voluntary Organisations
NGB	National Governing Body
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
NRU	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
PDM	Partnership Development Manager
PATs	Policy Action Teams
POS	Political Opportunity Structure
RED	Redistributive Discourse,
RDO	Regional Development Officer
RSB	Regional Sports Board
RFU	Rugby Football Union
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SAZs	Sports Action Zones
SC	Sports Council
SE	Sport England
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
SID	Social Exclusion and Integration Discourse
SDO	Sport Development Officer
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
VSCs	Voluntary sports clubs
YST	Youth Sports Trust

Chapter 1
Introduction

> Three forces are driving modern economies – finance, knowledge and social capital. It is no coincidence that all are intangible: they cannot be weighed or touched, they do not travel in railway wagons and cannot be stockpiled in ports...When the three forces of modern economic growth work together the economy hums, and society seems strong and creative. (Leadbeater, 2000:3).

Charles Leadbeater an avowed proponent of third way politics and a knowledge based society is not the first to propose that social capital is one of the key elements vital to the smooth running of modern society. What he does allude to is the intangibility of these key drivers insofar that elements perceived of as being so vital to economic growth and social harmony are generated by socially purposive activity and interaction by individuals, who are connected to one another in some manner. Implicit to Leadbeater's observation is the notion that social capital acts as a type of collective conduit through which information can travel, thus allowing knowledge and finance to flourish, enabling a stronger and more cohesive society to be created. For some, from the earliest commentators to the most contemporary, this feature facilitates social solidarity and has been referred to as a form of social glue (De Tocqueville 2003) or even superglue (Putnam, 1996, 2000).

Social capital has predominantly been considered by political scientists, sociologists and economists in relation to either: system maintenance, in sustaining the notion of liberal democracy in western societies; or more focused on specific relationships which are beneficial for individuals and specific groups. In the case of the former, many commentators posit that it is the abundance of associational life shown outside of both the state and private sectors (within civil society) that is the key indicator of the strength of the civic core of any given society. For the latter, it is the contextual and structural relations found within that very same space, between market and state, which individuals and groups share as well as the particular relationships developed to specific societal level outcomes, which is of major concern. The issues at stake are essentially those that concern relationships and networks of relationships. A broad range of observers and

writers have tended to preface their varied in-depth analyses of social capital by stating that 'relationships matter' or that 'social networks have value' (Putnam, 1993, 1996, 2000, Field, 2003, Newton, 1999, Coleman, 1988, 1994 to name but a few of the authors who have referred to social capital in this manner). In short, social capital is a contested term; suffice to say at this juncture that it tends to refer to the importance of networks and the benefits arising from social interaction.

The explosion of academic interest in social capital can largely be attributed to the work of Robert Putnam whose two key works *Making Democracy Work* (1993b) and *Bowling Alone* (2000) have popularised and revived the term. In *Making Democracy Work* (1993b) Putnam argued that it was the volume of horizontal networks, norms of reciprocity and trust in north compared to south Italy that accounted for the differing levels of civic engagement. Putnam terms these networks, norms and trust 'social capital'. This social capital was what laid the key foundation for civic activity. The publication of *Bowling Alone* (2000) sought to develop this thesis concerning politics and democracy and extend it to explain the apparent decline of social capital in the USA (Putnam, 1995, 1996).

Putnam's work has stimulated much debate in the fifteen years since the publication of *Making Democracy Work.* The editor of the Quarterly Journal of Economics proclaimed the book as the most cited social science work of the 1990s and Fine (a notable critic of Putnam) noted how the concept 'tapped the intellectual nerve of social theory at the turn of the millennium' (Fine, 2001: 191). In taking forward Almond and Verba's (1963) civic culture argument, Putnam not only linked voluntary associationalism with democratic maintenance and societal value but also served to reinvigorate thinking and debate surrounding the meaning and value of civil society (De Hart and Dekker, 1999, Tempest 1997).

Certainly the Putnamian version of social capital is a concept that has caught the attention of the American (Lemann, 1996, Portes, 1998) and UK governments (Home Office, 2004) in addition to the interest shown by the World Bank (World Bank, 2000). In this

respect Putnam's work on social capital and civic engagement has received most attention and consequently is by far the most prominent. Despite the dominance of Putnam a number of academics have offered alternative accounts of social capital, and two of the most influential in this respect have been Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman respectively. Indeed both Bourdieu and Coleman preceded Putnam and each of their particular accounts of social capital are becoming more widely recognised as Putnam's interpretation is increasingly criticised and dissected by a variety of academics from a variety of academic disciplines (e.g. Tarrow, 1996, Foley and Edwards, 1999, Boggs, 2001 Fine, 2001).

As academic appreciation of social capital has matured from Putnam's reinvigoration of the concept, through a range of sociological, economic and policy related enquiries so it is possible to speak of there existing three schools of thought concerning social capital theory. These schools or strains stem from the three main writers: Putnam, Bourdieu and Coleman, and are respectively referred to as the democratic, critical and rational strains of social capital (Lewandowski, 2006). Both the critical and rational strains of social capital are each closely linked to a broader theoretical framework: in particular Bourdieu's concern with social reproduction and Coleman's focus on social order respectively. Moreover, the critical and rational strains of social capital in facilitating particular theoretical and conceptual interpretations of the structure and functioning of aspects of society, also allow for the critical analysis of what has become the dominant strain of social capital, the democratic strain. It is in light of these conflicting strains that critics have questioned his conceptual generalisations and failure to fully take into account the possible negative outcomes of social capital (e.g. Edwards and Foley, 1998, Boggs, 2001, Fine, 2001). That Putnam addresses some of these issues in later works does not dilute some of the more problematical aspects of his use of the concept. These aspects are explored through the empirical approach of this study.

The democratic strain is notable for its attempt to pinpoint causes of civic activity and focuses on the establishment of networks, norms and trust as social capital. Furthermore, the desire to establish causality for the rise and decline in social capital in the USA led

Putnam to conclude in *Bowling Alone* (2000) that this decline is mainly due to the passing of a 'long civic generation'. This generation was not only very civically engaged, but also socialised more and had higher levels of trust. Importantly for this study, Putnam in following De Tocqueville's 'art of association' (2003), placed voluntary associationalism as the primary means for establishing sociability, norms and trust as social capital. In this respect Putnam's use of the metaphor of the lone bowler was intended to signify the decline in organised associationalism and the rise of individualism and the impact that this had for societal democratic structures, given that as associationalism decreased so did civic engagement so did sociability and so did trust. Thus, the democratic strain invites a clear association between the output of civil society organisations (CSOs) , the pursuance of democratic values and structures with the desire to 'build solidarity in a secular society exposed to the full rigours of a global market and committed to the principle of individual choice' (Leadbeater, 1997a:35).

Social capital, the context for and of its formation and the necessity to establish sustainable frameworks is therefore an issue for policymakers and key decision makers in all walks of life. Moreover it is this notion of social capital as a public good and the ready acceptance of the concerns of the democratic strain in promoting the civic value of CSOs within policy debates that provides the key context for the received view that voluntary sports clubs (VSCs) can have a positive impact in wider society beyond the mutual boundaries of club membership (Leadbeater, 1997b).

Since being elected to office in 1997 New Labour has established the idea of modernisation as central to its political and social project (Finlayson, 2003), and the term has been regularly used as a descriptor of various facets of its public policy. Indeed modernisation does not only signify forward movement within a technologically advanced globalised economy, but also acts to problematise legitimate aspects of public service provision. It is in this latter context that modernisation has served as the generative framework within which social capital has found some purchase as a means for establishing a cure to the diagnosis of particular 'errors in the organisation and

management of particular public services and for establishing their cure' (Finlayson, 2003:68).

The importance of modernisation for the voluntary and community sector in general and VSCs in particular involves the embracing of the core tenets of the New Public Management, which includes a commitment to professional management, auditing and performance management as standard bearers, and an embracing of contractualisation in relation to inter-organisational governance (McLaughlin et al, 2002). The importance of modernisation to establishing New Labour's political and policy mandate is clearly identifiable in the turn to, and strengthening of, civil society. In particular, conceptual weaknesses apparent in the establishment of New Labour's ideological position have been buttressed by modernisation which has sought the renaissance of civil society to overcome apparent social problems or 'errors'. It is in this respect that former Prime Minister Tony Blair was able to argue the centrality of civil society explaining '[that] ...is why the Third Sector is such an important part of the third Way' (Blair, 1999:2).

This aspect of New Labour's mission involving the rhetoric of 'rights and responsibilities' (Giddens, 1998) not only embraces civil society, but formed a blueprint for government to 'breathe new life into our democracy' (Blunkett, 2001:2). Indeed, encouraging people to become active citizens was to become the primary means of civic regeneration and vital to New Labour's overriding aim to reduce social exclusion through an emphasis on the 'organisational capacities of communities' (Coalter, 2007: 538). This communitarian approach employing notions of active citizenship also intimated an individualism borne in the form of a responsibility to include oneself within the potential for self-empowerment through engagement and networking with others. Indeed the current Prime Minister Gordon Brown has indicated an approach to governance that embraces the notion of civic enterprise which implores an active citizenry to not only 'work' within civil society, but also in partnership with statutory authorities (Butler, 2007). In this respect the acceptance of Putnamian visions of social capital are deep rooted in the version of communitarianism subscribed to by New Labour.

The ready adoption by New Labour of communitarian social capital, in line with Etzioni's functionalist version (1995, 1996, Prideaux, 2005) in particular has enabled New Labour to emphasise community as a defining characteristic (Levitas, 2000). Within this scenario the stressing of voluntary activity by citizens for the creation of social capital has become commonplace amongst policymakers. It is in this respect that VSCs have become viewed as civil society organisations (CSOs), and have received much attention (e.g. DCMS, 2000, Blunkett, 2001, DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002), particularly as VSC volunteers make up the single largest component, that is 26%, of all voluntary activity occurring in England (Taylor et al, 2003). Indeed the strength of Putnam's adoption of the bowling metaphor, to signal a decline in social capital, together with his emphasis on voluntary associationalism has ensured that sports volunteering, active citizenship and civic renewal have become conflated by policymakers following this rationale. Unsurprisingly much has been claimed about sport and particularly formal sport occurring within a VSC in terms of the potential benefits to society. Benefits that accrue mainly in the form of human capital, but also in economic and physical capital and include: reducing crime, improving health, improving skills that can lead to educational benefits and above all in relation to the perceived 'positive' characteristics of sport by policymakers (e.g. Coalter, 2007, Carter, 2005, Nichols 2003a, 2003b, DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002, DCMS, 2000, DNH, 1995). Indeed, given that there are approximately 150,000 VSCs in Britain (Nichols, 2003) any expectation of a contribution to wider society, on the face of Putnam's approach, is apparently both a reasonable and realistic proposition.

In this way social capital has been invoked, both mysteriously as 'the magic ingredient that makes all the difference' (Blair, 1999:3) and specifically in the sense that 'a community's ability to help itself [depends upon the] vital resources of social capital' (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000:24). Furthermore, policy relevant social capital allusions although often implicit have tended to revolve around the advocacy of volunteering as a means of supporting civil society. Certainly the establishment of the 'Compact' in 1998 between government and the voluntary and community sectors (Home Office, 1998) provided a basis for the oft repeated desire to increase capacity within the voluntary

sector, and has focussed attention onto 'civil society' as a means of addressing a whole range of social and welfare issues. In a speech given to the policy think-tank Civitas in 2001, the former home secretary David Blunkett rose to this implied theme in arguing that '...we must also seek to expand volunteering...building networks of informal mutual support...' (2001: 3).

It is with this backdrop in mind that much of the increased political and policy emphasis on sport and VSCs as the mainstays of sporting participation in the UK, has to be viewed and interpreted. Of all the many polices and strategies to emerge from central government departments and non-departmental bodies concerning the organisation, structure and development of sport, it is *Game Plan* (2002) that has arguably been the most influential and far reaching. This document is, in the first instance, symptomatic of the power of modernisation processes to shape and delineate decision-making processes, the setting of agendas and the shaping of preferences (Hay, 2002), which enabled the document's very development in the first place. Moreover *Game Plan,* in setting out the issues in a development framework, is itself a document that aims to translate modernisation to those organisations and individuals who 'willingly comply' (Lukes, 2005) with its central modernising mandate. Indeed, *Game Plan* specifically links the benefits of forming social capital to reducing social exclusion and distributing the benefits coming from the feelgood effect of international sporting success. In this respect *Game Plan* implicitly incorporates a Putnamian or democratic strain of social capital within the modernisation it seeks sporting organisations (including VSCs) to endorse. Consequently in following a strategy unit discussion document 'social capital increases with the "feelgood factor", crime is lower, there is increased bonding between sections of society and possibly an increase in GDP' (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002: 63).

It is this Putnamian inspired view of the importance of voluntary associationalism, and its suggestion that by increasing and expanding both the opportunities for, as well as the actual numbers, volunteering in a voluntary organisation (VSCs) that there will be causal and far reaching impacts at the societal level that is central to this study. To be sure the emergent policy hierarchy from *Game Plan* (2002), through *The Framework For Sport in*

England (2004), *The Carter Report* (2005) and *The delivery system for sport in England* (2007b), has imbedded managerialism (Rustin, 2004) within the modernisation of the structure of British sports, at all levels, as a means of delivering specific outcomes. Consequently, it seemed opportune and appropriate to examine the key participative sport structure, namely the VSC, and how it is perceived by both stakeholders (sport professionals with a vested interest) and club volunteers as a key delivery agent in light of its apparent social capital dominated policy context.

Research aim and objectives

The aim of this thesis is:

To examine the perceptions held by external stakeholders and voluntary sports club members of the role of voluntary sports clubs in forming and sustaining social capital.

The objectives of the thesis are:

- To establish the New Labour political and policy context within which VSCs are perceived to be agents of social capital creation
- To establish the perceptions of external stakeholders concerning the role of the VSC in forming social capital within broader governmental policy agendas
- To establish the perceptions of VSC members concerning the role of their particular club in creating social capital and in meeting wider government objectives.
- To establish how individual VSCs identify and negotiate the relevant POS in relation to their local and sporting context.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is composed of eight chapters and divides into three distinct sections. The first section is the review of literature and incorporates chapters 2 to 4. Chapter 5 may be seen as the second section and explains and identifies the methodology and primary data

collection methods that were used in the study. The third section first examines the three empirical case studies in chapters 6 to 8, before in chapter 9 going on to offer some further analysis prior to concluding the thesis.

Chapter 2 sets out to unpack the concept of social capital, the elements that comprise it and how the concept can be applied and interpreted in relation to its eventual application to voluntary sports clubs. The chapter also expands on key ideas of civil society and power, both of which are crucial to interpreting and utilising social capital as a theoretical construct. The chapter also identifies the major contributors to the debate, their respective theoretical positions, and through a critical analysis the way the different strains of social capital impact on the context of this research.

Chapter 3 explores and identifies New Labour's Third Way politics and ideology as both a response to Thatcherite and neo-liberal agendas, and an evolution with the establishment of modernisation as the central policy framework for social and welfare policy. It also charts the embracing of social capital within community as a guiding metaphor for New Labour and explains the necessity for the political opportunity structure to be taken into account when considering the value and role of voluntary associations.

Chapter 4 pulls together the theoretical and conceptual discussions of the previous chapters to embed the notion of social capital within the voluntary sports club and the wider sports policy agenda. The ramifications for a public policy framework framed by a modernised political opportunity structure that contextualises and nurtures volunteerism is further considered in light of policies that impinge on both the governance and structure of the voluntary sports club. The key themes of social capital, civil society and volunteerism, are also developed further within this modernised context as well as that of the role of the voluntary sports club in terms of public service provision.

Chapter 5 establishes the philosophical basis of the methodology employed in this study and provides the rationale for the methods used within this thesis. This study takes a critical realist approach and uses 'multiple sources of evidence' within a qualitative

approach to reveal embedded structures and account for individual interpretations of those structures. Data was collected via semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis. The research design employed a distinct two phase case study approach that employed critical content analysis as the means to interpret the collected data. Phase one of the data collection involved stakeholders in an English county that have an interest in the outcomes/outputs of the VSCs within that county. Phase two utilised two embedded local authority case studies, each of which comprised up to three VSCs, representing the sports of football, rugby union and swimming respectively.

Chapter 6 analyses the first empirical case study, which is at the county level and takes a three themed approach in its analysis. First whether a countywide strategic orientation to social capital outcomes is discernible. Second, whether there is much translation of strategy to structure insofar of the organisational structure to deliver particular policy outcomes and; third, the extent to which stakeholders hold expectations of what and how VSCs can contribute to and benefit local communities. The modernisation agenda of stakeholders emerged as the overwhelming key strategic policy and political driver and subsequently provided an overarching context for the examination of the county-level relationship between social capital, government policy and VSCs.

Chapter 7 examines VSCs in one particular local authority (LA1) through the perceptions of VSC members in two sports; rugby union and swimming. The analysis focused on three areas: strategic issues, structural issues and the club-community relationship. Strategically, modernisation and accreditation provided the contextual analysis for social capital, whilst structurally the political opportunity structure was used to detect where and how VSCs are perceived to be in relation to local policy frameworks and arrangements. Finally the case study identified the extent to which VSC members were able to identify and contextualise relationships between the club and the community, which not only returned to the problematic issue of community, but discussed notions of social capital within such contested areas.

Chapter 8 examines the second local authority (LA2) using the same analytical areas as in Chapter 7, and in doing so clearly provides a framework for comparisons of various

aspects of particular context relating to VSCs as perceived of by their members. It outlines that different perceptions of VSC members are, at one level tied into the structure within which VSCs find themselves, and at another reliant upon individual agency that differently appears associated with particular sports. The importance of these differences for, and in terms of, social capital creation and hence meeting broader policy outcomes is explored within broader organisational contexts.

Finally, Chapter 9 analyses the three competing strains of social capital against the evidence provided by the preceding three empirical chapters. It therefore places each strain of social capital in the context of relevant policy and the relevant political opportunity structure to offer tentative conclusions about theories of social capital within broader policy contexts. The chapter also allows for some examination of the intersection between social theory and policy, particularly where a policy anticipated direction of causality is not borne out by the empirical evidence. It is evident that whilst the importance of VSCs is not to be underplayed, so there is also a logic that demands to know exactly where their importance does indeed lie.

Chapter 2.

Interrogating social capital.

Introduction

Social capital is a term that has been used in various contexts for over a century having been first coined by Marx and used later by Hanifan and Dewey. Its modern usage stems primarily from sociology, economics (rational choice theory) and political science largely from the writings of three academics that each provides the basis for a distinct school of thought or strain of social capital. Bourdieu, writing mainly in the 1970s, infuses the critical strain, Coleman, writing in the 1980s, is the basis for the rational strain and Putnam, who popularised the concept, is associated with the democratic strain. Providing a generic definition of the concept is consequently difficult as conceptions can differ markedly between each strain as this study will demonstrate.

In the course of this chapter a brief overview of the conceptual history of social capital is outlined before turning towards a fuller consideration of the state of play within contemporary thought. Analysis is then offered that considers the debate pertaining to the geometry of social capital along its three major fault lines, which within a rapidly burgeoning literature have fashioned particularistic and distinct approaches to the interpretation of the concept. This discussion aims to provide sufficient clarity to ensure that the role, contribution and value of voluntary associations and particularly voluntary sports clubs (VSCs), and the volunteers who operate within them can be coherently interpreted in relation to social capital theory.

In order to be able to establish the type and nature of the relationship between sport, and particularly that of the VSC and social capital, then it is also necessary to consider both power and civil society. Both of these theoretically distinct concepts facilitate an understanding of how social capital can be created and destroyed, and used and abused. In deconstructing and clarifying the elements that comprise social capital in its many theoretical guises, both power and civil society are therefore necessary in order to

establish the conceptual clarity required by this thesis to provide the necessary platform for the operationalisation of the concept within the field.

The concept of social capital an overview

In possibly the simplest definition of social capital the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has stated that it includes '...the networks, norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups' (OECD, 2001:4). In the UK, the Strategy Unit has identified social capital as consisting of the '...networks, norms, relationships, values and informal sanctions that shape the quantity and cooperative quality of a society's social interactions" (Strategy Unit, 2002:5). In essence, what both of these definitions capture is, in the sense of John Stuart Mill's 'conjoint action' or Adam Smith's 'a sense of duty', a potentially powerful social mechanism for overcoming the problematic notion of collective action.

It is this aspect of social capital that has spawned the popular appeal of the concept for social scientists and has signalled interest among politicians, some of whom have incorporated a version of social capital within their own particular political project. Social capital in the hands of former Prime Minister Tony Blair has been conceptually stretched to include '...bonds of trust and commitment that stem from giving everyone a stake in society and encouraging people to work together for common purposes' (Blair, 1996:116-117). The stretching is evident in the simplification of: (a) the relationship between connections and outcome, thus rendering empty the notion of relative causality and (b) the presumption of a moral good being delivered.

Putnam tends to belong to the school of thought that holds that it is the volumes of voluntary associational activity in organisations as diverse as political, religious, environmental and sporting groups and clubs that informs on the level and amount of social capital available in any particular community or society. It is Putnam's work, which has focused on social capital and its relationship to the perseverance of democracy in the USA that is of particular importance. Indeed since the publication of his work

(1995, 1996) and especially *Bowling Alone* (2000) Putnam has had audiences with former President G W Bush, his predecessor Bill Clinton and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (Lemann, 1996).

In essence, Putnam has traced a decline in social capital in the USA over the last forty years, which he claims is evident in declining community relations, involvement, mutual support and trust. This type of analysis has proved popular not least because 'the culprits', for the cause of the decline, are named and a wealth of statistical evidence has been amassed and presented which supports and outlines the case against the so-called culprits (Putnam, 1996). Popularity has been further ensured by the effortless political appropriation of this type of analysis to inform whole rafts of social and economic policy, particularly as in the case of Putnam's analysis, the blame for the decline is directed towards the victims and not on the state or the persistence of capital per se. However the paradox exists that as social capital is continually popularised through its continued utility, particularly in the sphere of public policy, then so the pressure mounts on the whole concept to become more water-tight and less flabby.

All academics have their critics and Putnam has no shortage of those. It is therefore important that before returning to discuss, in more depth, the work of Putnam that the evolution and development of the concept is given due consideration. A particular problem facing social capital is one of 'conceptual stretching' (Johnston & Percy-Smith, 2003, Portes, 1998). This has tended to occur where a relatively new concept, or for some old thinking reassembled in a new package [see for example Portes, (1998), Tarrow, (1998), Fine, (2001), Edwards and Foley, (1997), for further elucidation and discussion of this point], has been identified with the contemporary social and political zeitgeist, and is seized upon and viewed, particularly by policy makers, as a new therapeutic remedy for the ills of society. Indeed Putnam has even suggested that 'The term social capital itself turns out to have been independently invented at least six times over the twentieth century...' (Putnam, 2000: 19). It is in this sense that the concept of social capital has, to a certain extent, manifested itself in some rather nebulous and woolly thinking (Economist, 10.5.2001). Weitzman and Kawachi (2000), for example,

have suggested that social capital can have a protective effect on students' binge drinking. They argue that one's volume of volunteering activity – which results in a corresponding scale of volume of personal social capital – acted as a deterrent to binge drinking. This type of analysis makes a number of assumptions concerning not only the definition, but perhaps more importantly, the relative organisation and intra-relationship of social capital's constituent parts. The results of this study are somewhat misleading given that all volunteering is considered on a par, no causal direction is shown and the outcome of social capital is indistinct from what comprises it in the first place.

One is therefore able to understand why Johnston and Percy-Smith (2003) have referred to social capital as 'the contemporary equivalent of the philosopher's stone' (p.332). This notion of conceptual stretch will be returned to later in this chapter, for now the words of Portes provide a cautionary warning, in that

> 'Social capital now appears poised to repeat the experience suffered by other promising social science concepts in the past: from intellectual insight appropriated by policy pundits, to journalistic cliché, to eventual oblivion" (Portes, 1996:1).

This contention is echoed by Fine's aphorism and critique that social capital constitutes '...a sack of analytical potatoes' (Fine, 2001) which approximates middle-range theory (constituting analysis somewhere between grand theory and description) resulting in a "...web of eclecticism in which the notion of social capital floats freely from one meaning to another with little attention to conceptual depth or rigour" (Fine, 1999: 9). If Portes's melancholic prophesy and Fine's attack are to be avoided and defended against, assuming one agrees with their assertions, then close examination of the concept is necessary in order to foreground any empirical framework. Given that this thesis is addressing the importance of voluntary sports clubs in terms of their ability as both venues and collectivities to create to social capital – an aspect alluded to in much of what constitutes British sports policy (Strategy Unit/DCMS 2002, Houlihan and White, 2002, Coalter 2007a, 2007b) – the pertinence of such an approach becomes even more paramount.

This chapter now goes on to examine the concept of social capital with a view to its practicability as both a heuristic and explanatory tool when applied to social relations and networks that arise within particular social contexts. It is within this context that the following discussion of social capital discourse is necessarily located, particularly in the sense, as alluded to previously, of establishing a discernable logic and rationalisation for the measurement, assessment and evaluation of social capital in relation to voluntary sports clubs.

The development of the concept

The history of the concept of social capital has been well documented (Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2001, Coleman, 1988, 1994, Woolcock, 1993, Fukuyama, 1995, Fine, 2000b, Casey, 2002, Bourdieu, 1986, Field, 2003, Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, Foley and Edwards, 1999). However, Alexis de Tocqueville is generally regarded by those promoting the democratic strain of social capital as a key forerunner. De Tocqueville, whilst travelling in America in the nineteenth century, observed that, unlike in his native France, Americans had a distinct propensity for forming voluntary associations. De Tocqueville viewed this as being particularly important, given that this collective form of action – in forming groups of all shapes and sizes that could be both important and trivial to individuals' lives – acted to reverse much of the potential for excessive individualism that modern democracies could promote.

De Tocqueville referred to this occurrence as the 'art of association' (De Tocqueville, 2003) and possibly the reasons for many of his observations concerning this sprouting of civil associations were first; that the France he knew at that time was beset by a particular form of individualism, and secondly that de Tocqueville's own family background, coming from a position of wealth, privilege and elitism, imbued in him a particular world outlook. In this respect his expectations were that 'modern democracies' formed with the notion of individual equality before the eyes of the law, would produce a rather dispersed and atomised society, which would result in anarchy, social instability and chaos. His surprise at finding social order is apparent in the rather unquestioning validation given to the role of voluntary groups operating to sustain that social order, insofar that these

voluntary groups were seen as fundamentally democratic allowing even the weakest individual to become strong through their associational life (De Tocqueville, 2003).

However, de Tocqueville's world view did not allow for a fuller examination of voluntary associations and in particular whether the outcomes of participation are equal for all individuals, whether different social groups create different products and fundamentally whether there existed a relationship between American society's power structures and this burgeoning 'art of association'. Essentially for de Tocqueville, his system level account of American democracy in the nineteenth century meant that the micro was subsumed by the macro at both the conceptual and analytic stage.

Although de Tocqueville described civic engagement in the United States in the nineteenth century, he didn't actually use the words 'social' and 'capital' conjointly with any conceptual clarity. In Farr's conceptual history of social capital Marx is identified as the first known user of the term in *Das Capital* in 1867 (Farr, 2004). Marx defined the term (gesellschaftliche Kapital) as an aggregate of individual capital that forms a fund for future production and formed part of his 'radicalisation' of the labour theory of value that underpinned classical political economy (Farr, 2004). Other early users of the term include Sidgwick (in 1883), Clark (in 1885) and Marshall (in 1890) who, like Marx, were challenging classical political economy on a specific front as well as 'attacking what they regarded as the unsocial point of view of classical political economy' (Farr, 2004:22).

Notwithstanding the writings of these eminent social theorists, the earliest coherent use of social capital, that has a direct bearing on contemporary interpretations of the concept, appears to be Hanifan's *Social Capital – Its Development and Use*, originally published in 1920 (Hanifan reproduced in Ostrom and Ahn, 2003). Hanifan's definition sought to differentiate social capital in direct relation to other forms of capital. In many respects Hanifan encapsulated a relational capacity that foretells social capital in contemporary thought,

> '... that in life which tends to make those tangible substances [physical and economic capital] count for most in the daily lives of people; namely,

> good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families that make up a social unit...' (Ostrom and Ahn, 2003: 22).

Thus in the Marxian scheme of things, once one's exploitation becomes apparent to the self, the individual is logically predisposed to unite with other individuals of a similar position and promote their disaffection with the status quo, such that revolution is the rational endgame of their struggle. From this position one is able to postulate, in the context of Hanifan's definition, that their struggle is expounded, elucidated, clarified and amplified through the 'fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse' they are party to as members of the same group (Ostrom and Ahn, 2003). In this regard the lexicon of social capital was forever started, and this depiction of intangible resources in the relational context ensures that connectedness has become the common currency of social capital theory. Indeed other notable theorists such as Durkheim and Weber (Field, 2003) have had their writings re-interpreted by a variety of writers and organisations such as the OECD, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, (Fine, 2000, Foley and Edwards, 1999, Edwards and Foley, 1997).

In Emile Durkheim's theory of integration, in which an integrated family is one in which individuals share values and expectations, and engage in behaviour that promotes the interests and order of the family as a group. Durkheim argued that the internal cohesion and integration of the social group formed a sort of antidote to his notion of anomie, which was realised as a form of self-destruction that manifested itself in suicide (Durkheim, 1970). Within this context Durkheim was concerned with the norms and values of the group and in particular the sanctioning capacity of group rituals, such that exchanges of reciprocity were acknowledged as occurring within a common social structure (Portes, 1998). Furthermore, Durkheim's concept of the group, within his social integration theory, provided an ordered world which guided individual action in such a way that it continuously renewed the bond between each member of that group.

The importance to the current debate over social capital is that the group, for Durkheim, acted as a sort of moral arbiter and guarantor thereby confirming the status of members

and through the possible levying of internal sanctions, ensuring adherence to group norms. Similarly, Tonnies' distinction between 'gemeinschaft' ('community') and 'gesellschaft' ('society') was indicated by the nature of social relations present among social groupings (Tonnies, 1955). Gemeinschaft society was essentially premodern and revolved around the existence of strong bonds and networks that emanated from kinship relations and the face-to-face contact that one might find in a small relatively 'closed' village. Gesellschaft society was differentiated in the sense that a framework of laws and formal regulations governed the way individuals interacted within that society. For the former, the close webs and dense networks of interdependence were the denominator from which social order emanated, for the latter a more atomised population was characterised by more informal and impersonal relationships and the dependency for mutual support was less. In essence, the forces that produce the norms and values of each society, which may be considered as the building blocks of order and structure, are shown to be different depending on the type of society in question (Fukuyama, 1999).

The point of the discussion is not simply to allude to apparent historical determinism, but rather a suggestion of the analogous theoretical concern with distinguishing between the value and meaning of social interaction within particular groups (or between social groups) and the product of that interaction as it relates to future dealings of that group with both individuals and other collectivities. Thus the term social capital is tacitly and implicitly imbued with a vast amount of historical and theoretical baggage.

Social capital has subsequently been utilised by a large number of divergent researchers who, in their wide ranging applications of the concept, have perhaps tended to stretch the concept. Indeed for Szreter, conceptual clarity and parsimony are necessary if social capital is to go beyond meaning 'all things to all people', and become accepted as 'simultaneously an economic, sociological and political concept' (Szreter, 2000). Serageldin and Grootaert (1999), in entering the fray from an economic position, argue that the ongoing debate in academic circles over the appropriate definition of social capital masks the need for an integrated concept. Essentially they see this developing from the various areas of overlap and convergence that are apparent from the many

definitions, types and models of social capital that currently exist. Serageldin and Grootaert (1999) refer to this as 'complementarity', and whilst there is merit in the notion of a definition of social capital that bridges the social sciences, they also potentially reduce its heuristic and analytical capability by doing so. There is an obvious logic to their assertion, that measurability of social capital is both more straightforward and comparable, although this comes at a price. The price being the inevitable compromise that competing definitions would have to make, in terms of their potential in offering a variety of interpretations and analyses, in explaining particular social phenomena under investigation.

In a similar vein there tends to be an acceptance that a variety of definitions of social class do not detract from the concept itself, and few argue for a definition that is all encompassing. Social class is similarly therefore, a contested term, with sociological (including cultural) definitions not so much competing with economic definitions, rather complementing one another as singular and individualistic analytical tools whose interests are best served by a continuation of theoretical singularity. The legitimacy of competing theoretical singularities of social capital is also hampered by the apparently problematic appropriation of the term capital from economics. Critics such as Fine (2001), Fine and Green (2000) and Cohen (1999) have each remarked on the tendency for economics to attempt to colonise other social sciences once the dam between disciplines has been breached. In this case, appropriation by sociologists, anthropologists and cultural theorists of the term capital, has allowed economists to broaden and extend their traditional domain, thereby traducing emergent interdisciplinary fields. This approach thus renders the social as subordinate to the economic.

Contemporary social capital theory, in this respect, has been extended and developed to include a wide range of social phenomena; from analysis of educational attainment – where social capital was employed as a key explanatory tool in the debate over the creation of human capital (Coleman, 1988, Lauglo, 2000, Bourdieu, 1984); to health, where the presence of high levels of social capital are positively correlated to living longer (Putnam, 2000, Hall, 1999, Morrow, 1999), drinking less (Weitzman and

Kawachi, 2000) and being insulated from drug abuse (Aguirre-Molina and Gorman, 1996). Many writers have also focused their attention on a number of wider social and economic development issues emanating from the establishment of public policy that aims to institute or create social capital. For example, in forming social capital in areas where its apparent absence is perceived to affect economic development (Woolcock, 2001, Whiteley, 2000); in the role of social capital to the progressive functioning of both devolved and regional economics (Casey, 2002, Casey, 2004); and in the use of social capital as both tool and vehicle for the rebuilding of deprived urban areas and alleviating poverty (Williams and Windebank, 2000, Putnam, 1995, Mohan and Mohan, 2002).

Social capital thinking has also employed a variety of indices (Putnam 1996, 2000, Hall, 1999, Fukuyama, 1995, 2000, Casey, 2004, Narayan and Pritchett, 1999) and models (Paxton, 1999, Whiteley, 1999, Foley and Edwards, 1999) in order to establish some form of measurement over the increasing claims for social capital's efficacy in resolving social problems. In sum, the prevalence of social capital in a community would seem to impact directly on quality of life which for Putnam means that

> ...connected people live longer, happier lives. Money can buy a bit of happiness...but active participation in even a single community group is the 'happiness equivalent' of doubling your annual income (Observer, 25.3.01:16).

These community-wide measures and the statement made by Putnam tend however, to exhibit rather generalistic characteristics, and are indicative of system level analyses, which may have a propensity to overlook specific social and cultural contexts that frame individual and collective action. In this respect it might be more appropriate or more accurate to suggest that individuals who are connected to networks, which enjoy strong social positions and are then able to mobilise those connections, are more likely to enjoy a happiness dividend from any involvement on their part.

Putnam's statement foreshadows a major problem with the particular analytical framework he employs, which tends to suggest that all activity/participation in voluntary associations produces outcomes of equal value/worth to participants and society alike.

Accordingly, two hypothetical voluntary groups – one a football club run and organised by a number of enthusiastic mums and dads, the other a local branch of alcoholics anonymous – would each be presumed to have similar positive individual and societal outcomes regardless of their specific purpose. As shall be discussed in more depth later, this is largely a result of the methodologies employed, and the nature of the type of data gathered, which tends ultimately to be a consequence of a particular theoretical framework.

Some researchers (Stolle and Rochon, 1998 and Eastis, 1998) operating within this tradition have shown how voluntary associations are not alike, and that the social capital created is different for the specific individuals concerned, depending on the nature of the particular voluntary group involved. In essence then the social context of voluntary activity is essential if one is to make sense of any perceived benefits both to the individual and society, precisely because this approach focuses on potential resources and one's access to those resources.

Power and social capital

Before going on to analyse social capital further and discuss the three dominant strains of social capital theory it is necessary to identify how power has been conceptualised in the literature and how an understanding of power can help to illuminate and inform upon the value of social capital to the social scientist. Given the general agreement, among all social capital theorists, of the importance of networks and the benefits arising from social interaction it is clear that having, using and being able to mobilise social capital resources is dependant upon the capabilities of agents to do so. In this sense the 'generic sense of power' when used in relation to social life 'refers to the capacities of social agents' (Lukes, 2005:71). In short, as Svendson (see also Foley and Edwards, 1999) has highlighted, social capital is likely to be 'unequally distributed among social groups in specific power contexts' (2006: 42).

In many ways this is a methodological issue concerning the establishment of a qualitative rather than quantitative approach to interpreting social capital, particularly as the basic common core to any mention of power in the analysis of social relationships is the notion that A in some way affects B in a significant manner. Power as a concept is therefore of some relevance and consequence and Lukes and Foucault offer two of the most important theories of power and it is these theories that are now examined.

Lukes (1974, 2005) seminal text, *Power: A Radical View*, is a classic reading in political sociology and essentially proposes that power can be viewed from one of three dimensions. One dimensional views of power, such as Dahl's (1961), Lukes (1974, 2005) claims, are based upon the notion that A gets, or attempts to get, something from B. Lukes considers Dahl's (1961) view of power, in which 'A has the power over B to the extent that A can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do' (Lukes, 2005:16), to be over-simplistic and inaccurate as the use of power may produce observable behaviour that may be impossible to detect or measure in any useful way. Furthermore, as Lukes argues this first dimension or 'face' of power assumes that all decisions are the outcome of observable conflicts thus ignoring the possibility of implicit or taken for granted views or values (Lukes, 2005, Hay, 2002). Consequently, in the one dimensional view, power is an attribute of individuals and is associated with the domination of, or power over, others. It is an unproductive zero-sum relationship in that 'some gain only to the extent that others lose out' (Hay, 2002:173).

Lukes tends to agree therefore, with Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who consider the one dimensional view to be an inadequate explanation of power as it fails to consider the unobservable power exercised by the more powerful. That is to say, power also involves the conscious or unconscious prevention or suppression of views or potential conflicts. This mobilisation of bias, evident in all individuals, groups and organisations, determines which issues are organised into or out of the observable discussions and conflicts (Lukes, 1974, 2005).

The second dimension of power is underlined as the result of political scientists Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz's critique of Dahl's pluralism, and accounts for the predominant values and beliefs that benefit one group at the expense of another. This process involves both observable and unobservable decision making and non-decision making processes. According to this view, a decision is a choice among alternative modes of action and a non-decision is a decision that results in the suppression or thwarting of a latent challenge to the values or interests of the decision maker (Lukes, 1974, 2005). Consequently, in order to grasp this second dimension of power, 'it is crucially important to identify *potential issues* which non decision-making prevents from being actual' (Lukes, 2005:23). Demands for change within an organisation, for example, can be thwarted or suppressed without any discussion or observable conflict taking place, either before or during the policy process (Lukes, 1974, 2005). This provides an explanation for the way in which issues may be kept on or off the political agenda and helps to explain how those in positions of power can perpetuate the status quo (Leanard, 1975; Hay; 2002).

The third dimension of power according to Lukes is ideological in nature and involves exercising power to prevent the formation of grievances by shaping perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a away as to ensure the acceptance of a certain role in the existing order. It recognises that power is decision-making, agenda setting and preference shaping (Hay, 2002: 180). This face of power recognises that power is exercised when A gets B to do something she otherwise would not do - but is also exercised when A influences or shapes B's preferences; so that B believes the options offered by A are 'a good deal' (Hay, 2002: 178). According to Lukes, power is

> ...shaping their perceptions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural or unchangeable (2005: 28)

This aspect according to Lukes (1974, 2005) suggests that power does not have to be manifest as observable behaviour and clearly stresses the relationship between the third dimension of power and what Marxists have called 'alienation' and 'false consciousness'. In this regard Lukes' exegesis is not Marxist in the strict sense of the term, although it

does feature the Marxist-inspired, and problematic, opposition between people's 'real interests' and the ideological blindness that prevents many of them from grasping these interests, and consequently acting upon them (Jessop, 1998). Retrospectively Lukes has argued that his analysis of the three dimensions of power only really dealt with power as domination, which has signalled his latter interest in Foucauldian interpretations of power and domination (2005).

Foucault's view of power

Foucault rejected, in part at least, the one dimensional view of power that Lukes described, claiming that individuals do not possess power nor do they have different levels of power. Particularly influenced by Nietzsche, Foucault believed that people did not 'have' power implicitly but that power is an action which individuals can engage in (Foucault, 1973, 1982, Ransom, 1997, Barth, 1998). He contended that power cannot be possessed, but it can be exercised and when exercised, typically, its impact will provoke a resistance. Foucault argued that individuals communicate their identity in their interactions with others and as such do not have a 'real identity' that they possess, nor is their identity fixed, rather it changes according to the interaction with those persons that they are surrounded by and is a shifting, temporary construction.

Foucault's explanations of power consequently reject Marxist and even neo-Marxist views of powerful elites. According to Ransom (1997) and Danaher et al (2000) Foucault's view of power works against the view that there are dominant subjugating cultures that subordinate and oppress certain groups. In this respect Foucauldian theory tends to be at odds with, for example, the feminist claim that women are disempowered by men. This is largely because these theories assume that certain groups and individuals possess power because of what or who they are. Foucault contends that life is not so clear-cut with some men, for example, having less in common with their male peers than with the women they are supposedly oppressing.

Foucault claimed therefore, that the elitist theories of power rely on the notion of stable identities, with no recognition of the confusion that may surround the identity of, for

example, the ruling class or workers, male or female, straight or gay. He suggested that it is illogical to assume that power will somehow be possessed by certain people and not held, in any way, by others. Instead, Foucault argues that power is something which can be deployed by particular people in specific situations, which itself will produce other reactions and resistances and is not tied to specific groups or identities (Ransom, 1997, Danaher, Schirato and Webb; 2000). According to Foucault power is derived from people's empowerment or disempowerment by the groups to which they belong. Although Foucault's vision of domination in *Discipline and Punish* has been shown by Lukes (2005) to be both extreme and misleading, his ideas have a resonance and facilitate greater explanatory power when also considered alongside the three-dimensional model of power in securing willing compliance among different groups.

It should be apparent that social capital involving social interaction between and among individuals and groups does not take place in isolation. In considering the 'capacities' of social agents to utilise social capital there is a tacit acknowledgment that social capital can be created and destroyed in certain situations. Power, because of the connectedness of social agents and their social location is an important factor in necessarily interpreting the how, when and why of social capital resource mobilisation. Indeed, an appreciation of power alerts the reader to the existence and acknowledgement of different types of social capital, which are interpreted differently according to the position adopted by each of the three main strains of social capital theory. The implication of this is a critiquing of the so-called 'celebratory view of social capital' (Portes and Landolt 1996: 21) and calls attention to the 'downside' or 'dark side' of social capital (Field, 2003). Portes' (1998) 'positive and negative' categorisation of social capital essentially differentiates between the two on the basis of aspects of power. Positive social capital is consequently associated with rule enforcement, bounded solidarity and enforceable trust, whilst negative social capital involves isolated networks that exceedingly limit members' freedom of action at the micro level and have a negative effect on society as a whole (Svendsen, 2006).

The concept of power is thus a key piece of the jigsaw that constitutes social capital. Necessarily therefore, if one is to make sense of something that has been referred to as a 'club good' (Strategy Unit, 2002), that is where benefits are controlled and protected by those who have access to them, then theories of power are not only necessary but essential as explanatory tools. The discussion now turns towards the issue of trust, which itself can be subject to power relations as a component of social capital, and is vital as a contextual factor for interpreting outcomes associated with civil sector organisations such as VSCs to which this thesis is ultimately addressed.

Clarifying the components of social capital

The social capital research agenda has tended to be dominated by economists and political scientists during the last ten to fifteen years (e.g. Kenworthy, 1997). This agenda, in being foreshadowed by the work of Putnam (1993b, 1995, 1996, 2000) and promoted under the aegis of The World Bank (Dasgupta and Serageldin 2000, Sobel 2002), has been dominated by a positivistic dimension (Svendsen, 2006) which largely casts social capital as a social fact. The subsequent acceptance of social capital as a social fact can often lead to assumptions being made in relation to its 'measurability' often via a non-specific proxy measure, which presumes existence according to predetermined theoretical constructs. In this respect Hall's (1999) analysis of social capital in Britain used a number of 'proxy' surveys such as the 1959 civic culture survey and 1973 political action survey.

Other than the simplistic general agreement that social capital concerns the interplay of networks, individuals, some commonly identified component parts and their connectedness, there is little agreement on how the constituent parts of social capital are both organised and organising in relation to specific definitions. Social capital is therefore not only a contested term, but is also contested in terms of outcome or output, which has significant ramifications for both its measurement and identification within the broader context of social policy analysis. The component parts of social capital, of which there tends to be a consensus, namely: trust, reciprocity, norms and values, have been

assembled, disassembled and used in different formats. In this regard some see trust as a fundamental defining feature (the process) of social capital (Fukuyama, 1995), whilst others see trust as an outcome of social capital (Newton, 1999, Coleman, 1988). Clarification of the role and relationship of trust, norms and values, and reciprocity, within social capital theory is necessary before the logic and use of social capital by Putnam, Coleman and Bourdieu can be considered.

Separating the sociological from the psychological

In the debate over what constitutes social capital and what amounts to the product of social capital, non-relational issues have come to form part of the definitional-outcome relationship. In particular the more functional definitions of social capital – especially where 'what it is' has tended to be conflated with 'what it does' – have tended to incorporate psychological terminology in order to interpret the functioning of social capital. In this case trust is the most commonly cited variable, a phenomenon that resides within the individual and is based upon perceptions and perceived relationships (particularly involving notions of reciprocity), as well as the actions of societal institutions in forming normative settings within which individuals act in both collective and individual capacities.

This interpretation of trust is analogous to that of Simmel who has suggested that 'Trust...is one of the most important synthetic forces within society' (Simmel, 1950: 326) and clearly is important and vital to interpreting particular strains of social capital. For Coleman (1994) it is *the* essential part of social capital, whilst Fukuyama has gone further by arguing that trust is the basis for defining social capital 'Social capital is a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or in certain parts of it' (Fukuyama, 1995:26).

What is trust?

> Trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on shared norms, on the part of other members of that community (Fukuyama, 1995: 26).

Essentially for Fukuyama, trust is a product of relational activity and although it resides in the individual, can only be produced by one's interaction with others. Those from the human development school of thought might suggest additionally that there is a predisposition to trust specifically within the individual until, through the socialisation process, that trust is replaced by mistrust, which may impact on the corresponding psychological capacity to *hope*. This form of 'basic trust' (Austrian, 2002: 47) is most easily identifiable with infant children who have a biological need to trust that those, whose genes they share, will protect, provide and generally nurture them (Dawkins, 1989). Thus the infant's ability to trust is, in this case, activated by the mother and helps to understand why for some, such as Whiteley (1999) it is the early socialisation in the family that is the key to the formation of basic trust between individuals. This form of trust along with early formed normative beliefs and social codes, together with later membership of 'imaginary' communities (Anderson, 1991), are fundamental to the formation of social capital.

Other key commentators (such as Fukuyama, 1995, Coleman, 1988, Bourdieu, 1986, 1992, and Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2000) have each remarked upon the family as central to the formation or as the primary site of formation of social capital. For Fukuyama the family is 'the primary instrument' of trust and cooperation and is subsequently '...the reason that virtually all businesses start out as family businesses' (Fukuyama, 1999:17). Similarly, Coleman and Bourdieu both allot a privileged position for the family in terms of its 'primordial' status, although Bourdieu (1986) explicitly links this with the creation of cultural and human capital in the context of social reproduction. Putnam however, views the family as a form of collective group which, although part of the social memberships one would possess, was again ascribed foundational status in terms of its impact on social capital creation insofar that 'Child development is powerfully shaped by social capital' (Putnam, 2000). Butterworth and Harris (1994) have noted that, in impacting on wish fulfilment and risk taking, the culmination of this scenario is the possible reduction of reciprocal behaviour among social agents. Additionally, the context of power relations may, as previously highlighted, prove important in terms of clarifying the processes that contribute to the social construction of mistrust.

Whilst 'basic trust' can be viewed as an innate quality that is potentially activated during the first few months of life, the use and inclusion of trust as a key variable within the social capital debate would suggest that there is a presumption that trust itself, whilst not necessarily contested in conceptual terms, is open to interpretation. In this context a number of researchers have identified a range of types of trust that may tend to exist in a variety of social situations. Thus far trust has seen common usage in terms of descriptions of particular societies featuring both high trust and low trust (Fukuyama, 1995, 1999, Fox 1974). Furthermore trust has also been explicitly identified as: abstract (Newton, 1999, Misztal, 1996), specific (Coleman, 1988), generalised (Almond and Verba, 1963, Brehm and Rahn, 1997, Putnam, 2002), thick and thin (Williams, 1988, Whiteley, 2000 – see Tonnies, 1955, and Durkheim, 1970, for their implicit acknowledgement of these types of trust in the construction of each of their counterpoised notions of 'organic' and 'mechanical' solidarity and 'gemeinschaft' and 'gesellschaft'), and institutionalised (Fox, 1974).

Many of the forms of trust outlined above are dependent on the particular theoretical lens employed by a particular researcher in his or her analysis of social capital. Hence, as an exemplar, Newton's (1999) notion of abstract trust is essentially defined as the trust that exists between acquaintances. The importance of this concept for Newton is in its wider application in understanding or placing modern European democracy. Within this framework abstract trust is viewed as essential to a society, which viewed in the post-modern approach, is increasingly fragmented with more and more importance attached to imagined communities. Imagined communities therefore, assume greater importance because individual spheres of contact are constantly changing.

The upshot of Newton's analysis is first an implicit criticism of those promoting the civic culture argument, particularly Putnam (1995, 2000) and his assertion that a crisis within American civic society is down to dwindling stocks of social capital. Second, in focusing attention onto the debate concerning the relationship that trust has with social capital, Newton establishes an appropriate lens through which the identifiable product of social capital – abstract trust – is given a logical coherence. Moreover, Newton's theoretical

concern with abstract trust is located within a purposive framework that sets out to facilitate interpretations of social structure and social relations within the bigger picture of concerns for a coherent social theory.

Locating Trust

Fukuyama has also claimed that trust is the very basis for social order 'Communities depend on mutual trust and will not arise spontaneously without it' (Fukuyama, 1995:25). Moreover in Fukuyama's theoretical construct trust not only defines social capital, but is present in wider society in enough volume to create social capital, which can presumably be measured by ascertaining levels of trust from specific communities. Trust, not least because it can give rise to reciprocal behaviour and shared norms and values within a collectivity, is a vital component of social capital, but to give it pre-eminence as definer of social capital is to both demote the relational aspect of human interaction within a variety of settings and make the measurement of social capital nearly impossible.

Despite Fukuyama's definitional dilemmas, trust (in economic terms) is vital to the structure and functioning of society, particularly as it can lower transaction costs and increase the efficiency of exchange between individuals. For Putnam this process is observable in the way 'A society characterised by generalised reciprocity is more efficient than a distrustful society, for the same reason that money is more efficient than barter' (Putnam, 2000:21). Similarly, for Coleman (and many others), trust is the distinct and vital component of social capital that facilitates productive activity (as with human and physical capital) '...a group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without that trustworthiness and trust' (Coleman, 1988:101). Nonetheless, it remains unclear whether social capital is a producer or a product of trust within society, or as Fukuyama (1995) would have it, both.

The above logic in foreshadowing an apparent tautology in Fukuyama's line of thought also requires an answer to the question where does social capital emerge from? If social capital is created through the existence of trust, what is there that creates that trust in the

first place? Whiteley (1999) extrapolates from computer science in referring to this phenomenon as the 'bootstrap' problem, which in the context of trust and reciprocation, implies that

> ...a minimal amount of social capital has to exist already, if it is to be created, since networks of obligations can be constructed and maintained only in a context in which a minimal level of trust between individuals already exists (Whiteley, 1999:27).

In positing trust as a definitional component and key contributor to the creation of social capital one is able to see the issue as problematic because of the circularity and tautology inherent to explanations based on such logic (Misztal, 2000, Arrow, 1999, Woolcock, 2001). The tautology is created because trust is positioned as both a) a creative variable and b) the product of that creation. In this guise trust implicitly tends to incorporate a retroactive analysis, which in excluding a number of other factors produces explanations that are both simplistic and misleading. Thus to say that a group formed through voluntary association is more trusting than individuals outside of the associative network, is a tautology, because the premise of collective action based on trust is a consequence of trusting individuals coming together in the first place (Portes, 1998).

The other major assumption involved in this type of analysis is that collective behaviour always necessitates trust. In this respect voting and direct protest action, even though potential contradictory indicators of trust – if one takes the 'civic culture' argument of Almond and Verba (1963) – are the result of a form of social trust. In many respects this is redolent of Luhmann's (1988) axiomatic comment of 'trusting in trust' which reminds the reader that trust, whilst a psychological trait, can only ever be truly manifest (and hence measurable) through human action.

Conceptually therefore sociological explanations are overshadowed by the employment of psychological terminology, which is then often further employed in clarifying and explaining some other aspect of system level behaviour. In this way much of the research that has sought to establish the existence of a civic culture within society has used mass data to interpret the actions of individuals in terms of their collective behaviour. In the

case of Almond and Verba's classic study (1963), the drive to participate civically was stimulated by generalised social trust (trust in people in general), but also tempered by a willingness to be led, and an adherence to the decisions of the authorities. This, Almond and Verba referred to as 'subject orientation', and acted to ensure that trust in government enabled the continuing stability of democratic society. Almond and Verba's concern with the system level effect is indicative of the overriding ontological concern of the political scientist in analyses of what might be termed 'civic behaviour'.

Importantly, the separation of psychological from sociological factors allows for the analysis and interpretation of what and how trust functions and operates in relation to the social relations from which it emanates. Thus, trust may not be a commodity that can be simply attributed to particular groups or individuals from analyses developed from large-scale aggregate data. It is too simplistic to suggest that because x number of people are involved in a particular associational activity then they are more likely to trust the government, other individuals, social structures or even their neighbours (Williams and Windebank, 2000, Mohan and Mohan, 2002). For Greeley, social capital is a '...dimension of human social structures whose importance is both obvious and often little noticed'. It is, in Greeley's opinion, sociological par excellence. 'It does not fall victim to [the] propensity of much [of what accounts for] sociological analysis to fall back on social psychological explanations' (Greeley, 1997: 588).

In other words, Greeley suggests that the over-use of social psychological terminology is misplaced and may even dilute the conceptual solidity and clarity which Coleman managed to imbue within the term social capital. Thus it is the relational aspect of social capital that is most important in understanding how social capital works, where it lies and the value it may have for individuals and groups at certain situations and at certain times.

Civil society and social capital

The discussion thus far concerning social capital theory reveals the importance of civil society to the concept. It is necessary therefore, that before going on to analyse the

democratic, rational and critical strains of social, an appreciation of the significance of the contemporary discourse concerning social capital and the concept of civil society is established. For some writers civil society has proved etymological in nature (see for example De Hart and Dekker, 1999, Gellner, 1994, Walzer, 1995), whilst for others (such as Fukuyama, 2000, Putnam, 2000 and to a certain extent De Tocqueville 2003 – who uses the phrase 'art of association' to account for Americans predilection for civil association) it is viewed as 'epiphenomenal'. Civil society is subsequently contested at both the conceptual and semantic level.

Prefacing the ensuing discussion is the general agreement amongst writers that civil society is a 'revived concept' (Allison, 1998, De Hart and Dekker, 1999), which has coalesced around a limited conceptual consensus vis-à-vis its commonest application in contemporary thought, which has tended to be in the context of the functioning and operation of the modern democratic state (Gellner, 1994). Fundamentally, civil society refers to the realm in which individuals can organise themselves into groups and associations and participate in 'uncoerced human association' (Walzer, 1995) or 'voluntary activity' (Deakin, 2001). Moreover these are voluntary associations and organisations

> ...which do not form part of the state machinery, whose core does not lie in the individual sphere of the formal economy, and which are open to voluntary membership (De Hart and Dekker, 1999:75).

The corollary of this definition is, as Diamond suggests, that 'Civil society is an intermediary entity, standing between the private sphere and the state' (Diamond, 1994a: 7). In this guise associational life, whether social, cultural or political, whether of the self-help or charitable variety, has as its defining feature a volunteerism that implicitly rejects interference and pressure from others.

Viewed in this light the notion of civil society has both spatial and operational dimensions that centre on institutions as diverse as the family and religion to the great assortment of voluntary associations to be found in many societies, where citizen action is employed in improving their communities and societies. Almond and Verba (1963),

Diamond (1994b), Gellner (1994), Putnam (2000), Putnam (1993), Fukuyama (1999), and Fukuyama (2000), argue to varying degrees, that the voluntary activity within civil society is the wellspring for the civic virtue that is a fundamental aspect of a democratic and pluralistic society. Indeed Gellner's (1994) statement 'no civil society, no democracy' succinctly encapsulates the almost universal notion of civil society as a protective sphere constraining state interference (see Berman, 1997 for a critical assessment of the failings of a vibrant civil society in solidifying democratic and liberal values). What does become clear is the inherent relationship between social capital and civil society such that Fukuyama comments, 'An abundant stock of social capital is presumably what produces a dense civil society,' (Fukuyama, 2000: 297). The prevailing literature on civil society would however suggest a conceptual realm or site, as an objectified norm, in which social capital can be located, tends to be the modus operandi of civil society theory.

The (relative) current conceptual harmony surrounding notions of civil society would seem to be a recent phenomenon stemming largely from its usage by Eastern European dissidents, and the eventual collapse of Eastern Bloc communist states in the late 1980s (De Hart and Dekker, 1999). Writers such as Tempest (1997) tend to dispute the implicit allusion to causality, indeed Tempest (1997) is more explicit in warning against the potential mendacity of an over-romanticised interpretation of civil society. This scenario of totalitarian regime collapse, signalled for Fine (1997), the moment civil society became privileged over other areas of social life and led to the subsequent theorising about civil society becoming protective, eliciting the notion that 'civil society furnishes the fundamental conditions of liberty in the modern world' (Fine, 1997:9).

This reflective analysis allows the previous interpretations of civil society to be given more contextual resonance in terms of agency, structure, creativity and conformity and perhaps facilitates a more generous interpretation of civil society than the previous parsimonious definitions would have us believe. For whilst there is a perceived consensus, particularly concerning the prevailing theoretical climate that 'privileges civil society', there is also much debate concerning the interrelationship between the elements

– the state, the market and individual liberty – that demarcate the space occupied by civil society itself. The complexity of this debate is further compounded when the role of civil society in totalitarian regimes is considered, largely because of the apparent dissolution of civil society itself within the party state (Gellner, 1994). Thus, in contemporary usage when state power is omnipresent within all aspects of social, political and economic life, as it is in the totalitarian state, there can be no obvious space (in the context of Western civil society theory) for individuals to express their freedom. However' this is not necessarily the case. The rise and fall of the Solidarity movement in Poland would suggest that (a) civil society can be generated given the appropriate configuration of civil society elements; and (b) that Western concepts and definitions of civil society are inadequate when examining the totalitarian state. However, given these caveats, the genesis of civil society organisations in former communist states, as in the case of Solidarity, may be fundamentally rooted within a historical constellation of economy, politics and social order (Tempest, 1997). Salamon and Anheier (1998) allude to this conceptually in their discussion of social origins theory, which treats civil society

> ...not as an isolated phenomenon floating freely in social space but as an integral part of a social system whose role and scale are a by-product of a complex set of historical forces (Salamon and Anheier, 1998:245).

It is with this background in mind that a speech made to the 1999 National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) Research Conference by the South African High Commissioner, Cheryl Carolus can best be understood.

> I have a saying, which often worries some of my colleagues and comrades, but I think that one of South Africans' strengths is their capacity to make themselves ungovernable. It is a positive thing when ordinary people have a sense that they have the power and ability to change things (Carolus, 1999:1).

The Commissioner's remarks about ungovernability are clearly a reference to the importance civil society has played in fermenting resistance in the struggle against the apartheid regime, a struggle that has, according to Carolus, '...helped shape the policies we have today'. According to the conceptual parameters set out by the social origins theory it is the historical forces, primarily apartheid in the South African example

(according to Carolus), which operates to embed civil society in a particular social and cultural sphere. Thus for Carolus:

> There is irony in South Africa's strong sense of civil society because it developed out of the dereliction of duty on the part of the apartheid state. This state used the entire resources of the country to cater to 17% of the population. So, in its place we found a set of institutions, programmes and values were developed by ordinary people, despite the tremendous odds that they were struggling against (Carolus, 1999:2).

In each of the cases cited above a particular version of civil society is accounted for by 'the life-world of civil society' intimated in Fine's classification of a 'radical type' civil society (Fine, 1997). In essence this involves the contrast between life, which 'moves towards plurality, diversity, independent self-constitution and self-organisation' and the post-totalitarian system, which 'demands conformity, uniformity and discipline' (Havel cited in Fine, 1997:10). Hence, for South Africa and Poland, the constellation of civil society elements is arranged differently in direct relationship to the juxtapositional framework that is historically derived and particularistic to the specific society in question.

As much of the discussion has amplified, the reification of civil society is a necessary condition that has facilitated theorising which tends to locate civil society as a counterbalance and site of resistance, or even a trumeau to both state and market. However, to state that civil society is not new is a mere truism and it is to the Enlightenment and beyond that one must look, to understand more fully its conceptual roots.

As far back as the ancient Greek philosophers and on to the works of Cicero and other Romans, the term civil society was relatively commonly used, although in classical usage the term was primarily equated with the state and the smooth functioning of the state (Held, 1996). Modern notions of civil society began to emerge firstly with the writing of John Locke who opposed the absolutist theories that linked individuals and property ownership together with a 'right' to govern. Locke argued that the basis of government was consent and later that liberty for individuals led to commercial freedom and

expansion. It is a moot point, but arguably post-civil war thinkers such as Locke paved the way for the political theorists of the Enlightenment, particularly Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson and Thomas Paine (Gill, 2003). Essentially these writers developed the notion of civil society as a domain parallel to, but separate from the state, where citizens associated according to their own interests and wishes.

This new thinking reflected changing economic realities: the rise of private property, market competition, and the bourgeoisie. It also grew out of the mounting popular political demand for liberty amongst the masses as the new economies impacted on social and political conditions, leading to examinations of jurisprudence within the emergence of the nation state under conditions of modernity (Hobsbawm, 1969). Ferguson for example, in his identification of a 'market' that must be self-regulating and separate, i.e. 'not be allowed to colonise civil society', appealed 'to the moral sentiments of his audience so that they recognise the true importance of the economic sphere' (Varty, 1997:44). In this assertion of the importance of property to the evolution of manners and customs that had accompanied the course of economic development – culminating in the polite and commercial society of the eighteenth century – Ferguson's emphasis on active citizen involvement (citizenship) has a contemporary feel. This view has further resonance given his argument that the market was not the sole basis for a 'moral community'; and that politics was more than 'individual or sectional interests' (Varty, 1997). Ferguson was also critical of what has come to be known as rational choice theory, arguing that it is man's social nature, which is his strongest motivator

> ...to state himself as the member of a community, for whose general good heart may glow with an ardent zeal, to the suppression of those personal cares, which are the formation of painful anxieties, fear, jealousy and envy... (Varty, 1997:45-46).

Civil society therefore, is a demarcated space where individual freedom is best protected, particularly from the state but also from some of the potential ravages of the free market, which critics have emphasised. Walzer (1995) indebted to both Hegel and De Tocqueville has been critical of this type of marketplace ideology arguing that the separation of civil society as a distinct autonomous entity could marginalize state

apparatuses in favour of a self-regulating economy carefully disguised as 'the general will'. Potentially this could result in a subtle form of tyranny '...in which citizens fall prey to a tutelary power that dwarfs them...' (Walzer, 1995: 221).

De Tocqueville prescribed free associations as a 'democratic' antidote to despotism, allowing the citizenry a taste for self-rule, as long as these associations were spread out among the various levels of society. Hegel was also wary of the 'self-regulating economy' suggesting that civil society was independent, but not wholly autonomous. Hegel himself considered civil society to be also directly related to welfare provision (public goods), arguing that Smith's 'hidden hand' was not a perfect tool and that '...the spontaneous workings of the commercial economy have to be supplemented by the activity of the state' (Williams et al, 1997:34). This, Hegel went on to argue, is necessary '...to guarantee the civility of civil society...' (Wiktorowicz, 2001: 90).

The prevailing message is one of wariness in relation to workings of the market and of reliance in relation to the state, particularly as civil society requires a certain civic space within which to operate. The provision, by a state, of the bare bones of a legal framework that constitutes a civic space, ensures an onus on that civil society to work with another legitimising entity, which is more often than not the state itself. In this sense the post-enlightenment discussion of civil society helps to facilitate modern interpretations of civil society, which tend to 'privilege' it above other institutions of governance. Whilst a separate sphere of human interest, civil society is not necessarily wholly autonomous, with a strong tendency to require the legitimacy provided by a legal framework together with a traditional reliance on the state for funding. Even in the USA, for many the bastion of liberal democracies, government support for civil society is widespread. Salamon and Anheier, reporting on the John Hopkins Comparative Non-profit Sector Project, found that 'Government is...almost twice as significant a source of income for American non-profit organisations as is private giving' (Salamon and Anheier, 1997:21).

There is then somewhat of a paradox to civil society, which Foley and Edwards have characterised in their analytical duality of civil society, into 'civil society I' – which constitutes the dense associations of De Tocqueville and Putnam, and 'civil society II' – which represents a sphere of action, independent of the state and is capable of resisting despotic regimes (Foley and Edwards, 1996). For Foley and Edwards, 'civil society I' by crossing potentially destructive social cleavages with overlapping associations, facilitates governance via its 'neutering' capacity. The paradox is that as a consequence, civil society's independence from government is increased, thereby reducing its governability. Civil society is both state enhancer and bulwark against state power and as such can both strengthen and weaken government. Complicit within this paradoxical relationship is the role of government, particularly in Britain with the election in 1997 of New Labour and their adoption of a 'third way' which posited a revival of civil society as crucial for effective and 'ecologically' efficient government (Giddens, 1998). For New Labour, developed in an effective manner, civil society could '...offer choice and responsiveness in the delivery of public services...promote civic culture and forms of community development' (Giddens, 2000: 81-82). This form of enmeshing can militate against fragmentary modernistic forces although it is predicated on the building of mutually beneficial relationships, which is the mainstay of social capital theory.

The different approaches to social capital

As the preceding discussion has demonstrated, the dominant view of civil society is as a third space, a civic sphere which tends, along with other institutions such as the family and religion, to be filled by a variety of voluntary associations. These associations, forming constituent parts of a complex whole, tend to be based on the existence of mutually beneficial relationships both within and external to particular associations. Moreover the acceptance that social capital refers to social networks and the benefits that can accrue from involvement in such networks, and that voluntarism sponsors forms of inter-personal trust, has become enmeshed within the broader notion that voluntary sports clubs (VSCs) play a key role in civil society and have great potential for 'social participation'. Indeed this is the thrust of the *2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey* which

has identified, that over a twelve month period, 42 per cent of the adult population of England was involved in groups, clubs or organisations with a sport or exercise aspect (Attwood et al, 2004). Coalter (2007a) argues that the key policy message coming from this sort of research is that involvement in sport associationalism has potentially positive benefits not least of which is the 'exercise of civic responsibility' (p.545).

Social capital is both a multifaceted and contested concept with each strain representing not only a particular analytical framework, but also an epistemological and ontological framework that predisposes one to specific methodological and operational issues. It is necessary therefore, to outline the mechanisms and mechanics of three strains of social capital.

As the dominant approach to social capital, the thrust of Putnam's work (1993, 1995, 2000) has already been outlined, suffice to say at this juncture that his macro-level approach purports to explain how generic problems of collective action might be overcome. In this regard social capital is framed within the broader context of the collective benefits that it might provide. A different approach to understanding the role of social capital is offered by James Coleman who was perhaps more interested in understanding social order and to this end has developed an approach that is interdisciplinary in that it combines the concerns of sociology with the rational thought of economics (Coleman, 1994, Coleman, 1988). Coleman was concerned to develop an explanation for human action rather than just provide explanations that clarified the conditions and influences under which certain human action could be interpreted. Thus this second social capital thesis proposes an economic generator of human action, that of rational choice theory which '...sees the actor as having goals independently arrived at, as acting independently, and as wholly self-interested. Its principal virtue lies in having a principle of action, that of maximising utility' (Coleman, 1988:95).

Bourdieu was the first to offer more than just a simplistic definition of social capital and, for Portes, was the first writer to provide a 'systematic contemporary analysis of social capital' (Portes, 1998:3). Bourdieu's approach is centred on his project to understand

'social practice' and particularly his concern with social reproduction – producing a particularly socialised version of social capital (Jenkins, 1992). For Bourdieu, capital does not have to take an overtly financial form and he presents social capital as one of three fundamental types of capital: economic, cultural and social. Social capital thus constitutes a very human property that is essentially generated and bounded by the relations and relationships that humans form with one another over time.

Robert Putnam

Putnam began his varied analyses of social capital by looking at civic relations and regional government in Italy, finding (among other things) that the most civic regions – that is those regions where high levels of social capital were evident – tended to have better, more democratic and more representative regional government (1993). Putnam then moved on to focus on the USA (1995, 2000), and in particular the perceived relationship between the apparent decline in citizen participation in associational activities and levels of social capital. Putnam has offered a number of definitions of social capital that essentially have been refinements of each previous definition. He first defined social capital as '...those features of social organisations, such as networks, norms and trust, that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit' (Putnam, 1993:35). Importantly, Putnam views social capital as a collective feature, something that is not just a public good, but is intrinsically for the public good (Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003). Later Putnam refined his definition, dropping the reference to mutual benefit, bringing clarity and an increased readiness for measurement '...to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity that arise from them' (Putnam, 2000: 19).

In essence then for Putnam social capital boils down to an individual's capacity to feel connected within a variety of networks that are not mutually exclusive, but form part of an individual's social wage. Social capital in this context thus refers to the propensity that those networks have for the provision of the norms by which trustworthy behaviour is generated. The culmination for Putnam would see individuals being swept up on a tide of

reciprocal behaviour in a sea of trust, subsequently facilitating the smooth running of society and contributing towards democratic stability.

Manifestly there is a presumption of efficiency within Putnam's analysis that a) networks provide communication channels for individuals and b) that they facilitate exchange between individuals. According to Putnam this is largely due to the mutual obligations demanded by one's involvement in a particular network, which he refers to as general reciprocity. Putnam describes general reciprocity, comprising 'thick' and 'thin' trust, as the 'touchstone' (2000: 134) of social capital and goes on to identify thin trust as of more importance as 'it extends the radius of trust beyond the roster of people whom we can know personally' (2000: 136). Putnam's notion of 'thin' trust with its similar emphasis on abstractly knowing others is very similar to Newton's (1999) idea of abstract trust, and signals once again the importance of imagined communities within a world where fixed identities can no longer be guaranteed. For Putnam then, trust contributes to many other things such as volunteering and political and community organisations, and also that those that trust 'display many other forms of civic virtue' (2000:137). These traits, Putnam suggests, are necessary for a civic community which according to Putnam is attributable to efficiency in the sense that 'A society characterised by general reciprocity is more efficient than a distrustful society – for the same reason money is more efficient than barter' (2000:21).

Putnam also considered associational life as the great touchstone of social capital. Indeed he accorded voluntary organisations, such as VSCs, two important functions: the 'internal' effects (i.e. the benefits for the participants), and the 'external' effects (i.e. the benefits for the wider community). The first aspect is straightforward, in that they 'instil in their members habits of cooperation and public spiritedness, as well as the practical skills necessary to partake in public life' (2000: 338). Beyond this function they have external effects which

> ...allow individuals to express their interests and demands on government and to protect themselves from abuses of power by their political leaders.

> Political information flows through social networks, and in these networks public life is discussed. (2000:338)

This is similar to Almond and Verba's view of voluntary associations as providing a potential political resource in *The Civic Culture* (1963). They attempt to demonstrate Tocqueville's assertion that associations have wider benefits, and they see such associations as being a key intermediary between the individual and the state. Putnam also sees voluntary associations as providing training in citizenship, as 'schools for democracy (2000:338).

With such a focus on voluntary associations and the potential therewith for social action, Putnam, in his research, has been able to aggregate large sets of data to make assumptions about first the relative density of associational life and democratic efficiency in Italy; and latterly in respect of the USA, provide a meticulous account of the decline in social capital and its impact on wider civil society.

Lastly, in this brief overview of Putnam's contribution to social capital theory, he importantly distinguished between two forms of social capital: bridging, forming links with people unlike me, and bonding, forming links with people like me. In essence bridging social capital is inclusive as it involves 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973), facilitating relationships with individuals on the basis of acquaintance whilst bonding social capital is exclusive, reinforcing established relationships particularly within the family and also within a particular social group of which one may be a member. For Putnam, bridging social capital is a 'kind of sociological WD40' whilst the bonding variety is a 'kind of sociological superglue' (Putnam, 2000:13). Thus for Putnam

> Bridging networks...are better for linkage to external assets and for information diffusion...when seeking jobs – or political allies – the 'weak' ties that link me to distant acquaintances who move in different circles from mine are actually more valuable than the 'strong' ties that link me to relatives and intimate friends whose sociological niche is very like my own (2000: 22-23)

Essentially, wrapped up in this metaphorical use of social capital is a whole range of qualitative factors that impute a complex dynamic in the formation and expression of

social capital via associational activity. For example trust and trustworthiness are central to the social capital debate and much of the discussion has focused on whether these particular elements constitute an outcome of social capital, is part of its process, or a combination of the two (Newton, 1999, Edwards and Foley, 2001).

James Coleman

Putnam clearly acknowledges the influence of the work of James Coleman in the formulation of his particular version of social capital. Coleman mainly considers social capital in relation to the creation of human capital and uses the concept to look at education and the related issue of youth in supporting the community. Coleman, following in a more economic tradition in his use of the term – particularly in relation to rational choice theory, stated that

> Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors (Coleman, 1988:98).

Coleman thus views social capital as a functional multi-entity, that is defined via the actions of actors in terms of what it does productively, which for some has meant that in so doing it 'makes it impossible to separate what it is from what it does' (Edwards and Foley, 1997). Portes has asserted that the upshot of this scenario is that causes and consequences become confused, to be sure Portes argued that defining social capital '...as equivalent with the resources thus obtained is tantamount to saying that the successful succeeded' (Portes, 1998:5). However, Coleman was really concerned with the role of social capital as a concept to facilitate action and although the definition undoubtedly helped to lead, as Portes suggests, to the proliferation of processes being labelled social capital (via Putnam), it is not fair to blame Coleman for this. He, unlike Putnam and those of the democratic strain, only uses the concept to examine one aspect of social relations, and separating it from the role it plays in Coleman's broader work is a misuse of his version of the concept.

Coleman's broad theoretical project was to balance economic and social theories which provide the basis for his concept of social capital. Indeed his concern for action enabled him to problematise both streams: the sociological largely because an 'engine of action' was missing, resulting in an over-socialised view; and the economic because the role of the individual is overstated which 'flies in the face of empirical reality' (1988:96). Generally the sociological stream emphasises structure and the economic stream highlights agency, and Coleman sought to synthesise the two streams and uses the notion of social capital to assist in this process. In this regard his aim was to

> ...import the economists' principle of rational action for use in the analysis of social systems proper, including but not limited to economic systems, and to do so without discarding social organisation in the process. The concept of social capital is a tool to aid in this (Coleman, 1988:97).

Essentially for Coleman social capital plays a vital role in what is in essence a modified theory of rational choice that takes into account the wider social environment of the individual.

Social capital following Coleman's concept is a relational attribute and not the property of individuals. Rather it inheres in the relationships and the interactions of individuals and coupled with the rational choice theory approach implies that individuals approach their connectedness with the view to 'maximising their utility' (Coleman, 1988). Social capital is also considered to be context dependent, in that what constitutes social capital in one situation may not in another, and this follows both spatially and temporally, which Coleman refers to as its 'limited fungibility' (1988).

Thus for Coleman, social and public 'goods' are created by individuals pursuing their own rational desires (their self-interest) in a socially relational context. Coleman went on to clarify social capital further as,

> ...the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organisation and that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or young person. These resources differ for

> different persons and can constitute an important advantage for children and adolescents in the development of their human capital (Coleman, 1994: 300).

Importantly Coleman recognises that there is differential access to 'resources', which tends to operate at a subconscious level and hence social capital does not tend to be distributed evenly either. Second Coleman identifies that social capital has an important role to play in the development of individuals, and although he specifically only referred to young people, social capital can be advantageous and disadvantageous as well as positive and negative. Coleman thus recognises that power relations play an important role in one's ability to access resources as well as tacitly acknowledging that social capital itself can amply reflect those potential power differentials.

Coleman (1994) asserts that there are various types of social capital and he identifies six ways that types of social relations can 'constitute useful capital resources for individuals' (306). These are obligations and expectations, information potential, norms and effective sanctions, authority relations, approachable social organisation and intentional organisation. The first of these refers to situations where an individual does something for someone else in the belief that the individual receiving the favour, will reciprocate at some point in the future. Coleman (1994) refers to these obligations as 'credit slips' and suggests that these are analogous to financial capital and depend on two elements, '...trustworthiness of the social environment...and the actual extent of obligations held' (Coleman, 1988:102). In this respect trust is expended by an individual (the doing of something) in the expectation that at an unspecified later date that trust will be repaid – thus a norm of reciprocity is generated via this form of social capital under appropriate conditions. For Coleman, the appropriate conditions are those, which generate an organised society, as 'a high degree of social disorganisation...[is indicative of]...a lack of social capital' (Coleman, 1988:103). Accordingly the nature of the social structure is paramount to understanding this form of social capital. This is in the main because Coleman's functional definition of social capital is structurally located and bounded by the individualistic concerns of rational choice theory and also by the unresolved issue of trust generating and being generated by the process in question. Finally, in relation to

this form of social capital, the amount one possesses is simply the amount of obligations (credit slips) outstanding at any one time against which an individual is able to draw.

The second type of social relation (capital) refers to the notion that one individual can rely or trust another or can be perceived, by an individual, as a social relation that provides information that is used to bring about action. For Coleman these are not credit slips per se, as information channels are embedded in social structures and can be non-deliberate in the sense that particular information may come from channels maintained for other purposes. Again here there is a presumption, as with the first form of social capital, of a generalised background of trust – that one trusts the source of information – that one trusts that one will be repaid the 'credit slip' in the future.

The third type of social relation (capital) concerns the norms and effective sanctions that exist to facilitate a generalised environment of trust and help to prevent what could be a Hobbesian free-for-all (Coleman, 1987). In this sense Coleman cites a prescriptive norm, which in a group or associational situation can act to reinforce particular behaviours, specifically the norm of forgoing self-interest for the interests of the shared group or association. Acting in this respect, according to Coleman, collective associations can provide locations for the provision of public goods, and that it is the norms of the type discussed above, that are important in overcoming the problematic notion of cooperative activity and the production of public goods – a problematic consideration that is implicit in the application of rational choice theory to collective action situations. Coleman's forms of social capital therefore facilitate productive activity, and all contribute towards the existence of trust and trustworthiness, which in turn yield efficiency and effectiveness in terms of collective action problems.

The key aspect that Coleman refers to, for norms to function, is 'network closure' (1988, 1994), by which he is referring to a social structure that operates to reinforce social norms. Closure operates from dyads and triads upwards to large, complex societies and acts as a way of sanctioning behaviour via normative processes thereby reducing potential expenditure costs in the operation of a network. Closure tends to occur where

members of a network know, or are known to, each other and are therefore able to influence the behaviour of other members via strong normative effects. In situations such as this the relations between different individuals and institutions become mutually reinforcing and ensure reciprocity (repayment of obligations) and the imposition of sanctions. Coleman puts it thus:

> Closure of the social structure is important not only for the existence of effective norms but also for another form of social capital: the trustworthiness of social structures that allows the proliferation of obligations and expectations...Reputation cannot arise in an open structure, and collective sanctions that would ensure trustworthiness cannot be applied. Thus, we may say that closure creates trustworthiness in a social structure (Coleman, 1988:107/108).

In framing relationships in this manner, the importance of the social structure to social capital and the subsequent outcomes of that social capital are spelled out in unequivocal terms. Coleman's analysis of social capital is thus wrapped up in a wider analysis of social action. In particular Coleman attempts to show how an approach to social action predicated on methodological individualism can be resolved in social terms, and in this context social capital is a key tool with which to address the thorny question of collective action (Coleman 1994).

Pierre Bourdieu

Finally the topographical map of social capital would not be complete without examining the contribution of Pierre Bourdieu who locates his interpretation of social capital within his own particular theoretical approach. In similar fashion to Coleman, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital grew out of his concern for education and educational achievement although for Bourdieu other forms of capital, notably cultural, economic and symbolic, are fundamental to understanding how social capital operates. Furthermore in dismissing methodological individualism Bourdieu affirms 'the primacy of relations' (1977), imbuing his work with a highly social and historical contextual slant (and thus exposing his emergence from the structuralist tradition).

Bourdieu defines social capital as:

> ...the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 119).

Thus for Bourdieu social capital is used to benefit either an individual or a group and as such does not provide for the public benefit per se, but rather is linked to how particular agents use social capital to exploit the other forms of capital in their possession. In essence, social capital in this context creates the milieu within which, one is able to operate successfully, in terms of activating and realising ones economic and cultural capital.

Bourdieu (1977) saw capital as the key structural determinant in any given society at any given time, with agents operating in 'fields', utilising 'strategies' within wider 'practices' that relate to a specific 'habitus'. Indeed the concepts of habitus and field are important elements in Bourdieu's work. Habitus essentially refers to a process of socialisation that moulds an individual's world-view and forms a subconscious group identity. Bourdieu wrote thus:

> The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (eg the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures [original italics] (Bourdieu, 1977: 72).

Structures can therefore help transmit the disposition of the group to individuals, with factors such as taste and general perception being rooted in an individual's cultural background. According to Bourdieu individuals can also identify those with similar dispositions such that habitus '...is both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification...of these practices' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170). Thus habitus presents itself as 'a life-condition' that has a particular structural position within a system (1984), which Bourdieu referred to as a 'field'. For Bourdieu a field is

> ...a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation...in the structure of the distribution of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions. (Jenkins, 2002:85)

These networks are vital for social capital transmission and aid group identity, particularly as membership of a group according to Bourdieu allows an individual to accrue social capital resources. For VSCs these concepts have some important ramifications, which will be explored in more detail later, suffice to say that field are the networks that foster collective assets, and the occupants of those fields share habitus, which reinforces the group's identity.

These concepts are relevant to understanding Bourdieu's approach to capital insofar that '...the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the world,' (Bourdieu, 1997:46). Moreover one's relationship to, and possession of, forms of economic, cultural and social capital determines one's social world and one's relationship with other social worlds. For Bourdieu whilst all capital stems from but is not reducible to the economic, it is the disguised aspect of cultural capital that makes its benefits all the more un-detectable and less penalised. In this respect Bourdieu refers to the transmission of cultural capital as '...the best hidden form of hereditary transmission of capital...' (Bourdieu, 1997: 246).

Thus implicit in Bourdieu's use of social capital is his rejection of economism and acknowledgement that social capital is a disguised and transformed form of economic capital that is 'never entirely reducible to that definition' (the more transparent a form of capital the easier its conversion to economic capital in the ultimate equation) (Bourdieu, 1997). Furthermore 'Acknowledging that capital can take a variety of forms is indispensable to explain the structure and dynamics of differentiated societies' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:119).

In this sense capital, for Bourdieu, is a social construct mainly identified through its meanings to the parties involved and also through its effects and those that are privy to them. It is therefore not individual utility maximisation that constructs the social and economic worlds inhabited by individuals, rather it is their differential access to capital that is the key driving and determining force (Foley and Edwards, 1999). According to Bourdieu therefore, power is inescapably linked to the notion of having and using social capital, a quite different approach to the more benign approaches to social capital discussed thus far. Power is exercised by individuals operating to reproduce their social position, and social capital functions in a transmutative fashion to reinforce ones symbolic and hence cultural capital. This corresponds with Bourdieu's concern for the reflective status that cultural capital confers on those who possess and are knowledgeable about this form of capital.

In considering Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital, status and power, it is instructive to consider the post-war arts movement in Britain. After the Second World War the Council for Encouragement of Music and Arts (CEMA) was created, this organisation had the task of bringing arts to the people and generally rebuilding, creating and popularising interest in a variety of artistic and cultural forms nationwide. CEMA was relatively successful in developing touring art shows, theatre groups and other performances of 'high art' only previously accessible in London to a relatively small audience. However Lord Keynes, the pre-eminent government economist and public school elitist became a dominant figure in the post-war arts movement and the genesis of the Arts Council, which took over from CEMA as 'the' government agency promoting the arts in Britain. The Arts Council under Keynes reversed the earlier policy of CEMA, focusing more on Keynes' aspiration to transfer any capital expenditure on the arts into cultural capital to be consumed by an elitist minority. Thus one of the first grants given by the newly formed arts council was to the Royal Opera House amounting to some 10% of its overall budget (BBC Radio 4, 6.9.04).

In essence what Keynes had orchestrated was a reaffirmation of the power of the ruling class via the imposition of an arts policy, which reinforced the exclusivity of the cultural

capital of a significant but relatively small population. Possession of this cultural capital not only carried immense status, but coupled with the ability to communicate this cultural capital with other individuals formed a very powerful network that confirms one's possession of significant social capital. In this context individual wealth is marginalised in the sense that economic capital or the relative strength of it is only defined as such by the product of cultural coefficients, which provide a 'purposeless finality of cultural or artistic practices' (1997). Indeed any investment in cultural goods 'symbolically' presupposes cultural capital which means that by buying a painting, one is therefore making both an economic and cultural investment. Within this rationalisation it is not therefore the 'as if market' that drives ones access to social capital, rather it is ones access to networks of connections (Fine, 2001). Hence for Bourdieu

> The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilise and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected (Bourdieu, 1997:51).

Reflecting on the three strains of social capital

There a number of similarities and differences, agreements and disagreements between the three strains of social capital and their major proponents discussed thus far (see table 1 below). These relevant disparities and uniformities are important when one considers the theoretical and practical application of social capital, particularly in light of the extent to which the concept has been utilised within a broader conceptual framework. Putnam, although citing various theories in his work (for example collective action dilemmas, historical institutionalism), uses a very narrow conceptual framework. This means that his concept of social capital is rooted in civil society and is hence isolated from other factors. Consequently the lack of consideration of broader political and economic factors in Putnam's work is problematic because civil society does not operate in a vacuum. Moreover the application of social capital in this instance has led to concerns that it is theoretically 'slippery' (Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003) and stretched. Woolcock has

observed in this respect that social capital has '...become all things to all people, and hence nothing to anyone" (Woolcock, 2001:69).

Table 1. The distinguishing features of the three strains of social capital

Social capital themes	Main author	Broader conceptual framework	Level of analysis	Structure and agency	Positive and negative outcomes	Strong and weak ties considered	By-product or consciously created
Strain of Social capital							
Democratic	Putnam	Narrow and concentrates on vibrancy of civil society	Macro and meso: mainly national & longitudinal with some comparison	Asserts that agency can drive civic engagement*	Mainly positive, but notes that negative outcomes can result	Both. Concentrates on strong ties (easier measurement) & extols virtue of bridging social capital (through weak ties)	By-product of social relations which can also be fostered*
Rational	Coleman	Social capital is used as part of a theory that attempts to combine economic and social streams	Micro: individuals and small groups	Explicitly wants to balance the two	Mainly positive but does note that there can be negative ends	Strong ties in dense networks	By-product
Critical	Bourdieu	Social capital is part of a broader approach to capital and reproduction of inequality	Micro: individuals and broader classes	Concentrates on structural restraints	Positive for those in the privileged networks, negative for those outside	Strong ties in dense networks	By-product

*based mainly on *Bowling Alone* (2001)

In contrast both Coleman and Bourdieu each considers social capital as part of a broader conceptual framework. For Coleman and the rational strain of social capital the emphasis on social processes is a dominant feature that 'blurs distinctions between types of social relations, distinctions that are important for other purposes' (Coleman, 1994: 305). This 'blur' in the concept is indicative of his desire to look at one aspect of social relations,

one which is difficult to quantify. Thus social capital for Coleman reveals the function of certain elements of the social structure insofar that a mixture or combination of resources can produce 'different system level behaviour' or different outcomes for individuals (Coleman, 1994, 305). In this respect Coleman did not mean for his concept of social capital to be used independently. Certainly Putnam's adoption of Coleman's definition is problematic because he does not fully consider the context in which Coleman deployed the concept.

Bourdieu uses social capital as part of his general assertion that society is dominated by elites whose power and wealth are reproduced through direct and indirect means and in this respect his version of the concept links directly with his notions of field and habitus. Both Coleman and Bourdieu provide a very individualistic appreciation of social capital (although Bourdieu rejects Coleman's use of methodological individualism), whilst Putnam's use of the concept is based on collective or social benefit. Both Coleman and Putnam tend to view social capital as resolving collective action problems within a rather functionalist and benevolent or benign orientation. Bourdieu however only really presents social capital as a way that elites preserve and perpetuate themselves. In this respect for Bourdieu, social capital is always associated with the exercising of power, is largely a negative force, and operates to reinforce cultural capital, thereby reinforcing inequality and social reproduction.

A range of criticisms have been levelled at the democratic strain in particular. These stem, in part from its dominant position in social science research, in part from the lack of a clear conceptual framework, as well as from the distinct treatment of data within the strain's positivistic ontological and epistemological position. In particular critics have commented on: the lack of definitional clarity (Newton 1999, Portes and Landolt), the championing of social associations (Levi, 1996, Warren, 2000), the absence of political and social factors (Tarrow, 1996, Boix and Posner, 1998, Maloney et al 2000a), and the lack of consideration given to the downside of social capital (Foley and Edwards, 1999, Portes and Landolt, 1996, Portes, 1998).

The implied criticism of the work of Coleman and Bourdieu is that the treatment of social capital as a social fact at the macro level renders much of what passes for social interaction, which occurs at the micro level, as unattainable. Indeed the insistence within the democratic strain of measurement has resulted in some, who operate within this school, such as Halpern, to employ a definition of social capital that is broader than Putnam's. Halpern subscribes to Putnam's basic position but asserts that he would be just as happy with the term 'social fabric' as 'social capital'(Halpern, 2005a). Furthermore, in privileging quantitative research methods, the democratic strain offers limited scope for conceptual advancement which means, as Grix points out that although

> This research paradigm has advanced our thinking on the concept of social capital but has done so in keeping with the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of Putnam's own work (Grix, 2002:190-191).

In contrast to the democratic strain both the rational and critical strains of social capital take as their level of analysis the individual or small group. For Coleman, social organisation was the most common form of social capital, whether formal or informal and importantly he does not tie this entirely to voluntary associations – the form of social structures so highly valued by Putnam. Bourdieu tends to examine small elite networks and consequently treats groups as forming part of a larger class who share social capital.

Sport and the arts, together with community and welfare organisations, as types of civil society organisations, have been a major element in the debate over developing and creating social capital as a public good. However, as identified above much of the literature relating to the outcomes of these types of associations have used aggregate data on which to base many assumptions (Putnam, 1995, 2000, Stolle and Rochon, 1998, Hall, 1999). Indeed other than providing evangelical fervour for those who presume the undoubted ability of voluntary associations to create social capital, much of the research carried out to date offers little in terms of how, when, why or even how which form or forms of social capital are generated. As indicated by Grix (2002) these approaches tend not to offer analysis that informs qualitatively about the associations in question and consequently fail to analyse the quality of interaction occurring at the associational level;

types, number of members, nature of member interactions, attributable meanings and individual involvement in particular networks and so on.

It is in regard of the issues raised above that this study, although not predicated on any one particular strain of social capital, seeks to develop a micro-level analysis predicated on individual level interaction within voluntary associations. Indeed given the conceptual competition between the three strains of social capital this type of empirical analysis can facilitate deeper understanding of it as an outcome rather than just an output. Moreover the debate about the value of its production, in terms of private or public goods and hence its relationship, meaning and value to, and as, policy, can be better understood (Schuller et al, 2000). Furthermore the micro level approach to analysing and operationalising social capital, as hinted to above, is congruent to social structural considerations, which presuppose that the social context of human agency is fundamental in rationalising and understanding human action.

This is not a clarion call for those who seek deterministic answers to problematic areas of human action, but rather the beginnings of an analytical framework that, when considering associational activity and social capital creation, pays heed to their particular circumstances. Hence the need for a framework of this type to have a regard for an institution's, in this case the VSC, opportunity structure which facilitates a discussion of contextual factors in association with a methodological approach that ensures the contextual relevance to the investigation of social capital.

Conclusion

This chapter has set out the basis for an understanding of what social capital is, where it has come from and how the concept has become contested among three differing schools of thought. There are some key definitional differences between the social capital authors which clearly differentiate strains of social capital and how those strains can be known and operationalised. While Putnam and Coleman emphasise norms, Bourdieu

cites resources as being of importance. All of the authors highlight networks as being part of social capital, and this is the sole common feature.

For Putnam social capital is specifically linked to civic engagement, shifting an emphasis from the elements of trust, norms and networks in earlier works to a later definition where networks are emphasised as the most important of the three, with norms and trust arising from them (Putnam, 1993b, 2000). Coleman's definition looks at what can facilitate the action of actors and again suggests that social capital can take a variety of forms. For Coleman anything that facilitates action is social capital. There is certainly common ground between Coleman and Putnam as they both see social capital as facilitating action of some kind. Bourdieu pinpoints the resources in an individual's network as social capital which accentuates the exclusionary potential of social capital, particularly as Bourdieu also implies that the resources that constitute social capital are mainly economic.

It is also clear that each competing strain of social capital can be differentiated in terms of a range of issues such as its use as part of a broader conceptual framework, the level of analysis, considerations of structure and agency, the extent of negative as well as positive outcomes and the extent to which social capital can be consciously created as a particular policy outcome. Each of these issues subsequently contributes to how each strain of social capital interprets and deals with social phenomena and for this study how each strain can be used to interpret the operation, value and meaning of VSCs.

Certainly despite Putnam's apparent avoidance of issues of power and political context they are potentially vitally important to interpreting and understanding social capital within specific associational situations. This once again reflects on the appropriate level of analysis that each strain indicates is appropriate for making sense of interaction as a necessary precursor for social capital to occur or be formed. Indeed the continuing contention between the different strains of social capital tends to reaffirm the need for qualitative analysis at the empirical level, particularly if the contested nature of social capital and its value as a heuristic device are to be explored further. The chapter has also

elaborated on the critical contextual issues of civil society and power. Foremost in this respect is the pre-eminence of voluntary associationalism, for the democratic strain, as the primary civil society location for the creation of social capital. Whilst neither the rational nor critical strains place as much emphasis on voluntary associationalism, they both consider groups as harbingers of social capital. That many of these groups exist in civil society is inescapable particularly as civil society has become associated as a demarcated space between the state and the family (Diamond, 1994a) and has become dominant as an instrument of governance (Gellner, 1994).

The extension of social capital towards aspects of governance also signifies the importance that an understanding of power can have in interpreting the way in which 'networks and shared values function as a resource for people and organisations' (Field, 2003: 43). Lukes (1974, 2005) seminal work is important in this respect and in particular his third dimension of power which, in a Marxian fashion, highlights the hidden processes that shape preferences (Hay, 2002). Foucault (1973) too offers some insight as he considered power to be derived from people's empowerment or disempowerment by the groups to which they belong. Clearly social capital cannot and should not be divorced from the concept of power, particularly if one seeks qualitatively to explore the nature of its distributional capacity (Foley and Edwards, 1999).

These issues are not only important in their own right, but given the potential importance of social capital as policy and to understand policy, both civil society and power become vital to assessing the policy milieu within which social capital has become incorporated. In this respect the conclusion of the British government sponsored Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU) states that

> Social capital should be seen as giving policymakers useful insights into the importance of community, the social fabric and social relations at the individual, community and societal level (PIU, 2002:73).

Chapter three develops some of the themes discussed above and focuses upon the political context as a conditioning factor in the relationship between social capital and policy development.

Chapter 3.

The politics of social capital: The Incorporation of the concept of Social Capital into Public Policy

Introduction

The election in 1997 of New Labour promised a brave new world where 'old' notions of 'right' and 'left' were to be left behind as a new agenda was developed based upon the 'Third Way' (Kendall, 2000, Giddens, 1998, 2000). This was epitomised by New Labour's rejection of the 'Old Labour' Clause IV and the idea of 'common ownership of the means of production' in favour of a 'new clause 4', which committed the party to '...common endeavour in pursuit of the realisation of individual potential, to the enterprise of the market and the rigour of competition...' (Driver and Martell, 1998:67). Indeed, the much debated and contested political and ideological concept of the 'Third Way' was claimed to be 'situated within the left' (Blair 1998) and involved the modernisation of government (both in terms of structures and practice). Moreover New Labour's rediscovery of the 'civic sphere' (Halpern and Mikosz, 1998), invoked a terminology that espoused community, social cohesion and collective action (Levitas 1998, Taylor, 2003).

For New Labour, the corollary has been that the Third Way has become the vehicle through which their modernising response to the Thatcherite legacy has been articulated as an aspect of governmentality (Rose, 1993). Gordon Brown, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a speech to a primarily socialist audience, argued that the Third Way '...was not so much about what the state can do for you, but about what the state can enable you to do for yourself' (Brown 1994:25). Essentially Brown was signalling that New Labour was prepared to accept the view that individualism and the neoliberal state would be part and parcel of their political and policy direction. Once in office this non-traditional approach to social democracy became clearer, as then Prime Minister Tony Blair put it,

> The Third Way recognises the limits of government in the social sphere but also the need for government, within those limits, to forge new partnerships with the voluntary sector...'enabling' government strengthens civil society rather than weakens it, and helps families and communities improve their own performance (Blair 1998: 14).

Thus from 1997 onwards an interpretation of civil society as a restraining influence on both state power and free market capitalism (see chapter 2, p. 39) has been incorporated into a broader communitarian policy framework (Driver and Martell, 2002, Levitas, 2000, Prideaux, 2005). This framework has also sought to reinvigorate civil society primarily through the incorporation of social capital both as policy tool and object of policy. The subsequent focus on voluntary associational activity has been as the increasingly explicit means with which this policy agenda is to be achieved. Moreover, Giddens' observation that "The good society is one that strikes a balance between government, markets and civil order" (Giddens, 2000:165) serves as a portent of the moral agenda that is explicit to the Third Way and a key component of New Labour's communitarian rhetoric.

New Labour therefore, having arisen from the ashes of four straight General Election defeats, and having repositioned itself as distinct from 'Old Labour', and following an intense period of policy review and political introspection, has appropriated the Third Way, as both its modus operandi and modus vivendi. This is reflected in the promotion of the overarching policy agenda of modernisation and the related but separate issue of community development, as the means of enriching the lives of individuals (Driver and Martell, 1998).

Having previously outlined the three theoretical strains of contemporary social capital discourse, it is apparent that the concept's utility, particularly in terms of its analytic, heuristic and explanatory capacity in respect of social action, is both its strength and Achilles' heel. The purpose of this chapter therefore is to chart the depth and extent of the appropriation and incorporation of social capital into public policy and latterly, sports policy arenas in Britain. In order to do so New Labour's political journey to, and the

meaning of, modernisation is outlined as not only the key overarching policy context, but the one within which the reinvigoration of community is best examined. The chapter also identifies and examines how the political context or opportunity structure for the active citizen impacts on the incorporation of social capital into policy-making.

Towards modernisation

The emergence of New Labour with strong, pragmatic and popular policies came about after a thorough policy review in the late 1980s and early 1990s; a review which for some marked the abandonment of Keynesian social democracy (Benn, 1981, Shaw, 1996) in favour of Thatcherite market led solutions which, as summarised by one commentator, meant that 'Labour has come to embrace the arms length regulated market economy it was once pledged to directly manage and control' (Hefferman, 2000: 72). Accordingly, the response of New Labour has been described as 'an exercise in post-Thatcherite politics' (Martell and Driver, 1998), shaped by Thatcherism and yet also representing a reaction against it.

This shaping of the political environment, particularly in response to the electoral success of the Conservatives and their neo-liberal agenda, subsequently gave rise to internal and external pressures which forced many in the Labour Party to examine many of the traditionally held beliefs about how they should run the country once, and if, elected (Smith, 1993, Martell and Driver 1998, 2002). Hefferman (2000) argues that successive election failure, the Kinnock leadership, the Policy Review of 1987-91and the emergence of Blair as party leader, are all 'moments of transition' rather than 'points of origin' (Hefferman, 2000). Indeed, as shall be returned to later, the political opportunity of the time (Tarrow, 1996), that is the resources outside of the Labour Party, was also fundamental to the emergence of New Labour and the imprecation of modernisation as vital to the Third Way.

However, before embarking on a discussion of modernisation as a policy framework from which the incorporation of social capital into public policy, its application within

civil society, and the consequences for voluntary associations can be readily understood. It is necessary to offer a brief overview of the political and philosophical map that is the backdrop to the current position. The 'map' in this instance is topographical in the sense that the contours of the political landscape facilitate an unambiguous view of established political polarities of the left and right. The current debate takes place within a political continuum that, if not in thrall to globalisation, has at least accepted it as the dominant social science mantra with which to explain most, if not all, political change in Western democratic societies. (Pierre and Peters, 2000, see also Driver and Martell, 1998, 2002, Levitas 1998, 2000, Hefferman, 2000).

In similar fashion to understanding social capital at its most fundamental level as 'relationships matter' so the fundamental level of the traditional ideological bipolar division can be reduced to 'left' versus 'right'. The Third Way consequently stands in relation to at least the fundamentals of these two opposites, which Blair encapsulated thus

> The Old Left sometimes claimed that the state should largely subsume civil society, the New Right believes that if the state retreats from social duties, civic activism will automatically fill the void. (Blair, 1998:14).

Given this distancing from established party politics, a consideration of being beyond 'Old Labour' (Left) and 'New Right' is significant for interpreting modernisation and the values and meanings brought to the policy table and their impact on the policy process and any subsequent policy outcomes (Driver & Martell, 2001, 2002).

For the Old Left or 'Old Labour' it was the post-war social democratic values of emancipation and social justice (Cammack, 2004) that were the bedrock of strategy, including a belief in egalitarianism and Keynesian economic thinking (Levitas, 2000, Barrientos & Powell, 2004 – Tony Benn, 2004 provides an interesting and persuasive account of 'old labour' values). These values informed the political agenda of social democracy, as it focused on the strong and active state to block or moderate the dynamics of capitalist production. The modernisers of New Labour were also insistent that the statist 'Old Labour' mode of delivery, which was largely concerned with redistribution and not wealth creation, was ill-suited to the development of both a progressive agenda

and the acceptance of globalisation as a process of change (Finlayson, 2003). A further implicit criticism of Old Labour centred on the social democratic approach to the promotion of a universality of welfarism, which was largely identified as an underpinning ideological value. For critics whilst this approach ensured that individual rights were easily accessible there appeared to be little recourse to, and enforcement of, the corresponding value of individual responsibility. Social democracy maintained, therefore an uneasy relationship with capitalism and exhibited a consistent refusal to acquiesce to the capitalist logic of accumulation and exploitation.

In contrast the neo-liberal agenda argued that strong and active states restore, maintain and extend the path of capitalist logic and hence give rise to the key capitalist feature of self-reproduction. Of prime importance in this respect was the dominance and centrality of the individuality of free markets to the neoliberal doctrine, which favoured market-led solutions and placed economic individualism at the heart of social and welfare policies. Coupled with 'asocial' values and a preference for a minimal role for the state, the New Right has stood accused of fermenting 'selfishness...and greed' as part of their social and economic agenda (Driver & Martell, 1998, 2001, Scruton, 1996). The New Right was therefore economically liberalist with at its core a contradictory conservatism that although inconsistent was 'politically potent' (Levitas 1998, 2000). This tension was most evident between the neoliberal emphasis of the economic deregulation of markets, ensuring freedom and individual rights and traditional conservatism invoking loyalty to the state, national security and a patriarchal loyalty, which also reinforced the normative values of monogamy and heterosexuality. This accommodation at the heart of the New Right was not only a necessity but also a lesson in reciprocity in that the liberalised economy '...needed the strong state to police its consequences whilst the strong state relied heavily on the disciplinary effects of economic coercion' (Levitas, 2000:191).

In a sense then New Labour was aiming to blend the party's traditional commitment to the public services with the aspirational values of the New Right, and consequently many previously opposing elements were now able to be harmonised under the rubric of the third way, promoting; the market *and* community, wealth creation *and* social justice. The

New Labour framework reflected these concerns and in the form of the 'responsible market and the clever state' (Henry, 2001) was able to ensure the validity of private enterprise, whilst legitimating state choice, but did not (and still does not) assume that governments can or will provide all public services directly.

The meaning of modernisation

Modernisation has often contained or implied a certain opacity in terms of its meaning, depending on where when and how the term has been used. In part this may be, as Fairclough (2000:19) has noted, due to its use 'without reference to any specific practice or domain' and in part as Rose suggests because the term 'shows a preference for what is new rather than what is old, and for change against the status quo. But it does not identify what direction change should take' (2001:37). Indeed New Labour driven by its own reforms positioned itself as a major reforming force on the centre-left of British politics. In this respect modernisation represents New Labour's response 'to a range of social conditions and conjunctural processes' (Finlayson, 2003:66). In particular as Coates notes this was because New Labour

> ...presented itself as a party that was still firmly rooted in the values of the Labour tradition, but one whose re-renewed radicalism came from its willingness to forge new modes of delivering those values, modes appropriate to the realities of the modern age (Coates, 2005:29)

It is noteworthy in this respect that New Labour has moved Britain on from the market-based reforms of previous Conservative governments, choosing to modernise rather than privatise and setting targets as the key method of judging progress (Driver, 2006).

It is in this sense that modernisation has become a structural framework for the development of policy and acts to buttress the New Labour 'hybrid' project (Hall, 2003) through a 'discourse of modernisation and change', which as a result tends to encourage a world view that is pragmatic, positive and forward looking (Lister, 2000). The upshot would appear to be a popularity for progressive politics, which for New Labour has meant an electoral success that for Lister has a certain 'inevitability' to it given the

foundations of a discourse '...that brooks no opposition, for who wants to be appear as old-fashioned and backward looking?' (2000:8).

Finlayson (2003) has identified three aspects of modernisation – its rhetorical function, its concrete reference and its use as a strategy of governance – that help to explain and interpret its meaning. The rhetorical function of modernisation has been referred to by Lister (above) as well as identified by Finlayson as an 'up' word that persuades and motivates (2003) in this regard which also delivers an ideological function in unifying. Indeed in this regard New Labour's programme has been referred to by Rustin (2004) as 'managed capitalism', built on a 'unitary philosophy' where all institutions serve the same value system 'rather than represent and mediate differences between them' (113). Thus modernisation implies a coherent approach of those who continually use the term and is indicative of a strategy embedded in a 'particular political project' (Newman, 2001:46). Furthermore unification also simultaneously presents an opposite of exclusion, which can then be used to claim that anything that is not modern is not part of New Labour's Britain. Importantly for the later discussion of community and voluntary associationalism, Finlayson argues that the unifying effect of modernisation impacts upon 'ways of thinking' about community and the 'naturalisation' of national community in particular (2003).

As a concrete referent the discourse of modernisation serves to bind together some of the dissonant elements of New Labour's programme and in particular the rhetoric and reality of certain policies (Lister, 2000). In this regard the apparent tension between the rhetoric of 'radical welfare reform', where social capital is identified as a key device for civic renewal and the promotion of active citizenship within civic society, and the more prosaic and pragmatic 'what works' approach tends to focus attention onto fiscal matters such as cost-effectiveness and away from important issues of principle (Powell and Hewit, 1998). Moreover the process of modernisation infers that 'modernised things' are 'technically advanced', lean, flexible, efficient and are networked. Indeed, the emphasis of liberal entrepreneurialism within New Labour's managed capitalism, itself implicit to modernisation, has helped to sponsor a burgeoning system of audit and inspection, which

further tends to impose conformity to central government agendas (Rustin, 2004). It is in this respect, as Finlayson notes that these two functions operate simultaneously to ensure that modernisation can refer to a whole range of processes necessary to improve both government and public services.

As a strategy of governance, modernisation acts as a problematising device ensuring that it '...serves as a mechanism for 'diagnosing' errors in the organisation and management of public services and for establishing their cure' (Finlayson, 2003: 68). Indeed the project of modernisation involves not just an acceptance of the necessity of such a process but also the reform of many key institutions via the implementation of this process. Finlayson is quite unequivocal on the self reinforcing nature and application of New Labours modernisation in that they practice '...not only the modernisation of governance but a kind of governance through modernisation' (2003: 69). In this respect the issue goes back to what modernised things look and operate like. Consequently modernisation has taken on a normative inflection that designates ways in which public institutions and public services *must* change in accordance with the rational and scientific processes of managerialism, evidence-based policy, measurement and audit (Newman, 2001, original emphasis).

Taken as a whole, modernisation acts as a central reforming policy development structure around which particular initiatives can cohere. In this way modernisation perhaps allows dissonant actions and practices some conceptual breathing and interactive space. However, as Driver notes, the reforming zeal to modernise may well be far more prosaic and simply a case of 'For modernise read work differently – but how differently?' (Driver, 2006:272). Certainly in terms of community level activity, the managed capitalism and liberal entrepreneurialism of New Labour are key elements to the whole process of modernisation. Indeed, whilst apparently transcending the 'ideological politics of the past' (Newman, 2001) modernisation affords New Labour a certain pragmatism and eclecticism to social and public policy. Certainly this aspect of modernisation has enabled New Labour to redefine and re-energise a conceptualisation of community as both antidote to the excessive individualism of unfettered neo-liberalism and as a positive

force for developing the collective values of reciprocity and solidarity (Avineri and de-Shalit, 1992, Arai and Pedlar, 2003).

New Labour and communitarianism

Within the speeches and writings of many leading New Labour policymakers and modernisers the assumption tends to appear that communitarianism is theoretically singular with the issue of 'rights and responsibilities' being the dominant theme. In this regard the question for interpreting and understanding New Labour's policy machinations is not why communitarianism (dealt with extensively elsewhere), but why and how a particularised brand of moralising communitarianism has been incorporated into the New Labour project. A version of communitarianism that both facilitates and requires a 'modernised' approach to community where individuals are enmeshed within social relations, with the subsequent need for forms of social capital as social 'superglue' and/or 'WD40' (Putnam, 2000) to be created and established as part of an overarching policy framework.

Blair, writing in 1994 – the year he was elected to the party leadership, in an early warning against leaving everything to a 'nebulous concept of society' – argued that, '...we should replace these ideas...with a concept of shared responsibility [creating] communities in which individuals are given opportunities but accept their responsibilities...' (Levitas, 2000: 191). These comments and the championing of Giddens' (1998) assertion of 'no rights without responsibilities' clearly suggests a repositioning of the notion of community in terms of its potential as a generator of a moral normative agenda within an authoritarian structural framework. Blunkett, in a speech in 2004 to the Ash Institute in Boston, was unambiguous in his identification of such a framework. He argued that a new 'compact' between government and the governed was needed, which would mean '...responsibilities and duties resting with the individual and community as well as with the government...with rights and responsibilities going hand in hand' (Blunkett, 2004: 4). These forms of political communitarianism (Little, 2002), which are indicative of a moral authoritarianism and

which are exhibited pre-eminently through the work of Etzioni (particularly 1995, 1996) are seemingly the basis for New Labour's adoption of the Third Way and their focus on community rather than society.

Despite Blair's open admiration for the writings and philosophy of John Macmurray (Fielding, 2000), it is the work of Etzioni that illuminates the bulk of New Labour's communitarian thinking. Indeed Blair, in following Etzioni (2000), has tended to align the free market and community as 'natural' partners whilst locating this partnership within a wider discourse of civil society. In *The Third Way to a Good Society* Etzioni clearly makes this case within a Third Way rationale

> The good society is one that balances three often partially incompatible elements: the state, the market and the community [and]...does not seek to obliterate these segments but to keep them properly nourished – and contained (Etzioni, 2000: 12).

For Prideaux (2005) it is functionalism that identifies New Labour with the work of Etzioni, particularly as both Etzioni and Blair view community as purposive within a capitalist economic system. This contention has implications for interpreting both the role of community in the policy process, as well as interpreting the discourse of community within which the New Labour understanding of the concept sits. Not least in this respect are the functional imperatives as set out by Talcott Parsons; adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latent pattern maintenance (Parsons, 1951), which are largely transcribed in New Labour's communitarian view as 'opportunity, responsibility, employability and inclusion' (Levitas, 2000: 191). This functionalist aspect to the New Labour policy agenda coupled with an overt consideration to maintain the structures of capitalism ('workfare' rather than welfare, Little, 2002) is indicative of Etzioni's communitarian thinking. Moreover, this functionalism can be identified in the common refrain concerning New Labour's policy-making as 'pragmatic politics', what counts being that which works.

For Etzioni the ideal type of society is predicated on the 'responsive community', that is '...one whose moral standards reflect the basic human needs of all its members...' which

in turn gives both structure and meaning to the lives of individuals within the community in question (Etzioni, 1995:13). In this respect parenting and schooling are the key generators of moral cohesion and authoritarianism rather than the state. Blair in reflecting this position argued that

> "Community" implies a recognition of interdependence but not overweening government power. It accepts that we are better able to meet the forces of change and insecurity through working together (Levitas, 2000: 191).

The implicit recognition, alluded to by Blair, is therefore of an inherent commonality that acts both in normative and palliative fashion and which, when taken with an influential role for government, is important for the well being of all and not just as a residual service for the poor and excluded. The use of community in this manner replicates much of Etzioni's logic concerning the formulation and working of community, and is indicative of how and why social capital has become such an important concept in interpreting intended policy outcomes at the micro level. Before writing, what is for many the communitarianism bible *The New Golden Rule,* Etzioni clarified his interpretation of community as

> ...social webs of people who know one another as persons and have a moral voice. Communities draw on interpersonal bonds to encourage members to abide by shared values...Communities gently chastise those who violate shared moral norms and express approbation for those who abide by them (Etzioni, 1995: ix).

Thus the remoralisation agenda of community, as articulated by Etzioni, together with an implicit conservatism, that denies the necessity for structural reform whilst encouraging volunteers and volunteerism, has chimed with Third Way thinkers in leap-frogging the old left right divide in suggesting a 'third social philosophy' (Etzioni, 1996:7). It is this agenda that has struck a cord with New Labour, not only in terms of the significant delineation of volunteerism as the key modus operandi for the reinvigoration of civil society, but also in terms of Etzioni's ignorance of economic inequality in favour of establishing pathways that enable individual opportunities (Levitas 2000). Thus, Etzioni speaks of 'returning' services to local communities enabling them to be 'tailored' to

specific individual needs (Etzioni, 1996). The thrust being that 'less is more', hence 'The reduction of state provision is supported by the argument that the voluntary associations and institutions of civil society... should be strengthened by being given a greater role (Levitas, 1998:94).

Paul Boateng, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, in a clear exposition of Etzionian influence on government policy in the foreword to the Treasury's cross cutting review of *The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery,* stated;

> So, as we begin the 21st century we look again to the voluntary and community sector to help us rekindle the spark of civic services that fires the building of strong civic communities; to reform the operation of public services and build a bridge between the needs of individuals living in those communities and the capacity of the state to improve their lives (HM Treasury, 2002: 3).

Boateng's comments not only clearly identify the role for the voluntary sector in community development and the subsequent need for capacity building to occur, but also suggest that support is to be geared at a level that enables individuals to work with others in partnership rather than at a direct structural level. Thus opportunity is facilitated through this enabling directive, which may reinforce notions of the pathological identification of an underclass reminiscent of Levitas's MUD analysis (Levitas, 1998 – see below for a fuller discussion). The irony being that this analysis was unashamedly geared towards clarifying the exclusory nature of social and welfare policy within the Thatcherite neo-liberal agenda in the first instance.

The British Conservative party too, has signalled the necessity for a juxtaposition of the moral agenda and 'localism' as the scramble for centre ground politics becomes more hectic (BBC, 2006b). For Liam Fox, then shadow Foreign Secretary, '...the old divides of left and right are also blurred...Politics has become less tribal, more local and more individual. The electorate has outgrown our politics' (Fox, 2005:25). The upshot is a further legitimisation of the moralistic climate surrounding British political debate, a climate that encourages individual and in-group responsibility. Hence, for Fox many youngsters are considered as lacking

> ...the values associated with a secure family upbringing...' and community is viewed as a site of local social action facilitating a situation where Communities and individuals should have greater control over things that affect them directly (Fox, 2005:25).

In essence then, the political Opposition in Britain would appear to offer little in the way of difference or divergent thinking in terms of perceptible political philosophy and would appear to back the mandate set out in the Etzionian vision of the Third Way. Whether this can be construed as a shift towards the left of the political spectrum itself or rather is more evidence to suggest that politics is now located firmly to the right of the political centre is a moot point, and one that need not trouble us further (BBC, 2006b).

There are many critics of Etzioni's brand of political communitarianism, not least being Little (2002) who suggests that Etzioni's ideas are 'Janus-faced'. Little argues that Etzioni often employs tautological conceptions of community so that what is presented as a critique of liberalist approaches '...rapidly disintegrates into the language of liberal individualism' (Little, 2002: 26). In this form of moral authoritarian communitarianism the state is presented as the enemy and civil society the salvation. The consequence for 'community' is that it is both reified and idealised highlighting a further problem vis-à-vis Etzioni's interpretation of community (see above) and his emphasis on 'interpersonal bonds' and 'gentle prodding [amounting to] mild social pressure' (Etzioni, 1995:40). In this regard much of Etzioni's discussion is shrouded in rather homogenous and coercive references to community action and community spirit.

The significance of Etzioni's frame of reference can be expressed as 'communities of choice as opposed to communities of fate' (Little, 2002:61), which on one level is evocative of Tonnies' (1955) distinction between Gemeinshaft and Gesellschaft (see chapter 2, p.19); whilst on another it reinforces the streak of moral authoritarianism that permeates the work of Etzioni. The informal social control favoured by Etzioni would seem to be problematic given the encouragement of 'gentle chastising' for moral deviants and 'approbation' for complainants. This moral community voice would, therefore, seem to be both potentially coercive and exclusionary given that Etzioni posits very few

answers to questions concerning the exercising of power within a community. In this respect Little (2002) sounds a cautionary note regarding the political sowing of the seeds of moral authoritarianism, which, '...is all the more evident when political parties or movements attempt to translate orthodox communitarian ideas into public policies' (p.64).

The mainstreaming of modernisation and communitarian practices within New Labour (as outlined above) and in particular the adoption of pragmatism as a policy making virtue, is indicative of Giddens' notion of New Labour being 'beyond' left and right (Giddens 1994, 1998). That is, being beyond the traditional polarised territory outlined above, where an ability to bridge the division between right and left has given way to an ability to transcend the political divide with a politics of the 'radical centre' (Driver and Martell, 1998, Giddens, 2001). Included in this radical centre are cultural questions of identity (particularly sexual, racial and national) and transnational concerns, especially regarding environmental issues and worldwide social justice issues that have arisen largely in tandem with the rise of globalisation. For Giddens the emancipatory politics of social democracy, which are about 'life chances'; have given or are giving way to a new concern for what he terms 'life politics', which is more concerned with cultural values and 'life decisions' which further establishes a tendency to blur the distinctions between 'left' and 'right' politics. This for Giddens suggests that,

> ...a whole range of other problems and possibilities have come to the fore that are not within the reach of the Left/Right scheme. These include ecological questions, but also issues to do with the changing nature of the family, work and personal and cultural identity (Giddens, 1998:44).

Framing and helping to construct Giddens' enthusiasm for this particular aspect of Third Way thinking is his belief that the collapse of socialism has indicated that there is 'no alternative to capitalism'. The logic of which, reminiscent of Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis, is summarised by Giddens,

> With the demise of socialism as a theory of economic management, one of the major division lines between left and right has disappeared, at least for the foreseeable future...No one any longer has any alternatives to

> capitalism – the arguments that remain concern how far, and in what ways, capitalism should be governed and regulated (Giddens, 1998:43-4).

Shaped by the fall of the Berlin Wall (Brasher, 1997), Giddens political beliefs, in incorporating the Hegelian concern for the triumph of rational thought (Williams et al, 1997), link together socialism, Marxist theory, and social democratic projects worldwide and then consigns them, in the guise of old style social democracy, to the dustbin of history. Giddens is then able finally to reconstruct the language of the Third Way so that the values of social democracy are redefined to fit in with the new political reality, which amounts to an acceptance of political or orthodox communitarianism as the driving force behind the Third Way that for some critics is clearly indicative of the 'current triumph of capitalist hegemony' (Loyal, 2003). (See Cammack, 2004 for a further discussion of Giddens' semantic deliberations, also Hale et al, 2004, Levitas 1998 and Martell and Driver, 1998, 2002 for a more comprehensive critical overview of these issues).

Civil Society, Community action and the bipolar state

The conventionally held political sensibilities of the left and right have traditionally held sway over policy formulation in Britain, and are of particular concern regarding notions of community and more specifically the (purposive) role of voluntary associations and volunteering within 'community' (Kendall and Knapp, 1996, Davis Smith et al, 1995, Salamon and Anheier, 1997). Crucial to this debate is the need to take stock of the traditional left and right approaches to assessing the purpose, value and role of civil society. The creation and expansion of social capital based on voluntary action, voluntary associations and volunteering has become a leitmotif within social capital theory and is centred on the delineated 'space' between the state and the free market. This aspect, together with the absorption of much of the content and language of communitarianism into the fabric of New Labour and particularly into Blair's interpretation of the Third Way, has thrust the idea of community centre stage, chiefly in the wider context of civic renewal.

The increasing importance attached to civil society has tended to caricature those who come from differing political traditions. Those on the right (and particularly those of a New Right persuasion) tend to view civil society in economic terms with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or civil society organisations (CSOs) 'enabling' a tentative minimalistic state. These NGOs and CSOs subsequently operate to ensure the protection of individual freedom and impose a virtuous civic order which in conjunction with the market becomes the 'rightful' vehicle for welfare provision (Green, 2000, Hodgson, 2004). For those on the left, these same organisations are indicative of the need to have a strong and expansive state, and one that can intervene to correct market deficiencies. Indeed in terms of welfare provision the role of NGOs and CSOs would largely be subsumed by the professional state that would reduce the need for such organisations in the first place (Blair, 1998).

The political dichotomy inherent to this bipolarity has in the recent past, in relation to certain aspects of social policy, resulted in the Labour and Conservative parties both largely agreeing the means by which policy is to be implemented, although disagreeing intensely over the end product, outcome or impact of that policy, which is something of a truism given the nature of established political debate. Central to this debate is an understanding of both what is meant when the term community is flagged up within this context, and also how particularised versions of what is understood to be community have been incorporated into particular policy agendas. It is worth noting that Plant, writing in the early 1970s, cautioned that community

> ...is so much a part of the stock in trade of social and political argument that it is unlikely that some non-ambiguous and non-contested definition of the notion can be given (Plant, 1974: 13).

Given this warning that community cannot easily be identified or specified as one single entity and can include a diverse range of individuals, the notion of a geographical community, in which '...very different world views can share the same geographical space' (East, 2002:169-70), becomes especially problematic for policymakers.

Furthermore Taylor (2003) has argued that the term community can be used descriptively, describing common interests which individuals might share becomes important: normatively, as a school of thought in making assumptions about the way individuals should live; and instrumentally, such that community becomes a proactive arm of policy implementation. In this sense a community may or may not be geographically located. Indeed Anderson (1991) has elaborated on the existence of 'imagined communities' which, as potentially large and dispersed groups of individuals, can develop high levels of group identification (particularly when pursuing a particular cause) that can lead to strong feelings of attachment and belonging (Whiteley, 1999). However the panoply of available research – from the many social capital theorists (see chap 1), to the classical texts of Durkheim, Tonnies and Marx, to those more concerned with the policy outcomes such as Maloney (1999), Nash (2002), Stoker (2004) and Blunkett (2003) – would suggest that, communities once defined and clarified, will tend to operate in a normative way that dictates the moral climate of that community and consequently the behaviour of the individuals who are part of that community.

Taylor (2003) has argued that policy makers tend to confuse the descriptive and normative meanings of community, and then subsequently assume that this idea of community will 'naturally' facilitate the smooth implementation and execution of policy. For Taylor, policy makers make the assumption

> ...that common location or interests bring with them social and moral cohesion, a sense of security, and mutual trust. But they [the policymakers] also tend to go a step further and assume that norms will be turned into action; that is, that communities can be turned into agency, with people caring for each other, getting involved in collective enterprises and activities and acting together to change their circumstances (Taylor, 2003:38).

This consideration has potentially important ramifications for thinking about the creation and development of specific types of social capital, and in particular it imposes a consideration of the means and methods of activating citizens within the community level approach.

Without a doubt this notion of community as non-uniform is somewhat problematic if government, in the application and implementation of welfare policy, takes an area-based approach. To be sure this has been the approach of central government since the late 1960s, exemplified by the proliferation of stand-alone (issue specific) special initiatives aimed at addressing the particular problems of disadvantaged localities. Most of these types of initiatives have been relatively short-lived and often deployed in successive waves by governments focused on appealing to the electorate and winning elections (Hastings et al, 1996). Community has been the focus of Urban Programme schemes, including the Community Development Programme, Task forces, Estate Action, and later City Challenge, Housing Action Area and the Single Regeneration Budget to name but a few (Goodlad, 2002). Many of these initiatives have increasingly sought to engage community organisations, although the question of the terms on which they are to be engaged has led to the emergence of distinct discourses that represent potential paths for understanding community level interventions.

The pathologising of deprived communities, whereby those least able to defend themselves have become demonised, has, as Levitas (1998) has argued, become a central feature of a moral underclass discourse (MUD) that was the prime discourse of community development during the New Right dominated Thatcher and Major years. Essentially this discourse, in seeking to blame the people for their circumstances, i.e. those who are deprived, eschews structural and systemic explanations of exclusion and poverty. Thus the poor and excluded have been stereotyped as scroungers and layabouts who have succumbed to the 'disease' of the benefit and dependency culture (see particularly Murray's comments in Collins, 2003).

In the context of the above discussion concerning the nature of the bipolar state, Levitas's topological analysis of social exclusion discourses – MUD (see above), RED; a redistributive discourse, favoured by the traditional social democratic approach, and SID; a social exclusion and integration discourse, favoured by Third way proponents – both contextualises and sets forth a framework (via reference to the ideal types she has set out) for interpreting community level action that implicitly as well as explicitly has set out to

create, develop and sustain social capital as part of wider policy implementation (Levitas, 1998). In this respect initiatives setting out to use community as the means to effect policy outcomes as well as being the targets themselves of policy outcomes, are fundamentally linked to the strategic approach of particular governments in utilising and stimulating this aspect of civil society in their wider policy framework.

New Labour has similarly tended to favour this area-based approach, which further tends to reify community in terms of geographical definitions (and can enhance a MUD tone to the language of policy), although a break with the past has been achieved via the focus on multi-issue and multi-agency intervention (Nash, 2002, Hastings, 2003, Collins 2002). The establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) and Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) in 1998 (SEU, 1998, 2001), created the environment and climate for what has been referred to as multi-level governance (see Stoker, 2004, 2002, Lowndes & Wilson, 2001, Maloney et al, 2000). This framework enabled local government to work through Local Strategic Partnerships with a range of partners in achieving specific outcomes, which idealistically sought to include a degree of empowerment for the particular communities concerned. The New Deal for Communities (NDC) from 1998, Education Action Zones (EAZs) from 2000, HAZs from 1998, Home Zones from 2001 and Sports Action Zones (SAZs) from 2001 (Frazer, 2002, Imrie and Raco, 2003), as more recent policy initiatives are all focused first and foremost on community as a geographical entity.

Whilst this approach is predicated on specific geographical areas as the targets of specific policy outcomes, in substituting Stacey's term 'local social system' for community the facade of (geographical) community as a coherent term, and concept for social policy implementation, becomes evident. This is largely because the extended notion of a local social system infers a range of beliefs and ideas as well as norms and values that constitute an unreliable basis for interpreting and defining community in the first place. Additionally post-modern assertions concerning economies, which are seemingly characterised by very different connections between production and consumption, tend to reinforce the appearance of a disparate society and subsequently potentially contribute towards the creation of fragmented communities (Rojek, 1995).

New Labour, the active community and social capital

The reciprocity, strong social bonds and desire for a responsive community that is part of the New Labour policy agenda are not new, but are part of a long tradition, even in the language of social capital, of organic conceptions of community established as a basis of the development and delivery of social policy. This has often been the case when political or civil unrest, largely stemming from perceived breakdowns in societal institutions, has threatened to become such a disintegrative force that new mechanisms have had to be found in order to maintain social order and cohesion (Imrie et al, 1996). In Britain, the involvement of the middle classes was important in facilitating the work of volunteers with professionally skilled individuals thus enabling self-help and mutual aid to develop. This was apparent in the 'town missions' of the early nineteenth century which attempted to introduce paternalistic aspects of the country village to Glasgow. These missions

> ...urged the middle classes to go out to the poor to give them support, to educate them in the basics of health care and child care and, not least, to spread to them the Christian gospel (Kendall and Knapp, 1996:38).

The emphasis was clearly on community development as a relief from the hardship and poverty of everyday life, although much of the 'charity' was not welcomed by the poor (particularly during Victorian times – see Kendall and Knapp, 1996, Davis-Smith, 1995, Cole, 1945a). By the late eighteenth century the poor were becoming empowered to take control of social service provision, largely through the flourishing friendly societies, despite laws passed to repress their activity in a political climate that was not wholly receptive to the aims of mutual aid as opposed to philanthropy. Cole commenting on the general state of affairs suggests that it was not so much a direct subversion of the British constitution that was feared rather an 'uppishness' or 'sauciness' of the poor,

> ...which threatened the expectations of the rich of a humble demeanour among the poor, and was regarded as a challenge to rank and quality' [and]...a social order conceived as static by its principal beneficiaries found itself confronted with manifestations of change which it was unable to understand, and was apt to regard philanthropy as an instrument for resisting the forces of disintegration (Cole, 1945:13).

In this context philanthropy took on a discernible political hue that reflected the particular concern of the time with social control. This appears to prefigure Andrew's (1989) later concern, developed from her study of charity in London between 1680 and 1820, that particular forms of voluntary action reflect and are shaped by the specific political context in which they operate.

Whilst this is not necessarily a new idea, it is one that has contemporary resonance, given the subject matter of this chapter namely the incorporation of social capital into New Labour's policy agenda. Andrew's concern does indeed foreshadow the identification of the political opportunity structure (POS) as a framework for establishing a more contextual analysis of the development and implementation of social policy (Kriesi, 1995, Casey, 2004, Maloney et al, 2000b, [and implicit in] 2000a).

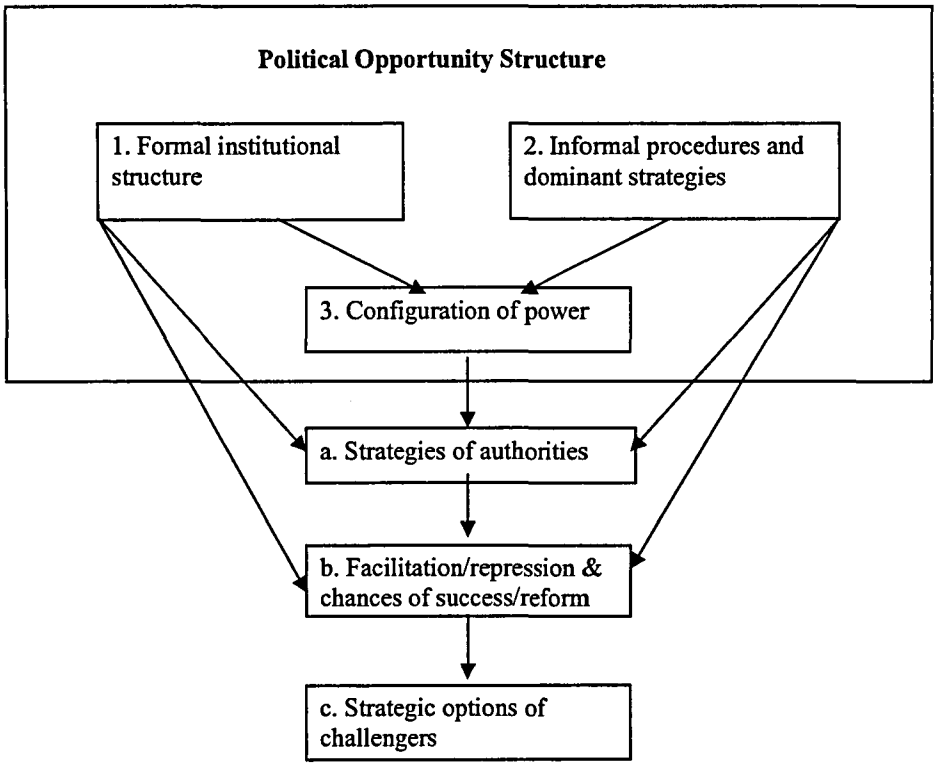
Essentially born out of movement theory, with its indebtedness to Marxism and Marxist scholars (e.g. Gramsci, 1971), new social movement theory attempted to interpret the development and proliferation of new social movements such as the anti-nuclear movement and those pursuing the identity politics agenda, within a broader context of post-structuralism and specific political contexts (Kriesi, 1995, Tarrow, 1998). The resultant argument coming out of this school suggests that social processes facilitate a manufacturing and restructuring of the existing power relations with a concomitant impact for social protest (Skocpol, 1979). In short, the contention is that political context can be translated into a POS which allows 'For the systematic analysis of the political context that mediates structural conflicts...' (Kriesi, 1995:167). Gramsci for example was able to show the necessity of collective action for the poor, dispossessed and alienated, but failed to detail the specific 'political conditions' that would result in resource-poor and exploited workers being expected to act on behalf of their interests (Gramsci, 1971), what Sidney Tarrow refers to as 'the problem of political opportunities and constraints' (Tarrow, 1996:13). Thus political structure and the context of that structure can facilitate or impede the operation and development of social movement organisations such as those voluntary associations and organisations found in the voluntary sector.

Eisinger appears to be the first writer credited with using the term POS, which he describes as '...the openings, weak spots, barriers and resources of the political system itself' (Eisinger, 1973: 11-12). In his study of protest behaviour in the USA, Eisinger identified the POS as a major factor in the potential success of particular social movements. Tarrow further argued that the POS involved consistent 'dimensions of the political environment' that incentivised individuals to participate in collective action by affecting their expectations of success or failure (Casey, 2004:243-244). In a later reworking, Tarrow, mindful of Gamson and Meyers (1996) 'sensitive' critique, which outlined the 'catch-all' basics of the concept, was more conscious to discuss the nature of political opportunity rather than the POS itself (see Berman, 1997 for more consideration of political opportunity and role of political institutions). In so doing Tarrow was able to avoid employing a seemingly over simplistic formula as a means for predicting the emergence of contentious politics, that is when 'ordinary people...join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents (2000:2). As a result Tarrow was able to identify the concept of POS not

> ...as an invariant model inevitably producing social movements, but as a set of clues for when contentious politics will emerge, setting in motion a chain of causation that may ultimately lead to sustained interaction with authorities and thence to social movements (Tarrow, 1996: 20).

Tarrow does not view the POS as a fixed coordinate, rather he sees it as a more organic than mechanistic concept, with the clues arising from the ability of individuals and groups to mobilise particular networks in search of these 'clues'. According to Tarrow the clues include access to power, shifting alignments, the availability of influential allies and cleavages within and among elites (Maloney et al, 2000). Kriesi in narrowing the scope of the POS sets out three broad sets of properties, '...its formal institutional structure, its informal procedures and prevailing strategies [to deal with the challenge]...and the configuration of power...' (Kriesi, 1995:168). The configuration of these properties as a framework for action are set out in diagram 1, below.

Diagram1. Kriesi's POS Conceptual Framework (1995)



Maloney et al (2000) suggest that these three properties allow an analysis of three key issues that facilitate a greater analysis and contextualisation for the creation, inhibition and appropriation of social capital. First, an analysis of formal institutions allows for a greater analysis of where and how social capital is created vis-à-vis relationships between government and voluntary associations/organisations. Second, the informal procedures and prevailing strategies facilitate an examination of the distributive capacity of social capital which is crucial given that '...the more powerful groups usually are in command of more social capital' (Evers, 2003:16) and that '...access to such capital may be unevenly distributed throughout a society...' (Foley & Edwards, 1997:2). Third, the configuration of power translates into an analysis of the political context in which voluntary association-government relations are embedded and thereby provides a means to understanding the link between governance and social capital.

Scholars such as Mohan and Mohan (2002), Hall (1999), Skocpol (1996), and Woolcock (1998), have all, to some extent, identified formal institutional structures as affecting involvement in voluntary associations, have all looked at how policies are applied and how individuals and associations react in terms of notions of reciprocity and trust, and have all suggested that the climate of government (i.e. the configuration of power) can have a direct influence on both institutional arrangements and institutional processes. Importantly for voluntary associations, the POS can have a significant impact, although as Maloney et al point out '...not every association faces or perceives the same POS and that POS may differ across different policy issues' (2000b: 811).

At the macro policy level under New Labour, the POS for voluntary associations can be regarded as generally more positive than it was under the governments of Thatcher and Major. Put more simply, New Labour and the political environment generated since 1997, is more sympathetic to the concerns of voluntary associations as well being more concerned with the role that voluntary associations can play in realising policy outcomes (Kendall, 2000, Deakin, 2000, Martell and Driver, 2002, Imrie and Raco, 2003, Levitas, 2000). The notion of POS has potentially noteworthy ramifications for interpreting the conditions under which social capital can be created, appropriated and inhibited, and shall be returned to in due course.

Imrie and Raco (2003) highlight the use of community as a policy tool, which predates New Labour particularly in regard to aspects of self-help and mutual aid development, which can be seen as growing organically as a defence mechanism to times of hardship or threat (Cole, 1945b). Moreover policy discourses concerning the role of community in (re)development and empowerment tend to concern the encouragement of capacity building. In this regard individual citizens are enabled to develop both individual and community level capacity as a means to, and outcome of, participation in 'civic' activity. These policy discourses not only predate and parallel New Labour's current concern with civic regeneration, but can also be seen as the forerunners to the UK's urban policies of the 1970s.

The issue of political bipolarity clearly frames this debate and in this respect Houlihan and White (2002) note that the idea of community development has 'appealed to both the left and the right', as for the former it offered '...the prospect of a counterweight to a centralised civil service too closely allied to business interests and too accepting of business values' (p.13). Whilst for the latter, '...community development focused more on the return of power to the community to enable it to exercise effective control over local government and entrenched professional interests' (Houlihan and White, 2002:13). Thus the perceived decline of community in the late 1960s, (redolent of more contemporary community lost arguments, see for instance Taylor, 2003) offered an opportunity to establish policy that would devolve power from the centre to the local albeit via the 'benign' influence of the professional. From this position the Home Office, in 1968, argued that regeneration required 'the growth of persons in the community' and 'an awareness of interdependence'. On the back of this call to support defective or 'deficient' individuals (Imrie et al, 1996), Community Development Projects (CDPs) were established in 1969 (Home Office, 1968:3). There are obvious parallels here to some of the moral and functionalist orientated pronouncements of New Labour (Prideaux, 2005) since their re-election in May 2005 to a third consecutive term in office. One noticeable aspect has been a call, in relation to 'good government' (Heffernan, 2006), for a greater 'respect' and moral rectitude to become evident among the citizens of the UK. This reflects not only a perceived decline in community but also, and perhaps more pertinently, disquiet among policymakers about perceived declining trust and social capital (Halpern, 2005b).

The CDPs (1969-1977) were an attempt at joined up government and based around twelve local neighbourhood action research experiments aimed to support both people and neighbourhoods. The CDPs in this regard were intended to establish support for local initiatives, bring services and communities closer together and encourage participation (Miller, 2002). The emphasis throughout was on citizen involvement and self-help which, in reflecting the dominance of the Keynesian orientated POS at that time, demonstrated that the roots of social problems lay within British and global markets. This interventionist philosophy ensured that the fickle nature of capital was

largely blamed for the preponderance of poor inner city areas, facilitating a focus on structural reforms as necessary to alleviate the social problems faced by individuals. As forerunners to New Labour, partnership, integration and coordination were key aspects of the CDPs, as was the provision of information and evidence for developing and establishing strategy as well as monitoring and evaluating policy.

One of the problems the government had with the CDP projects was an apparent contradiction between the prevalent POS of the time and ministers who wished to set a more progressive agenda. In the van at that time was Secretary of State for Social Services, Anthony Crossland, who thought that the policy ought to help communities to 'stand more on their own in the future by their own efforts' (Imrie and Raco, 2003:10). Crossland's statement is somewhat portentous given the continuity in both Conservative (1979-1997) and New Labour emphases on individualism as the currency of community development and the latter's fondness for establishing government as an enabler of community development.

By the 1980s the post-war political consensus had been rudely interrupted and the POS had changed dramatically, evidenced in particular by: a move toward marketisation in reform of public services; a more centralised system of government; a reduction in direct taxation; a quest for privatisation and deregulation; and the adoption of new public management techniques (Heffernan, 2001, Martell and Driver, 1998, 2002). Above all, the strident and combative tone of Thatcher was an important factor in setting the tone for the POS around which the politically sensitive themes of change and confrontation constantly surfaced. The bipolarity of political decision-making was therefore reinforced and in so doing enabled the public to understand the nature of her leadership as a stemming 'from her conviction that British politics has become an important, even a decisive battle of ideas' (Kavanagh, 1987:249). In terms of community development, the overwhelming discourse that dominated relationships between government, voluntary associations and hence community was that of reducing government expenditure.

Translating social capital into pragmatic policy making

The discussion thus far would suggest that social capital, whilst not explicit in most areas of policy generation and implementation, has from at least 1970 had an implicit, almost covert effect in the construction and implementation of policy in such areas as health, crime, employment and educational attainment. In turning to look at how social capital has become part of the canon of social policy the key question is what does the present government and what did the previous administrations understand by the term social capital? Tony Blair, in a keynote speech to the NCVO annual conference in 1999 stated,

> We have always said that human capital is at the core of the new economy. But increasingly it is also social capital that matters too – the capacity to get things done, to cooperate, the magic ingredient that makes all the difference. Too often in the past government programmes damaged social capital – sending in the experts but ignoring community organisations, investing in bricks and mortar but not in people. In the future we need to invest in social capital as surely as we invest in skills and buildings (Blair, 1999).

Although Blair's account of social capital, with its allusion to mystery in the form of 'the magic ingredient' is somewhat woolly, it nevertheless signals an appreciation not only that 'relationships matter' but that government can and should have a place in facilitating social capital through appropriate investment. Furthermore a Strategy Unit discussion paper has identified '...economic efficiency, equity and civic or political arguments for government intervention to promote the accumulation of beneficial kinds of social capital' (Aldridge et al, 2002:7). For Blair and New Labour, and within an overarching communitarian orientated Third Way, these arguments for social capital creation, would seem to be predicated on the reinvigoration of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) with an overall aim to re-establish the active citizen as a precursor to the active community (Marinetto, 2003). In this sense the aim of government is to expand the capacity of the VCS to provide services to and for their citizenry, where volunteering and volunteerism become central to the development of the necessary social capital.

The desire of New Labour, since 1997, to develop a mixed economy of welfare (Kendall, 2000), has given the VSC a new level of legitimacy relating to social capital creation principally through the establishment of the British *Compact* in the first instance, in 1998 (Home Office, 1998). Moreover the creation of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) in December 1997, the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) in 2001 and Active Community Unit (ACU) in 2002 has focused attention on the need for government to enable citizens and communities to be active and empowered. In this respect citizens can therefore develop the capacity and potential for the formation of the social capital necessary to be socially included in an 'institutionally thick arena' (Imrie and Raco, 2003).

Within this 'thick arena' the Strategy unit suggests a range of ways in which government might try to promote the accumulation of social capital, and in so doing has further clarified the potential for intervention at the individual (micro), community (meso) and national (macro) policy levels. The paper identifies a number of 'levers' for influencing policy at each level. At the individual level greater support should be available for families and parenting, mentoring, volunteering, new approaches to dealing with offenders. At the community level levers include; promoting institutions that foster community, community IT networks, new approaches to the planning and design of the built environment, and dispersing social housing and using personal networks to pull individuals and communities out of poverty. At the national level measures to facilitate mutual trust, service learning in schools, and community service credit schemes are advocated (Aldridge et al, 2002:9). While a number of these levers have already been incorporated into public policy, many existing policies and programmes may actually contribute to the creation of social capital, although they may not necessarily be articulated in the language associated with the concept. This may present a problem with assessing whether social capital has been created or is present in the aftermath of policy implementation. Indeed policy deliberately designed to do nothing or geared towards a different area entirely, may inadvertently create the space, connections and the will for participants to develop forms of social capital.

The introduction of the poll tax in 1990, for example, despite opinion poll evidence of dissatisfaction, seemed to galvanise those opposed to its implementation. Indeed opponents formed a proto-opposition consisting of Tory councillors, ordinary members of the public and even the Lord Provost of Edinburgh (Lee, 1999). By the end of March that year demonstrations had given way to riots in central London and although extremists were mostly to blame (for the riots) they represented opinions across the political spectrum. In hindsight and with the lens of social capital theory it is possible to argue that this policy created a cause around which a disparate alliance of individuals and groups could unite in opposition, thus allowing elements of civil society to form networks, establish relationships and thereby create an atmosphere of normative and mutual trust in opposition to this manifestly unfair policy. Consequently it is possible to surmise that it was the extent of bonding, bridging and linking social capital that really allowed opposition to the poll tax to be successful. In sum the connections and networks established both horizontally across and vertically between different groups, linked individuals placed differently in the social and economic hierarchy, enabling information, ideas and resources to be drawn from those outside of their particular social milieu (Woolcock, 2001).

Prior to New Labour and their apparent championing of the VCS in the cause of civic renewal, the neo-liberal Conservative governments of Thatcher and Major made very little reference to the value of the VCS. In this regard voluntary associations tended to be viewed as a liberal means to service delivery within a monetarist and parsimonious welfare and social policy (Levitas, 2000, Driver and Martell, 1998). The Conservative beating of the drum of the free market, throughout the 1980's and 1990's was evident in their preoccupation with the 'dichotomy between the market and the state' (Kendall, 2000). This, Thatcher's (oft misquoted) maxim of there being 'no such thing as society' and the Tory penchant for property led regeneration, meant that social capital creation was not an overt concern in terms of Tory development policies. Moreover as Kendall notes Virginia Bottomley (Minister with responsibility for the voluntary sector at the time)

> ...referred to the relationship between the government and the voluntary sector as the 'terms of engagement'...a battleground. Which was exactly how she saw it (Kendall 2000:12).

Consequently successive Conservative administrations tended to view communication with the third sector as a place where debate and action on policy development was strictly limited, and where relations were prefaced by conflict. In essence the POS evident from 1997 onwards has proved very different to that which existed previously between 1979 and 1997. The bottom up rather than top down rhetoric of New Labour, is indicative of both the rhetorical power, and influence, as a strategy of governance, that modernisation wields (see above, p.66), has privileged both the VCS and volunteerism in terms of delivery. Moreover the communitarian focus on community as a central strategic metaphor together with the provision of an 'institutionally thick arena' (alluded to above), has given social capital a central focus to a policy orientation that did not exist before 1997.

Social capital and health

The extent to which New Labour has been able to operationalise the vision and value of social capital as set out by Blair (see above) is evident from the many interventions made by central government in terms of public service provision in the UK. Not least in this respect has been the study of health and its relationship to social capital, which as Halpern (2005a) has observed goes back at least to Durkheim's influential study of suicide (Durkheim, 1970). The importance in considering social capital and social policy outcomes was that Durkheim set out to show that suicide was actually influenced by the nature of the relationships one holds with other individuals within the context of specific communities. Using his concepts of 'social integration' and 'moral regulation' (see chapter 1, p.18) Durkheim categorised three types of suicide: egoistic, altruistic and anomic. Egoistic suicide relates to 'excessive individualism' among individuals who become detached, through a lack of social ties, from the commonly held values and norms of those around them. Altruistic suicide originates from an over immersion within a particular social group so that individuality is 'lost'. Anomic suicide results from

disturbances to the social order that result in individuals losing their normative order. Durkheim also noted that during times of political upheaval, especially in the case of war, the greater feeling of unity, the common sense of community reduces the suicide rates. For Durkheim therefore, 'Suicide varies...with the degree of integration of the social groups of which the individual forms a part' (Durkheim, 1970: 209). Fundamentally then Durkheim's explanation of suicide is reduced to a single social factor, namely the internal cohesion and integration of the social group of which an individual is a member.

There has been much criticism of Durkheim's positivistic analysis, especially from academics coming from the interpretivist tradition such as Douglas (1967) and Atkinson (1978). The key point in utilising Durkheim's research in relation to the current discussion of social capital theory and health policy, is that the value of social networks and relationships within which individuals find themselves, in terms of having an impact on mental and physical health, is not a new consideration. It is however one that is becoming more pertinent to policymakers striving to improve the capacity of the health service whilst attempting to keep costs down.

Given New Labour's predilection for evidence based policy making (Dorey, 2005, Solesbury, 2001), which has '...emerged as central to policy making and governance in Britain' (David, 2002: 1), the extent to which social networks are considered in terms of the policy making process would appear somewhat problematic. In particular this is because evidence is not always easily identified and identifiable and when evidence does emerge it may prove indecipherable and inconclusive in the context of rational policy making processes (Parsons, 1995). However, in the case of health, social capital would appear to be clearly evident, of which Robert Putnam writes, 'Of all the domains in which I have traced the consequences of social capital, in none is the importance of social connectedness so well established...' (Putnam, 2000:326). Evidence of individual connectedness and its relationship to individual health is clearly in abundance and has given rise to some clear policy outcomes.

In relation to physical health, studies by Kawachi et al (1996) and Vogt et al (1992) have suggested that strong social connections can aid recovery thereby lowering mortality rates, whilst Marmot (2005) reports that trust, tolerance and a sense of attachment to the neighbourhood were strongly related to health. Furthermore, Spiegel (1993, cited in Halpern, 2005) has supported suggestions made by Friedman et al (1986) that active intervention in terms of enhancing network support can reduce the recurrence of illness. In the case of mental health the integrative effect of social capital appears to act as a buffer thereby reducing emotional problems. Rose (2000) found that variations in the emotional health of individuals could be attributed to measures of social capital, whereas Mitchell and LaGory (2002) distinguished between the impact of bridging and bonding social capital. Interestingly, for Mitchell and LaGory (2002) bridging social capital, involving 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973), had a surprisingly more positive impact than bonding social capital, particular as one might expect in-group loyalty and solidarity to act palliatively during periods of ill-health. Importantly the amelioration of health issues appears to rest largely on policy responses geared at re-establishing the social capital necessary to affect an outcome, which in the main involves the building of networks that bond, bridge and link along a variety of dimensions (Putnam 2000, Woolcock, 2001). The consequence of the necessity to focus on the importance of one's social milieu in relation to health impels a sine qua non concerning social exclusion, to which some mention has already been made, but as a 'buttressing' (Lister, 2000) concern for New Labour it is an issue to which we shall return.

Social capital, education and crime

Other public service areas, education and crime in particular, have also been subject to research examining apparent deficits in social capital and the potential for positive and/or negative impacts in terms of educational outcomes and levels of criminality, respectively. Education has been at the forefront of studies that have attempted to show a close outcome based relationship between the amount and types of social capital and levels of educational attainment. Coleman was quite explicit about the importance of social capital in the creation of human capital in the next generation, and in particular how

relations outside of the school affected the educational development of children (Coleman, 1988).

In a seminal piece of work Coleman was able to show that family structure and the relative closure of the networks of parents (with children) impacted on the educational outcome of their offspring. For Coleman high schools based on religion, surrounded by a religiously orientated community, that is having 'intergenerational closure', exhibited strikingly lower dropout rates than for state or private funded schools. Coleman, in the rational strain tradition, was able to flag up the importance of social capital on educational outcomes, specifically identifying '...the importance of social capital in the creation of human capital' (Coleman, 1988: 116). This work was foreshadowed by *The Coleman Report* which had indicated that social factors, particularly the family and community background of children tended to outweigh the character of the school (Field, 2003).

At a more micro level the notion that social capital not only impacts directly on educational attainment but that central government can and should have a direct role in establishing and encouraging the connections necessary for its creation is often taken as a given. For New Labour the primary focus in this respect concerns the encouragement given to schools and parents to work in partnership as well as supporting parents through the introduction of programmes such as '*Sure Start*' and '*Supporting Families*' (Driver and Martell, 2002). Dika and Singh (2002) and Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) in separate reviews of studies of the relationship between social capital and educational achievement identified a clear and positive association between the two. For both sets of authors, scores remained positive when considering social capital as both parents' connections, and student's own connections. Of course the writings of Bourdieu (the critical strain) tend to underline the predictability of this form of 'reproduction' given the shaping of an individual's cultural capital by family circumstances and school tuition received. In other words that young people can enjoy educational advantage arising from their social relations (Jenkins, 1992).

Dika and Singh, however, draw attention to how social capital is used and the extent to which it can be considered a potential resource for all, specifically '...access to and mobilisation of social capital' (2002:43). Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) point to the case of more involved parents tending to be more aspirational in their tertiary expectations and thus suggest that, generally as the prime carer, it is the mother's educational attainment and the ensuing closeness of interactions with the child that can have a further impact on educational achievement. The wealth of data concerning schools, education and social capital is fairly comprehensive in suggesting a strong link (see Halpern, 2005 for another substantive overview) and a mostly positive relationship. However, attention should be given to how this notion is used and the extent to which issues such as power, class, inequality and exclusion are addressed by policymakers in developing and interpreting educational policy. A particular danger, alluded to by Munn (2000), is in the current usage of social capital which focuses excessive attention onto the role of the school in combating social disadvantage (or exclusion in common political parlance). This may serve to reinforce the notion of individualism in the political context of enabling and facilitating, rather than focussing on the existence of structural inequality. This perhaps provides a salutary reminder of the potential for education and social capital to be used as policy tools and one that Munn extends arguing that,

> The more we understand about how schools reproduce social and economic structures, the more tempted policy makers may be to focus on schools as the cure all for society's ills...Social inclusion policies which genuinely see schools as part of a larger jigsaw are to be welcomed especially if that jigsaw also has pieces labelled macroeconomic policy (Munn, 2000: 180).

The relationship between social capital and crime is a complicated one, not least in that the elements that comprise social capital can appear to have a variable and sometimes contradictory effect on crime. Social capital theory has been used to bridge the disciplinary gap between psychological and sociological explanations of crime and hence may offer causal explanation that spans these disciplines (Halpern, 2005a). Briefly, Freudian theories dominate the psychogenic approach whilst the sociogenic approach is based on socio-cultural and structural factors considered important to the potential for criminality to occur. To a certain extent these competing views represent the under-

socialised versus the over-socialised theoretical attempt to explain human behaviour in particular normative settings. Indeed Halpern (2001) has argued that it is between these competing rationales that Halpern social capital can help develop a more holistic explanation of criminal behaviour.

At the macro level the impact of social capital would seem to be largely benign with Putnam showing an inverse relationship between the social capital index and violent crime at state level (in the USA), maintaining that higher '...levels of social capital, all else being equal, translate into lower levels of crime (Putnam, 2000: 308). Sociologically Putnam's conclusion is somewhat axiomatic, given the importance of trust and reciprocity to his definition of social capital (see chapter 1, p.35). Indeed social dislocation, where individuals are haemorrhaged from the informal social controls associated with particular relations, has long been recognised as a prime cause of crime. Sampson and Laub (1993), in this respect, claim that it is the strength of social ties, outside of the immediate family, that enabled some prediction of criminal behaviour among teenagers to occur, they conclude that '...social ties...create interdependent systems of obligation and restraint that impose significant costs for translating criminal propensities into action' (Sampson and Laub, 1993:141). Indeed Kawachi et al (1997) argue that status and prestige resulting from strong networks can reinforce and sustain individual integration into the wider community, which can have a dramatic impact on the reduction of violent crime.

Halpern (2005a) in raising the question 'What if social disconnection is simply a symptom of an antisocial or deviant personality' (Halpern, 2005a: 116), argues that psychogenic theories of crime, which individualise criminal behaviour through personality and psychological variables, when viewed through the lens of social capital can establish more viable holistic explanations of criminal behaviour. Thus specific personality traits, which may drive particular criminal behaviour, may be reinforced or undermined by environmental and/or relational factors, which have a subsequent effect on a particular individual's potential for committing crime (Sampson and Laub, 1993). For some, the negative impact of one's social capital has been referred to as being 'dark'

(Putnam, 2000) or 'perverse' (Portes, 1996). Indeed these public negativities have been identified in relation to certain organisational structural situations. Organised crime is one such issue with the Mafia a particular consideration (Halpern, 2005), but also with drugs cartels in Colombia (McIlwaine and Moser, 2001), as well as paramilitarism in Northern Ireland (Bishop and Mallie, 1987).

The notion of dark social capital is itself problematic, given the specificity of context for interpreting and understanding social capital. Increasing social capital amongst street gangs in Los Angeles may be considered 'dark' social capital, although it may also be seen as a reaction to a system that represses and oppresses minorities. In this fashion in order to make life tolerable individuals sign up for gang-life and the 'dark' social capital can be more readily understood as the means by which individuals are able to involve themselves in meaningful communal activity thereby ameliorating social and economic conditions afforded them by a particular type of economic, political and social system. In other words social capital operating to facilitate action in a particular social setting is both multi-dimensional and open to interpretation depending on the extent of ones inculcation into a society's moral and normative code (Foley and Edwards, 1997). As Coleman observed social capital

> ...inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons, thus social capital and its uses are context dependent thereby rendering it neutral and valueless other than 'achieving goals not attainable in its absence (Coleman, 1990: 302).

Social capital and policymaking

In terms of policy aimed at the three public service areas outlined above a key aspect emanating from social capital discourse is 'simply' that policymakers need to consider social capital in the design and implementation of policy, and particularly social capital as an 'externality' to wider policy decisions (Halpern, 2005a). Essentially in this regard policy should be about not destroying social capital nor should social capital be seen as an undifferentiated concept given carte blanche for use in ameliorating all social ills. An over abundance of bonding social capital for instance can be quite negative, particularly

in respect of organised interests such as cartels, old boy networks, which produce a 'club' good as opposed to a 'public' good (Aldridge et al, 2002). In respect of unforeseen externalities the slum clearances of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, which were well intentioned attempts at improving the lives of the working classes, viewed from a social capital perspective become essentially failed attempts at social engineering. Young and Wilmott's (1957) seminal study of family in London's east end, showed that the re-housing of many East End residents in Greenleigh (a new town housing estate) increased 'home-centredness' particularly for men. This was largely a result of the destruction of many networks and friendships, which brought irrevocable changes to family structure and community life. More recently Halpern (1995) has reported that studies of clearance programmes have left residents severely depressed for up to three years after being relocated, indicating the value of social networks to sound psychological health. Thus returning to an earlier point, externalities affecting social capital should be born in mind particularly in terms of designing policy that is sustainable at both structural and operational levels.

In the first instance regeneration policies, particularly those which aim to offset the effects and impacts of social exclusion and are geared at the micro level of the neighbourhood (as a distinctive and distinguishable geographically located community), are at the forefront of policymaking aimed at creating social capital in specific geographical areas. In the van in this respect have been programmes such as the New Deal for Communities (NDC), introduced in 1998, which focused on 39 of the most deprived neighbourhoods of between one and four thousand households. The aim of the NDC is to increase employment levels, improve education levels, reduce crime and improve people's health (Dwelly, 2001). The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), inherited by New Labour from the previous Tory administration, has been one of the mainstays of policy geared towards alleviating deprivation and social exclusion. Operating on the basis of a competitive bidding process between local partnerships, each of whom represent specific localities, a central tenet of the SRB has been the espousal of 'localism' with spending priorities influenced by local people (Morrison, 2003). Moreover, the National Strategy Action Plan for neighbourhood renewal, building on the

work of the eighteen Policy Action Teams (PATs) has established a Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) of some £800 million to be spent primarily supporting the 88 most deprived local authority districts in England (SEU, 2001).

New Labour, since 1998, has evidently taken a strategic course to the regeneration of communities, neighbourhoods and specific localities. Additionally whilst the area-based initiative (ABI) is still part of the state armoury in tackling deprivation, its use is more closely linked to the development of local authority led local strategic partnerships (LSPs). These LSPs are an attempt at 'multilevel' governance, which is significant in that it enables recognition of the importance '...of governance arrangements operating at a range of spatial scales' (Hastings, 2003:85). The LSPs role has been paramount, in that as multi-agency partnerships, involving private and public organisations as well as people from the local community, they have been charged with identifying and prioritising problem neighbourhoods, and additionally to propose apposite solutions to the problems identified (SEU, 2000). Fundamentally all of the programmes identified above are a deliberate attempt to address both the issue of social exclusion and the government pledge to promote and enable opportunity and responsibility. Indeed these aspects represent a pragmatic response of the 'social investment state' (Lister, 2004), which complicit in the wider modernisation process fundamental to Third Way credos also spawns the 'active welfare state' (Lewis, 2005).

Whilst the institutional strength surrounding the policy goal of propagating an active society has been reinforced or 'thickened', the ABI has continued as a mainstay of community action policy, albeit with the caveats necessary for it to operate within the wider strategic remit of the LSP. The introduction of Health Action Zones (HAZ) in 1998, Education Action Zones (EAZ) in 2000, Home Zones (HZ) and Sports Action Zones (SAZ) in 2001 are all indicative of New Labour's belief in 'community' as its 'central collective abstraction' (Levitas, 2000). Indeed these targeted programmes that promote the 'hybrid' welfare regime, itself emerging from the 'social investment state', place a strong emphasis on the value of state investment in human and social capital (Lister, 2004). Consequently the ABI has been laden with the role of social capital

progenitor (Martell and Driver, 1998). The phenomena of action zones would suggest that the ABI is ideologically neutral and given it's new found institutionally rich environment, under New Labour, is appropriately positioned within LSPs to tackle issues, such as social exclusion, that cut across the traditional boundaries of public policy concern.

The plethora of ABIs in New Labour's first term was as a direct consequence of a desire to counteract the effects of deprivation and was largely predicated on the Tory notion that affluence had by-passed these areas, becoming 'islands of decline in a sea of prosperity' (Atkinson, 2003:161). This line of thought is characteristic of the MUD discourse of social exclusion which is complicit in pathologising particular communities (Levitas, 1998). Under New Labour this theme became one around which social capital creation as a form of investment for the promotion of civic renewal became implicit to the success of ABIs (including NDCs and SRB). Cave and Curtis (2001), in their assessment of an East London HAZ, identified social capital as significant to ABI regeneration programmes that can influence health by changing 'the resources at people's disposal and the conditions in which they live' (p.11). Similarly Gould-Ellen and colleagues in a review of the overlap between health and regeneration policies concluded

> ...neighbourhood conditions do appear to matter...We find the strongest evidence for the independent effect of neighbourhood on overall mortality [and in shaping] health-related behaviours and mental health. (Gould-Ellen et al, 2001:404).

Likewise, the NDC and other action zones, as modernised entities, are predicated on the notion of partnerships and community involvement which require social capital to be present, useable, and creatable within the communities in question. EAZs, for example, have been identified as relatively unsuccessful largely because of their failure to attract inward investment (Brehony and Deem, 2003). Moreover the inherent limitations of the EAZ, a lack of embeddedness and citizen engagement leading to an inability to stimulate social capital, was compounded by an apparent privileging of the business sector to the detriment of local community involvement. EAZs have been largely superseded by other policy developments in education. First the 2001 White Paper *Schools Achieving Success*

outlined plans for new specialist schools as well as an expansion in faith based schools (Brehony and Deem, 2003). More importantly in 2004 *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, and the *Children Act* were published, the latter providing the framework for the former. Both of these documents aimed to modernise education provision, which has involved aspects of individualisation and consumerism in identifying schools as extended service providers and hence a rationale to '...build services around the needs of children (DfES, 2004:2). In terms of creating social capital the implication is that education is to operate at a transformative level, transforming bonding to bridging capital and social capital into human capital. This process reflects broader governmental concerns with social investment as the means of circumventing structural factors that may preclude individuals from inclusion in the entrepreneurial opportunity culture.

The study by East (2002) however, of a HAZ in the district of Sneinton Nottingham, raises a pertinent question concerning the essential premise on which ABIs are formulated and operationalised. East identified a situation where the notion of a single community was problematic and consequently the idea of formulating an area based community policy to be a practical failure. In this respect East's concern was with the HAZ as an ABI, in particular that social relationships dominated by bonding social capital established separate identities, based on age, gender, class and ethnicity, to which many individuals subscribed (East, 2002). Furthermore HAZs, similar to categories of action zones, by maintaining and reflecting departmental priorities, may unwittingly compromise the development of social capital that would enable communities to move beyond a defensive posture towards a more proactive stance enabling communities to get 'things done' (Atkinson, 2003). East's conclusions suggest that in relation to policies which have social capital as a core element and are implemented in the 'community' that two riders need to be kept in mind. First that community is not a single entity but resplendent within its many dimensions, definitions and conceptualisations. Second, that when creating social capital as a particular policy outcome that there are likely to be unintended consequences of that outcome, which may have a deleterious effect both for social capital and other intended policy targets (East, 2002).

This example of a relatively clear tangible outcome of social capital in relation to a single variable (in this case health), lends itself to identifying some of the problems that tend to be implicit in establishing how social capital has been incorporated into wider social policy. Not least in this respect it is the revival of community as legitimate place for the operation of civil society (Levitas, 1998, 2000, Imrie and Raco, 2003, Kearns 2003, White, 1998) that is seen as the remedy to a variety of social ills. A prescription predicated on 'civic renewal' (Blunkett, 2003b) which former Home Secretary David Blunkett has described as being at the heart of '...the development of active citizenship, [and] strengthened communities'. (Blunkett, 2003a: 38). Blunkett's notion of civil renewal set out a new agenda for government that explicitly identified the activities of individuals operating within community, 'active citizens', as fundamental to the renewal process itself (Blunkett, 2003b). To be sure, for Blunkett the key social capital outcomes of trust, mutuality, reciprocity, and the production of norms and values (see p.85 above), produced by an active citizenry, are the crucial features of community that voluntary associations are so important to. In this respect macro level policy that necessitates community empowerment, also demands changes to governance structures involving a

> ...need to reach out to the many voluntary organisations and community groups who are much closer to the problems...and to involve them as strategic partners, valuing their expertise and knowledge and recognising their ability to devise new and different ways to solve difficult problems. (Blunkett, 2003b: 26).

This example highlights two aspects to this policy intervention. First, that 'modernised' welfare policy involving any one particular aspect of governmental concern is prefaced by a wider concern with civil renewal and active citizenship (and hence social exclusion/inclusion). Second, as a key element of 'social investment', social capital becomes the critical element by which this re-invigoration is to occur. For Blunkett social capital

> ...gives concrete empirical and theoretical content to ideas about community networks, the bonds of trust and belonging, and shared values amongst families, friends and communities [and] claims that communities suffer less crime, anti-social behaviour and family breakdown, when

> people know and trust each other, and interact in clubs, associations and voluntary groups (Blunkett, 2003b: 26-27).

If one momentarily accepts Blunkett's casting aside of the problem of which social capital theory is being considered (see chapter 1), it is apparent that the concepts of community, voluntary associations and civil society are problematic in their own right. Moreover the vagaries of specific ideological lenses, which have traditionally given rise to divergent political solutions (Giddens, 1994, Hefferman, 2000), are also equally as thorny when considering the incorporation of social capital into social policy. Indeed, the how, when and why of policy implementation, particularly concerning social capital creation and development, tends to display a particular binary opposition which, in effect, has dominated policymaking and implementation in Britain for the last thirty years.

Conclusion

It is clear that New Labour's enthusiasm for community is derived both from an attempt to escape the traditional political duality of British politics in their espousal of the Third Way as much as from the adoption of Etzionian communitarianism with its endemic moral authoritarianism. Moreover, the imprecation of modernisation has signified that Labour in 'throwing off historical obsessions and providing a new sense of direction' (Taylor, 1997:104-5) has responded to Thatcherism and the globalised context of the late twentieth century (Hay, 1999). Social democracy in Britain has therefore become focused on pragmatic politics in which liberal entrepreneurialism, citizenship, efficiency and effectiveness have become fused together under the guise of modernisation as the dominant theme (Levitas, 2000, Rustin, 2004). Within this managerialist paradigm New Labour's exhortation of community, as the key transformative agent in civic renewal, has given community empowerment a political potency and level of reification that would have hitherto been extremely unlikely.

For New Labour, social capital has become the touchstone in its approach to, and use of community as a political tool. This has often resulted in policies aimed at creating and sustaining social capital, within a particular locality, as being no more than intermediate

policies that seek to improve wider aspects of social and/or welfare policy such as in relation to individual health, educational attainment and crime reduction. This would appear to be an ongoing problem that challenges the conceptual validity of social capital. Moreover given New Labour's predilection for evidence based policy, the difficulty in measuring social capital has become manifest in the necessity to establish when a further outcome has demonstrably shown to have benefited from the apparent creation of social capital among citizens in a specific locality.

New Labour's apparent adoption of Etzionian communitarianism, replete with conservative and neo-liberal values (Prideaux, 2005), tends to chime with its own managerialist agenda and a functionalism evident in the disregard shown to issues of structural inequality. In this respect New Labour's policy assignation of social capital and functionalism is closer to the 'moral inflationism' (Lewandowski, 2006) of Putnam's (democratic strain) use of social capital than the value neutrality with which Coleman (1988) (rational strain) and Bourdieu (1997) (critical strain) associate with the concept. The upshot is a tendency to view social capital, in terms of generalised societal level policy outcomes, in a homogenised manner as a response to collective action problems. In this respect issues of power and the value and meaning of civil society tend to be overlooked. This is especially problematic given New Labour's centring of social capital as the means to establish an active citizenry en route to civic renewal via the establishment of policies aimed at encouraging and reinforcing volunteerism as the basis for this aspect of civil society.

Finally this chapter has also drawn attention to the political opportunity structure, which focuses attention onto structure rather than agency and considers crucial issues such as power relations and political context. In this respect the increased importance attached to voluntary associations by government is clearly related to the political climate and essentially refers to the 'attitude' of the political machinery for establishing or facilitating openings for social movements, such as volunteerism. The importance of the POS is that it helps to answer questions of why and how social capital has been incorporated into social and welfare policy. Moreover identification of the relevant POS also helps to

explain the continued reliance on ABIs as key elements to its civic and social renewal policies, and facilitates a clearer understanding of the link between exclusion, power relationships and social capital.

The importance of volunteerism to New Labour is clearly integral to wider policies where social capital creation has become the foundation for its communitarian vision. In considering the VSCs as key civil society organisations, this chapter provides some useful pointers as to how they may be investigated further. In particular the policy context, within which the VSC now stands, as both the subject and object of modernisation, perhaps denotes an underlying philosophy towards the governance of the voluntary sport sector (see chapter 3, p.68). This arrangement in placing social capital together with aspects of community at the heart of a civic renewal agenda clearly impacts on the perceived value and importance attributed to VSCs as distinct CSOs. In this respect the reconstruction of Labour, and the use of 'labelling tools' (Harrison, 2002) can be deconstructed and more clearly analysed with the use of the POS. Indeed the encouragement and support offered to the voluntary sector, the voluntary sports sector and volunteerism in particular is attributable to a more benign POS since 1997. Furthermore, when considering the meaning, value and potential of social capital, the POS helps to identify the role of political context and structure as important criteria in first structuring the context of associational activity and second in revealing the importance and value of the contextualised formal and informal relations that exist between actors.

The next chapter turns to examine sport in the context of policy development that both reflects on, and accounts for the changing relationship between social capital, voluntary sports clubs and sports policy.

Chapter 4.

Social capital, voluntary sports clubs and the development of sports policy

Introduction

As the previous chapter has outlined New Labour's election in 1997 saw the adoption of pragmatic third way politics, modernisation and an accountability ethic, which, when allied to governance rather than government, has enabled the private and public sectors new roles in policy implementation (Stoker, 2000, 1999). In this regard partnership working and contracting out have become commonplace, with many local authorities working to maximise this process which Blair considered right and proper, '...their distinctive leadership role will be to weave and knit together the contribution of the various local stakeholders' (Blair. 1998: 13). Furthermore the drive for civic renewal, based on a communitarianism where active citizenship constitutes a more buoyant civil society, has resulted in New Labour stressing the importance of community level action and the consequent need to build capacity within the community (DCMS, 2002). The discursive aspect to this relationship is evident in the manner that policy towards the incorporation and acceptance of volunteerism agendas is now no longer piecemeal and ad hoc. Kendall puts the situation in perspective when he states that

> In effect, for the first time, a purposive stance towards a third sector per se has become mainstreamed into central government's public policy agenda, representing a major break from the past" (Kendall, 2000:2).

The implications for VSCs were not immediate, but as New Labour began to clarify and clearly establish a distinct sports policy agenda (Labour Party 1997, DCMS 2000, 2001, DCMS/Strategy Unit 2003, Carter, 2005), the role of the VSC was ever more likely to come under scrutiny. In particular the amateur tradition of VSCs in the UK, would, in accordance with New Labour's reconstructivist and managerial tendencies, be in need of modernising both structurally and functionally. Indeed the ideological baggage associated with 'Third Way' politics, which when wedded to the concept of social capital would necessarily facilitate policy-making that would incorporate VSCs in meeting wider

social objectives. To this extent sports volunteers have become subject to the need for 'better capacity building...to ensure that both the quality and quantity are maintained' (DCMS, 2002, p.166).

This use of social capital as a tool in the sports policy-making process has involved the use of quangos such as Sport England (SE), the Youth Sports Trust (YST) and UK Sport in facilitating the delivery of government sports strategies, whilst simultaneously being subject to them. In this sense the remits of a variety of sports agencies have been prescribed and circumscribed in *A Sporting Future for All* (2000), *Game Plan* (2002) and more recently as a result of the *Carter Review* (2005).

However evidence that informs on the validity and expediency of supporting social capital creation as a means to invigorating civil society and achieving discursively other (often laudable) wider social objectives is sketchy at best. For VSCs as key voluntary associations, the evidence to date would suggest that this facet of voluntary associationalism is largely under-researched. As Collins (2003) has argued '...the social benefits sought by New Labour from a more active voluntary sector as part of the third way can scarcely be demonstrated by research' (p, 237). Furthermore the Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy in a review of the role of voluntary sports clubs stated that

> ...there is no *high quality research*, and therefore there is *no evidence base* from which to make policy...if policy for voluntary sports club development is to be evidence based, then primary research needs to be conducted to provide such evidence (Weed et al, 2005:41).

To this extent this chapter has three main aims. First, to embed the account of the politics of social capital within a context sympathetic to the value and role of both sport and VSCs within wider society. Second, to discuss the significance of the political opportunity structure surrounding volunteering and the voluntary sector as it relates to the establishment of a framework for public policy, itself charged with promoting and sustaining volunteerism, as an underpinning concept, of the policy agenda of central government. Finally sports policy, and that which relates to VSCs in particular, is considered in relation to the key themes of social capital and civil society; which having

been teased out in establishing a POS for volunteerism, is developed further within the wider context of public service provision. Necessarily the political and ideological concerns of government, and in particular those of New Labour since 1997, provide the environment within which the following analyses are located.

Dimensions of the voluntary sport club in the context of public policy

In the previous chapter an account was given of how and why social capital has been incorporated into public policy making, with civil society identified as the general point of reference and community recognised as the central motif for interpreting and understanding governmental concern for civic renewal. The corollary of this focus, particularly under New Labour, has been the identification of voluntary associations and volunteerism as the conduits through which much policy has been directed. To be sure most policy in this regard has been geared at ameliorating social problems such as social exclusion, boosting democratic values (through citizenship), and establishing an active citizenry within a wider framework of civic renewal.

The institution of the voluntary sports club (VSC), of which the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR) estimates there are 151,000, with 46% having existed for more than 30 years (Nichols, 2003), is a prime example of the type of voluntary association or civil society organisation (CSO) that facilitates the liberty of individuals to associate for a common purpose that does not involve the state directly (Cole, 1945). Sport as a whole, and VSCs in particular, have become feted within this context not least in relation to commonly held assumptions concerning the value and meaning of sports participation itself, but also because sport and physical activity account for the single largest area of voluntary activity in the UK. In this latter respect the 2003 Sport England-sponsored research, *Sports Volunteering in England* (Taylor et al, 2003), identified that 26% of all voluntary activity in the UK occurred in sport and physical activity. The report also estimated that the total number of volunteers in sport was over 5.8 million (14.8% of the population), and that they 'donated' 1.2 billion hours a year. Furthermore the report estimated that hypothetically, using the average hourly earnings for all industries for

2002 of £11.69 (ONS, 2003), that replacing volunteers in sport would cost the economy £14.1 billion and would require 720,000 additional full-time paid workers (Taylor et al, 2003).

Patently these costs are not affordable to government in either financial terms or social terms. Indeed the suggestion of paid professionalism in VSCs flies in the face of both the accepted research concerning individual motivations that compel one to volunteer in sport, and governmental concerns with establishing an active citizenry through the promotion of voluntary activity and social capital. In the case of individual motivations to volunteer, writers such as McIntyre and Pigram, (1992), Green and Chalip (1998), Nichols and King (1999), Nichols and Garrett (2001), to mention but a few, overwhelmingly cite altruism as the key motivational factor. In the case of sports volunteering Coalter has suggested that altruism becomes manifest in the axiomatic cliché of wanting to 'give something back' (Coalter, 2004). This is also apparent in Stebbins' nuanced allusion to the integration of altruism and 'self interestedness' within volunteering, largely in the form of serious leisure (Stebbins, 1997, for serious leisure see for example Stebbins 1992, 1993).

Of key importance to the debate concerning VSCs, social capital and policy making has been the traditional and general philosophical view that has tended to regard sport as 'self-evidently a good thing' (Rowe, 2005). In this sense participation in sport, and particularly participation occurring within a voluntary sports club, reflects the virtuous and moral status that has tended to surround sport in England since its emergence from almost a century of public school dominated amateur values (Holt, 1989, Polley, 2004). Moreover the 'values' of sport, derived as they are from public school athleticism roots, have been frequently cited as being conducive to creating both the well rounded individual who learns to play by the rules, doesn't cheat, wins with grace and loses with honour. These values have also commonly been viewed as encouraging the suppression of individualism for the sake of the team, as well as, in the collectively organised sense of a VSC, facilitating social cohesion across any number of social divisions.

For Allison the strength of the claims made for the value of sport lie in the very 'interests, principles and meanings' created by sport and which 'do not exist if there is no sport' (Allison, 1998:710). In essence the case is made for the particular contribution that 'sport' can make to civil society, beyond the established value of the voluntary association itself, particularly when participation occurs within a sports club environment. For Dyreson, commenting on the American experience, these values collectively and cumulatively may be referred to as 'cultural power', which amounts to the identification of sport (for Americans at least) as being 'the most important tool for making social capital' (Dyreson, 2001:24). Accordingly the self-reinforcing and self-perpetuating nature of sporting ideology becomes apparent, particularly when considered in the context of Diamond's list of the democratic functions of civil society: checking government power, skills and values learned through participation, information dissemination, and the provision of vehicles to express interests and the training and recruitment of leaders (Diamond, 1994b). According to Allison '...sports clubs can perform most of them [the functions]' (Allison, 1998:714), which suggests that not only is sport itself, and the institution of the VSC, subject to a democratic functionalist interpretation, but that policy making predicated on this interpretation does little to respect the culture and values inherent to the majority of VSCs. A consequence of this scenario has been that a number of pressures – from quality of service to the time that individuals are able to 'give' as volunteering (Nichols et al, 2005) – have impinge and impacted on the tradition of VSCs to such an extent that the institutional capital of the VSC has become synonymous with an autonomy and independence born from the dominance of the grass roots that are the mainstay of most VSCs.

This notion of an independent and autonomous voluntary sport sector was further entrenched through the establishment of the 'cultural power' of the ideology of sporting tradition within the central government policy statement *Sport: Raising the Game* (DNH, 1995). This strategy document not only reinforced and reified a popularistic and functional interpretation of sport, but also began an overt politicisation that linked ideology to sport development policy. For John Major, then Prime Minister, commenting in his introduction to *Sport: Raising the Game*,

> Sport is a binding force between generations and across borders. But by a miraculous paradox, it is at the same time one of the defining characteristics of nationhood and of local pride...and furthermore...Competitive sport teaches valuable lessons which last for life. Every game delivers both a winner and a loser. Sportsmen must learn to be both (DNH, 1995:2).

Essentially for Major, *Sport: Raising the Game* reasserted traditional 'one-nation' conservative values whilst maintaining a neo-liberal scepticism of the local state which was manifest in the continued political marginalisation of local government (Houlihan and White, 2002). Moreover the narrow focus on selected sports and the desire to re-unite the nation through an aspiration to international sporting success signalled a continuity with the traditional view of the VSC as an institution independent from government and policy makers.

To all intents and purposes Major's invocation of traditional conservatism engendered an interpretation of sport which was very much in accordance with established notions of the states right and proper role in taking an 'arms length' approach (Oakley and Green, 2001). Indeed this interpretation has been characterised by the conservative philosopher Roger Scruton, as '...a spontaneous institution, which in pursuing its internal purposes generates a consciousness of social ends...' (Scruton, 1980: 143). The consequence for VSCs was largely to reinforce and underpin the established philosophical tradition of the CSO as an essentially independent institution that has evolved and developed through consensus by and on behalf of its members. In other words VSCs were established with a guiding principle of mutual-aid, which policy-makers were loathe to interfere with because of the potential knock-on effects for civil society and volunteerism (Bishop and Hoggett, 1986).

Given the above debate, Haywood and Kew's (1989) problematising of the nature of sport forms is a salutary reminder that sports participation and the outputs and outcomes of sports participation are open to different interpretation and meaning. They argued that the nature of sport forms, when used instrumentally within social policy contexts, was that of 'products and reproducers of particular traditions and values' and that this

perception has largely gone unquestioned (Haywood and Kew, 1989:176). Essentially for Haywood and Kew the problematic nature of sport forms arises due to the different intrinsic traditions and values (of those sports), which gives rise to what Coalter has referred to as '...a wide range of processes, social relationships and presumed physical, psychological and sociological outcomes' (2001:7). Participation is not uniform, and subsequently any implicit traditions and values are subjectively felt and consequently may elicit differing responses and experiences from participants. Within this context specific sports, and their particular VSCs, may be said to have a 'subculture' which instils in participants a propensity to act in accordance with particular norms and values (Bishop and Hogget, 1986). Indeed the particular subculture of a VSC is but one of a number of components that makes up what can be considered to be the institutional capital of a particular VSC (Smith and Waddington, 2004).

For Bishop and Hogget the notion of a 'subculture' emerges from the group dynamic and can '...be seen to occupy an intermediate position, existing in the space between the individual or club engaged in a leisure activity and the wider social order' (Bishop & Hogget, 1986:43). Similarly Horton-Smith's suggestion, in the context of grass roots associations, of a 'group ideology' that equates to '...the values and beliefs that support the goals, existence, virtues structure and activities of a given set of people' (Horton-Smith, 2000:23), is indicative of the social processes that surround sports participation and particularly participation in a particular sport through a VSC and will be returned to in due course.

Given that sport forms and in particular the mutual-aid organisational location of their participation potentially carries a certain social and cultural reproductive capacity, it is perhaps not surprising that Haywood and Kew consider the community development through sport approaches in the 1980s to have been found wanting. Clearly Haywood and Kew posit that this programme failure occurred largely '...because they fail to consider the diverse nature and structures of the very sporting activities that make up the programme' (Haywood and Kew, 1980:175).

In outlining similar concerns Dunning and Waddington point to the 'Januform' character of sporting cultures, which they suggest emerges from two competing philosophical standpoints. On the one hand, the 'Dionysian' or 'Epicurean' is concerned with pleasure and self-fulfilment, being expressed in particular through team sports and a subculture that eulogises alcohol and reinforces heterosexual manliness. The 'Stoical' or 'Puritanical', on the other hand, is concerned with more utilitarian outcomes such as moral and physical development and is closely linked to the emergence of the nineteenth century rational recreation movement and the subsequent functional juxtapositioning of sport and health (Dunning and Waddington, 2003).

The importance to the current discussion lies in the apparent dominance of the 'Stoical' or 'Puritanical' which, tied as it is to the emergence of Britain as a capitalist urban-industrial nation state, has resulted in the dogmatic prominence of the Puritanical/Stoical view '...as a central aspect of the ideology of those charged with the promotion of sport in public policy' (Smith and Waddington, 2004:281). Essentially for Smith and Waddington the notion that social policy predicated on sporting schemes is dependent on a singular and potentially problematic notion of sport. In this sense, in reinforcing the stoical/puritanical at the expense of the Dionysian/Epicurean philosophy, sport (in particular specific forms of sport) tends to be accepted uncritically as being a wholesome and healthy activity, in both the physical and moral sense (Smith and Waddington, 2004).

Coalter (2007a) has referred to this over-generalised, popular and idealistic interpretation of sport as its 'mythopoeic' status. This concern has tended to serve a variety of British governments as a common denominator for particular brands of sports policy-making. For example, in John Major's foreword to *Raising The Game* sport is identified as something that 'teaches valuable lessons' and 'is a central part of Britain's national heritage' (DNH, 1995). Tessa Jowell writing some seven years later in *Game Plan,* argued that sport '...teaches us about life. We learn self-discipline and teamwork...to win with grace and lose with dignity. It gets us fit. It keeps us healthy' (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002:6). This simple comparison suggests that not only is this continuity of a particular philosophical character attributable to sport at the heart of policy development, but that it

is also driving the contemporary notion of an identifiable and legitimate sports policy strand (Oakley and Green, 2001). In this regard Tony Blair's comment, in his forward to *Game Plan,* that 'Sport is a powerful and often under-used tool that can help Government to achieve a number of ambitious goals' (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002:5), is perhaps the clearest indication to date that sport is viewed as an overwhelmingly positive activity that can impact on social and welfare policy within a wider framework of communitarian values (see chapter 3, p.69).

Within this scenario an apparent paradox has arisen which is directly attributable to the marriage of New Labour's desire to use sport as a tool of social policy and the desire to orchestrate civic renewal and active citizenship through the promotion of the volunteering agenda. Essentially the incorporation of VSCs and the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport, together with schools and local authorities (LAs), as the prime means to deliver sport and social objectives, would suggest, that in the case of VSCs in particular, that their traditional philosophical value of mutual-aid, and sporting value, derivable from a Dionysian/Epicurean philosophy, are being challenged. The challenge to traditional notions of VSC 'ideology' coming from a combination of New Labour's commitment to the modernisation agenda, its communitarian values and social inclusion.

The identification of VSCs as 'pure' CSOs is overly simplistic given the historically symbiotic relationship between CSOs and government (Halfpenny and Reid, 2002), and the extent to which sports volunteering has been identified and characterised as independent of, and outside of this relationship. Indeed positing a uniformity of purpose, structure and organisation among the many variations of the CSO is as futile as it is false and can lead to the temptation to 'create a more homogenous and discrete sector for research and analysis' (Halfpenny and Reid, 2002:536). Nevertheless in the context of the current debate it is the apparent divorce or bifurcation between the 'mainstream' of CSOs and the sports volunteering sector (as represented by the VSC in this instance) that is of interest, particularly in terms of the impact on governmental perceptions and hence policy towards each sector.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to detail the history of the voluntary sector; this has been performed thoroughly and more completely elsewhere (see for example Kendall and Knapp 1996, Davis Smith 1995, Harris, Rochester and Halfpenny 2001, Morris, 2000). Suffice to acknowledge that the contemporary voluntary sector has emerged from a history of philanthropy, defensive social and welfare provision and charitable giving, to occupy the space between the market and the state that has latterly been detailed as civil society (see chapter 2, p.35). In this guise voluntary organisations and CSOs may be said to have a number of major functions, which Kendall and Knapp have identified as service-providing, mutual-aid, policy advocacy and campaigning, individual advocacy and resource and coordination functions (Kendall and Knapp, 1995). The majority of CSOs and voluntary organisations would, according to these classifications, tend to see themselves as 'multi-functional', whilst most VSCs would, from this functional perspective, tend to fit squarely within the mutual-aid category (Kendall and Knapp, 1995).

VSCs also tend to differ from many other voluntary organisations in relation to the nature and value of the product emanating from a clubs own mutuality. Thus in one sense the product not only reinforces a shared mutuality within the VSC itself, but it may also reinforce the mutuality of other VSCs, both internally and externally, thereby establishing reciprocity and identity across particular sport genres. In this manner specific aspects of the governance of VSCs are clearly implicated in forming identity, solidarity and a sense of ownership across the various 'imagined' communities of VSCs involved in specific sports (Anderson, 1991, Whiteley, 1999). Governance in this instance may therefore be actually contributing towards the creation of social capital, albeit in a self-selecting and largely exclusive manner. Within this context there are likely to be levels at which imagined communities can operate from the mass inclusive level of all VSC members across the UK to particular niche imagined communities which may be delineated by certain temporal, spatial and specific sporting interests.

If one considers sports officials as an example, who operating in this manner, may form an inclusive imagined community, which could be further segregated along national and

regional lines, which is in turn given further focus by reference to sport type. In this regard the RFU's commitment to community rugby, which is centred on participation in the game via some of the 2120 clubs in England together or though the affiliated referees union (Nichols, 2003b, see also the Blackman Plan, 1998), has included the identification of beacon clubs, the sharing of best practice through local networks and a commitment to electronic only communication. Arguably this commitment has enabled the imagined community surrounding rugby union to be both strengthened and solidified, facilitating the reinforcement of identity and solidarity within and amongst members of community rugby clubs (Nichols, 2003b). Indeed the adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) as the prime means of communication between the RFU and its constituent members has possibly reinforced perceptions of being part of a wider community of rugby union both at the national and international level. It is however a moot point as to the long term impact of ICT on the notion of the imagined community, particularly given its increasing spread and influence on many areas of individual and communal public life (see Burrows, 2003, Graham and Marvin, 2001, and Maloney 1999).

It is the ideological and cultural values associated with mutual-aid rather than service (philanthropy), and a desire for autonomy and independence as opposed to state dependence – albeit in the service of the state – that tends to differentiate VSC from most other CSOs. Indeed the isolation, perpetuation and reinforcement of these values, by both VSCs and the mainstream voluntary sector through organisational and governance arrangements, have been responsible for much of the sectoral cleavage that exists within the contemporary voluntary sector landscape of the UK. This is not to suggest that philanthropy and mutual-aid are mutually exclusive, essentially they both detail the nature of an exchange relationship, but that the overriding raison d'etre of sports clubs is about the relationship between it and the individual and is not concerned primarily with action taken on behalf of the poor or excluded (Deakin, 2001).

In terms of function many CSOs, in the form of charities such as Scope, Mencap, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Amnesty International, clearly have a mandate to provide a

number of the functions outlined above by Kendall and Knapp (1995), even though each organisation may tend to prioritise certain functions above others. Moreover many of the mainstream CSOs have long since eschewed their independence from central government, particularly in terms of funding and structural support. This in itself is an acknowledgement that civil society is both relational in disposition, and sustained through the largely explicit support of central government. In this regard civil society, for all its merit, cannot operate in a manner that is wholly independent of state supervision, and is to a large extent closely aligned with Walzer's notion of 'critical associationalism' (Walzer, 1995).

For Walzer critical associationalism is akin to a forum that facilitates monitoring, by both the state and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and allows the occasional exercising of powers over one another. The upshot according to Walzer is the 'paradox of civil society', which has been discussed previously in the context of social capital creation (see Chapter 2, p.34), where the state by framing civil society concurrently occupies a space within it (Walzer, 1995, see also Foley and Edwards, 1996). For CSOs and NGOs in the UK this has meant that a tradition of funding and institutional support from central government has developed as the state has become more involved in the relief of poverty and the provision of welfare (Harris, 1990). Thus in 1990, 39% of the total operating income of the voluntary sector, some £12 billion, came from government and 48%, £14 billion, came from commercial activity (Kendall and Knapp, 1996). In essence the service function or the notion of effective service delivery (via individuals' volunteering) as detailed in the 1969 *Aves Report,* had come to dominate the mainstream voluntary sector as opposed to the mutual-aid function and fierce independence, which was (and is) both the modus vivendi and modus operandi of VSCs (Sheard, 1995).

A simple comparison of income sources for the VSC and mainstream CSOs is instructive given that, of the 'broad' voluntary sector income, 87% in 1990 came from either the government or via commercial activities. For VSCs however, in 1999, 63% of income came from the participants themselves (Allison, 2001). Not only does this suggest that VSCs (and perhaps the voluntary sports sector, if indeed it does exist at all) are likely to

enjoy greater autonomy than many CSOs and NGOs, but that the norms and values to which VSC members subscribe are apposite in relation to their expectations from their membership. In this respect Allison in the SportScotland research study *Sports Clubs in Scotland* has suggested that club success appeared attributable to three factors:

> ...a focus on the needs of their members as an absolute priority; the ability to raise adequate finances to meet their needs from within the club (autonomy); and a focus on short term planning (Allison, 2001:7-8).

However as government was beginning to significantly increase funding to sport, largely through the introduction of the Lottery Sports Fund in 1995, it was also becoming much more focused on establishing clear accountability and performance frameworks for delivering outcomes around public services. Thus the paradox (of sport) is not the one about which Major spoke in his introduction to *Sport: Raising the Game.* Rather, the paradox is more evident in terms of the developing tensions between the gradual and contradictory erosion of the independence of the VSC on the one hand, and the apparent support given to this independence via central government ideology and Sport England steerage. Furthermore the decline and almost cessation of the rhetorical support for a 'sport for sports sake' ideology, other than when considered in the context of elite development and performance, in favour of an outcome-orientated approach to sports development says much of the apparent contradiction (Houlihan and White, 2002). Above all the paradox is fundamentally rooted in an approach to sports development policy predicated on the perceived power of lottery funded grants, the attendant conditionality of those grants and a growing need to be accountable for delivering wider social, health and economic benefits (Rowe, 2005). Within this context of changing sports policy priorities the notion of VSCs as mutual-aid organisations, that is '...collectives which are self-organised, productive and which by and large, consume their own products' (Bishop and Hoggett, 1986:40), is both fundamental and problematic.

New Labour, social capital and the Political Opportunity Structure for volunteerism in the UK

Following Kriesi (1995), in setting out a political opportunity structure (see chapter 3, p.83), it is apposite to focus on structure as opposed to agency as the means by which to both contextualise and understand how the current environment in Britain, for volunteerism in general and VSCs in particular, has been established. The necessity to focus on structure rather than agency is largely predicated on the notion that actors will act and react according to specific moments of the status quo. The relationship between structure and agency can therefore be interpreted as dialectical (Baert, 2005). The consequence of which suggests that fundamentally actors are only logically able to operate in relation to the prevailing POS in which they find themselves. Whilst this may seem like a denial of agency, the concern is rather in identifying common institutional environments (Scott and Meyer, 1991). The purpose of which is to suggest that the institutional structures, within which human agency is exercised, are themselves conditioned both by a variety of non-economic mechanisms, that impinge on the organisation itself (Dimaggio and Powell, 1983), and by the established POS (Maloney et al, 2000b).

In similar fashion to Maloney et al (2000b) the importance attached to the utilisation of the POS is as an explanatory concept and subsequently it is important to recognise '...that it does not *determine* associational activity and the creation of social capital, but may well be a *substantial influence*' (Maloney et al, 2000b: 809, original emphasis). Kriesi (1995) also outlined three broad sets of properties that contribute to the POS: (1) formal institutional structure, (2) informal procedures and prevailing strategies; and (3) the configuration of power or political context in which government-voluntary associational relations take place. Before going on to discuss each of these in relation to the political opportunity structure for voluntary associationalism, and especially that of the VSC, it is worth noting the discursive and non-sequential relationship of the sets of properties outlined above. In this sense it is the extent to which these factors can influence and provide incentives in relation to people's expectations of success or failure

in terms of their willingness to undertake particular collective action that is of importance (Tarrow, 1998).

The formal institutional structure

Referring to formal access to the institutions of the state or political decision making processes, the formal institutional structure can be interpreted at macro, meso and micro levels. Given the amount of convergence between the general voluntary sector and sports voluntary sectors, it is something of a truism that the VSC is at its most distinct when viewed in institutional terms. The mutual-aid ethos, desire for independence and autonomy (see above) constitute a form of institutional capital distinct from the majority of generic voluntary associations. In this instance political engagement has hitherto been largely concerned with sporting matters within specific clubs and specific sport types. For the broader range of CSOs however, political engagement is likely to involve the formal institutional arrangements of specific local authority structures relevant to particular service delivery. In this respect the concern is with political decision-making processes, which, in light of the importance of social capital and community to the New Labour project, have politicised the very act of volunteering both in terms of inputs and outputs (Kriesi, 1995).

Essentially formal access to the state (the political decision making process) is both necessary and desirable if VSCs are to

> ...consciously redefine their identity in accordance with the changing environment, but without losing touch with their organisational particularities as self help groups of people who want to do their sport (Horch, 1998:53).

In this regard the inherent and enduring decentralisation of the VSC, is not only a bellwether for the notion of a social contract between individuals with similar interests, but has also enabled the institution of the VSC a myriad of access points to the state. Traditionally hierarchical sport NGBs have facilitated VSC access at the micro, meso and macro levels as suggested previously. In short the people who constitute the grass roots

of particular sports, and who make up the VSCs themselves, have tended to have an interdependent relationship with their particular governing body, with concern going no further than to the development and well being of that particular sport.

Given the extent and importance of decentralisation, there are at least two other political factors that need to be accounted for. These are the degree of concentration of state power and the degree of coherence of the public administration respectively which, in relation to the VSC, impinge both in terms of the established role and purpose of the VSC to its members (Kriesi, 1995). In the British system the presence of checks and balances, a mixed economy and the involvement of civil society within both of these aspects, ensures that VSCs have plenty of 'access points'. That is access to channels of communication and influence to ensure they have a voice, traditionally through NGBs (see above), but also through various regional sport bodies such as the county sport partnerships (CSPs) and regional sports boards (RSBs) as well as national sport organisations such as the CCPR, SE and UKSport.

When considering the coherence in public administration, it is important to be reminded of the left versus right debate surrounding British politics, which was outlined earlier in chapter 3. The key point here is that the historic left or right political positions towards volunteerism have each set aside a key role for the voluntary sector albeit with quite different outcomes for both citizens and society. Indeed the New Labour administration in seeking to eschew the apparent traditional political territorialism and government departmental 'fiefdoms' of previous administrations (Ellison and Pierson, 2003), has established a more corporate, cross-cutting approach to public administration within what Rustin has referred to as 'managed capitalism' (2004). The upshot for VSCs has been 'issue based' institutional opportunities for engagement (Maloney et al, 2000b), where increasingly sport and VSCs in particular are assumed to have the potential to contribute to non-sport objectives (Houlihan and White, 2002). Furthermore this relationship has latterly become the focus of 'upper-tier' authorities that have the capacity to determine and impose conditions and requirements (Maloney et al, 2000b).

New Labour's prioritising and institutionalising of modernisation (see Driver and Martell, 1998, Levitas, 2000, Finlayson, 2003, Clarke, 2004, Lewis, 2005) has further spurred the need for VSCs to both change and accept change within their formal institutional make-up. Under New Labour's modernising scrutiny the effectiveness of VSCs was deemed to be hindered by a combination of structure and tradition resulting in clubs being individually weak with limited capacity (Collins, 2003). This was highlighted in the DCMS policy statement *A Sporting Future For All* (2000), which identified the '...need for more systematic and structured development of sports clubs across the country' (DCMS, 2000: 40). Furthermore, *A Sporting Future For All* also outlined how VSCs would have to develop institutionally in order to be of value in encouraging socially inclusive practices such as setting up junior sections, offering participative opportunities to all regardless of age and ability, and linking with other clubs to form a progressive and structured network of VSC based participation opportunities.

On the face of it the stance taken by the DCMS would suggest a definite steer towards 'directing and controlling' as opposed to the stated intentions of the government, as voiced by the former Chancellor Gordon Brown, as 'enabling and empowering' (Brown, 1994, for context see chapter 3:61). This steerage is a further indication of New Labour's 'managerialist' approach to public administration (Rustin, 2004), given that 'steering' tacitly acknowledges the legitimate role of the state as a set of political institutions that '...are the only actors who can define goals and make priorities on behalf of the polity' (Pierre and Peters, 2000:56). Moreover the notion of 'steering' is indicative of a more intimate relationship, than the 'arms length' one of previous administrations (Oakley and Green, 2001), as well as a less adversarial relationship between the state, private business and the voluntary sector (Pierre and Peters, 2000). For the VSC this aspect of its formal institutional structure has focussed attention onto the context within which the notion of the VSC can both modernise and develop. Indeed, it is significant in this respect that the implicit informality associated with many of the 'access points', which have a crucial bearing on both internal and external expectations of the VSC, may come under greater pressure as modernisation follows its course.

Informal procedures and prevailing strategies

The manner in which the formal apparatus of the VSC is constrained within a particular POS is largely dependent upon the procedures and strategies typically employed in the informal application of the formal institutional structure (Kriesi, 1995). In this respect the key feature is the extent to which informal aspects of the VSC are able to be mobilised, thus creating potential resources that may become more profitable and more expedient than more formal opportunities for access. It is this aspect of the VSC that is most likely to be of importance in terms of social capital creation. In Particular it is the informal operation of VSCs, in partnership with more formal bodies such as local authorities and NGBs, that may generate the trust and norms of reciprocity, that have been referred to by Coleman as 'social structural resources' (Coleman, 1994, see chapter 2, p.47). However, as has been argued elsewhere, social capital resources are '...neither brokered equitably nor distributed evenly' (Foley and Edwards, 1998:2), and in this respect it is the culture of the 'upper tier' authorities in dealing informally with VSCs that can largely be either 'exclusive or integrative' (Kriesi, 1995). The issue in this respect is the manner in which upper authorities such as NGBs, CCPR, and SE, develop different approaches to VSCs. In this regard exclusivity and/or integration are implemented via the adoption of either: repressive, confrontative, polarising strategies, or through, facilitative, cooperative, assimilative strategies.

The outcome for VSCs is strategically related to the issue of informality as not all of the authorities that VSCs have to deal with will treat them all in the same manner. Issues surrounding the 'ideology' of particular sports and the specific sub-culture of specific clubs such as the socio-cultural make-up of a VSC, its geographical location as well as a concern with its provenance, may all impact on approaches taken towards different VSCs. In essence different authority groupings will establish different cultures in dealing with various VSCs that on the whole represent exclusive or integrative elements central to those authorities. Furthermore hegemonic influences stemming from the ideological position of the dominant political party, such as the dominance of neo-liberal globalisation processes, impact upon the manner and the means by which authorities interact with VSCs (Clarke, 2004). In this instance primacy is given to the private which,

in the case of sport, has meant that private interests in the form of volunteerism in and around VSCs, are viewed as the key vehicle for delivering sports development policy. The evidence stemming from *Game Plan* (2002) and the *Carter Report* (2005) has been clear in invoking structural change via the streamlining and prescribing of the role of SE for example. Moreover the implication of this restructuring is that the notions of economic efficiency, commodification and consumerism inherent to neo-liberalism (Finlayson, 2003), are discernible in New Labour's approach to both social cohesion and social morality which is discursively apparent in their interwoven approach to VSCs, social capital and sports development.

As vehicles for the potential creation of social capital VSCs are prone, through an emerging tension between their informal capabilities as a mutual-aid organisations and their modernised role in promoting socio-political responsibilities, to a '...closure of social networks' (Coleman, 1988:105). In the context of VSCs, closure facilitates social capital creation largely based on shared ideological and normative values to the relative exclusion of social capital based on dissimilar values or 'loose ties' (Granovetter, 1973). In other words bonding capital may be developed at the expense of bridging capital in VSCs. The consequence of this may be for some clubs to be 'organised in' and some to be 'organised out' (Schattschneider, 1960 – refers specifically to the political context), particularly if VSCs differentially accept the extent to which informality will affect the arrangements of the formal institutional structure. In short, the informal manner in which some authorities deal with VSCs may help to establish a differentiated VSC polity where some clubs become the equivalent of insider and outsider groups (Maloney et al, 1984). Garrett, in his study of Lottery funding of voluntary sports club, raises some apparently similar concerns in relation to Sport England's Lottery Fund given that

> The application for Lottery funding is a voluntary process and having agreed to accept the funding it is assumed that most VSCs are at least sympathetic, if not positive towards the goals of sports policy (Garrett, 2004:15).

Configuration of power/political context

Kriesi has readily identified that it is the juxtapositioning of particular central political interests, and the response of specific interest groups to those political interests, that largely determines the 'chances of success'. Indeed Kriesi has argued that '...the relevant configuration of power specifies the strategies of the "authorities" or "the members of the system"...' (Kriesi, 1995:168). In relation to the volunteerism environment the crucial issue in appreciating both the formal institutional structure and the informal procedures and dominant strategies, is the extent to which the political environment in Britain has become more appealing and more supportive to volunteerism generally, and VSCs in particular. Notwithstanding this structural pull factor, voluntary associations have tended to signal their willingness to be supported, included and proactively engaged within a government sponsored policy agenda. It is in this context that voluntary associationalism could be said to be in tune with government, and perhaps even succumbing to the hegemonic dominance of New Labour's managed capitalism. Indeed it is this respect that Lukes (2005) third dimension of power can be recalled as agenda setting and preference shaping (Hay, 2002) and moving towards a situation of 'willing compliance' among a differentiated constituency of VSCs.

Once again the receptivity and sympathy of the political context to VSCs can be determined at macro, meso and micro levels. At the macro level the focus is on the political and policy direction of central government, involving the steerage given to various sport organisations such as SE. Meso and micro policies have often been subordinate to macro level ideas in differing eras (Dorey, 2005) and tend to influence policy in particular areas and on specific issues. In this respect it is interesting to note the hegemonic dominance of New Labour's 'unitary ideology' (Rustin, 2004), where neo-liberalism and individualism have established a policy paradigm whereby meso and micro policies correspond to the macro. Thus the concerns of regional sports boards (RSBs), county sports partnerships (CSPs) and VSCs in a particular locality are likely to be bound up in the extent of local partnership building, entrepreneurialism, individual consumer choice and extending the business ethics. The configuration of power (the political context) therefore, shapes both formal and informal dimensions of the POS

(Maloney et al, 2000), although Stoker maintains that the potential role of governance arrangements should inform on the configuration of power in any attempt at developing a more in-depth analysis of the political context (Stoker, 1998).

The changing nature of the POS for voluntary sports clubs, sport development policy and social capital

Thus far within this chapter, the nature and meaning of VSCs in the context of public policy has been outlined together with an appreciation of how the formal and informal processes surrounding VSCs relate to a particular configuration of power in forming a specific political context that can be identified as enabling greater potential for the 'chances of success' for voluntary associations in the UK. In completing the jigsaw, the identification and development of sport development policy that has impacted upon the VSC, together with the establishment of any proto-relationship with the creation of social capital within a particular POS, needs both illumination and explication.

Government interest in the voluntary sector is not limited to New Labour and a range of writers have argued that one can go back some twenty years to the first Conservative administration under Margaret Thatcher in identifying the emergence of a positively inclined POS towards the voluntary sector (e.g. Brudney and Williamson, 2000, Halfpenny and Reid, 2002, Kendall and Knapp, 1996, Lewis, 2005, Wardell et al, 2000). Consecutive Conservative governments, from 1979 to 1997, exhibited a steadfast ideological continuity in terms of their antipathy towards state provision of goods and services, the necessity of a small welfare state, and a free rein for the unfettered market to be the dominant provider for people's needs. Within this context voluntary organisations took on both a defensive role to protect individuals, and a service role based upon contractual agreements to supply specific services. Given this scenario many voluntary organisations thrived, although not the trade unions who were seen as 'malign distorters of market processes', not least because of the potential for additional revenue from government (Kendall and Knapp, 1996).

The phasing out of the Urban Programme, the establishment of the Home Office document *The Individual and the Community: The Role of the Voluntary Sector*, and the UK wide Community Care reforms all occurred from 1992 onwards, and signalled a shift in state-voluntary sector relationships. The termination of the Urban Programme was greeted as 'disastrous', particularly as the funding that went with the Urban Programme was seen as relatively secure and flexible, and not too prescriptive (Kendall and Knapp, 1996). The Home Office document *'The Individual and the Community'* (1992) promoted voluntary activity, albeit through a bidding process that whilst delivering funding, tied voluntary organisations to specific contractual outcomes. This retraction of the welfare state was further evidenced through Community Care reforms, which according to Brudney and Williamson involved

> ...a shift in the provision of services to the people with greatest need; a focus on empowerment and choice...and... the growth of home-care services (Brudney and Williamson, 2000:87).

In essence under the Conservatives the state had become the last resort for personal and welfare services with greater responsibility devolved to the voluntary sector even though, as Kendall notes, Virginia Bottomley (then minister with responsibility for the voluntary sector) '...referred to the relationship between the government and the voluntary sector as the "terms of engagement"...a battleground. Which was exactly how she saw it' (Kendall 2000:12). The contradictory forces inherent to the New Right were once again evident (Levitas, 2000). The apparent rolling back of the state counterbalanced by the need to control and regulate from the centre, facilitated an invocation to the voluntary sector as both a paean to traditional philanthropic considerations appropriate to one-nation conservatism, as well as a means to establish economic efficiency in relation to public services albeit through instrumental values.

The election of New Labour in 1997, despite New Labour's own harbouring of contradictory forces (see for example Finlayson, 2003, Rustin, 2004), has provided an overwhelmingly positive POS for the ecology of volunteerism to be located. The government proactively encouraging volunteering for a number of reasons which include

promoting active citizenship, fostering a caring society, strengthening patterns of democratic behaviour as well as delivering greater efficiency and effectiveness within public services (Brudney and Williamson, 2000). New Labour first outlined its policies towards the voluntary sector and voluntary action in the pre-election document *Building the Future Together: Labour's Policies for Partnership Between Government and the Voluntary Sector* (Michael, 1997). This document was clearly designed with modernisation and governance in mind given Prime Ministerial recognition that there was a '... need for government to forge new partnerships with the voluntary sector' (Blair, 1998a: 14). Moreover the strategic direction of this document was consolidated, once New Labour was in power, through the establishment of 'compacts' between government and the voluntary and community sector across Britain. The English compact typically sought to outline the nature of the voluntary sector-government partnership

> ...Voluntary and community activity is fundamental to the development of a democratic, socially inclusive society. Voluntary and community groups, as independent, not-for-profit organisations, bring distinctive value to society and fulfil a role that is distinct from both the state and the market. They enable individuals to contribute to public life and the development of their communities... (Home Office, 1998:3)

For Lewis, this partnership arrangement, in filtering down to the micro level, has facilitated both the enabling role of the state as well as bolstering the notions of an active citizenry and democratic renewal (Lewis, 2005). In this regard the compact represents more than a New Labour obsession with modernisation. Indeed the compact should be viewed as part of a concerted attempt to move away from the notion of the minimalist state and pure market relationships, to a Third Way mixed market approach, which was perceived as a better model to frame policy and deliver services (Lewis, 2005, Halfpenny and Reid, 2002). Indeed NDCs (Dwelly, 2001), Sure Start (Clarke and Glendinning, 2002) and the plethora of action zones (East, 2002, Sport England 2001) across the country, are testament to this approach.

In establishing a POS that is both accommodating and proactive to volunteerism, Halfpenny and Reid (2002) further suggest that two other factors, in addition to

government interest, have been important in increasing 'visibility'. These are change within the sector itself and greater academic scrutiny and research at universities. Furthermore Lewis notes that although the compact may have addressed the issue of independence of voluntary organisations by '...securing a major improvement in the terms and conditions of service provision...' (Lewis, 2005: 122), the question of influencing the policy agenda within the wider context of democratic renewal is more problematic. This is perhaps evident in the emergence of 'community' under New Labour as its central guiding metaphor (Levitas, 2000), and one in which social capital as a bottom up generator of stronger communities is perceived as vital to both economic development and democratic participation (Strategy Unit, 2002). Moreover the desire for 'added value' from the voluntary sector can be interpreted as further reinforcing the appeal of the democratic strain of social capital to policymakers particularly as societal outcomes become anticipated as part of policy implementation. Indeed the adoption of the democratic strain, both structurally and functionally, further buttresses both the formal institutional structure and the informal procedures (HM Treasury, 2002) surrounding voluntary organisations.

For VSCs the POS is less clear cut, in part because of the mutual-aid aspect of VSCs, but also because of the elevation of sport up the political agenda and the adoption of an overly positive view of sport (based on it's mythopoeic status, Coalter 2007a), have all resulted in government not just wanting partnerships with VSCs, but rather incorporating them into wider policy objectives. In the foreword to *Game Plan* the Prime Minister stated that

> Sport is a powerful and often under-used tool that can help government to achieve a number of ambitious goals. We have to be sure we are well equipped to do that (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002: 5).

Furthermore, the Carter Report has identified a need for a 'single system' for community sport in which government to grass roots development should involve investment in '...clubs, coaches and volunteers, strengthening school-sport community links...' (Carter 2005:8). In the meantime VSCs have paradoxically been both beneficiaries and losers as

the POS has fluctuated in accordance with the relative changes to the configuration of power. Essentially this paradox has been delivered via the drive to modernise both institutional structures and the arrangements of governance, and should serve to reinforce the idea that the POS can be 'exclusive and/or integrative' depending upon the perceived nature and social location of the club in question.

From 1995 onwards there has been much more potential for VSCs to access relatively large sums of money from a variety of funding streams, most noticeably though through the Challenge Fund, the Community Projects Fund, Awards for All and other National Lottery funded grants aimed at either excellence or extending wider participation (Houlihan and White, 2002, Garret, 2004). In the main these latter grants for VSCs were attained via the relevant NGB, either in relation to establishing excellence through the World Class Programme or extending participation through the Active Sports Programme. Both of these programmes were National Lottery funded and intended both as a complement to each other, and as part of the rebranding that occurred as the English Sports Council (ESC) repositioned itself closer to government as Sport England (ESC, 1998, Houlihan and White, 2002). The precedents for this interdependent configuration lie in the contradictory stance adopted by the Conservative governments of the 1990s which, whilst identifying sport as a largely independent and spontaneous activity in the Scruton mould (see above), also sought to break with the tradition of 'deference towards voluntarism and amateurism' (Houlihan and White, 2002: 209). John Major's governments were thus much more adroit at establishing new types of relationships with the Sports Council (SC) and NGBs that were contract-based, reflecting both ideological constraints and a desire for accountability (Houlihan and White, 2002, Henry, 2001, Hylton and Bramham, 2008).

Prior to the embedding of a culture of accountability and contractualisation, the Sports Council in the strategy review *Sport in the Community: Into the 90's* (1987) highlighted that the Council had given grants to sports clubs for twenty years, largely based on the premise of recruiting and retaining volunteers. Essentially deference was being exhibited by the SC towards VSC development with little regard for the public good, other than

that that was produced by enabling individuals to participate in sport of their choice in VSCs. For Rees and Hardy (1985), who analysed a sample of the Sports Council grants to VSCs, the money had been well spent as it had enabled clubs to survive and expand and had produced many beneficial effects. Rees and Hardy also identified that: two thirds of the sample had increased their membership; frequency of play had increased; community use of many facilities had grown, and club finances had improved (1985). In short, development *of* sport had been considered worthwhile albeit with little to show in terms of the structures, processes and pathways necessary to developing sport for sport's sake (Hylton and Bramham, 2008). In considering development *through* sport, *Into the 90's* was circumspect in relation to VSCs other than to consider and acknowledge that there was potentially a 'two-way stretch' of pressures on NGBs and the larger clubs, which could erode autonomy if the state offered money for services (Sport Council, 1987). The SC was therefore complicit in reinforcing an almost slavish view of amateurism and voluntarism that privileged the normative aspects of VSCs above most other concerns.

For New Labour however, conditionality, which was inextricably linked to wider intended government outcomes and voiced through Sport England and the DCMS, has been increasingly attached to this funding. Moreover the conditions themselves have tended to reflect New Labour overriding concerns with democratic renewal and the role of social capital. Operationally for VSCs, these conditions are located within a framework predicated on compliance and conformity, the need for evidence based policy and in-light of evidence efficiency and effectiveness (see Solesbury, 2001, Coalter, 2007a, chapter 3). The visions heralding this structure having been set out by the DCMS in *A Sporting Future For All*, *Game Plan,* and more latterly through the review of resources evidenced in the *Carter Report.*

The distinction between the position adopted by Conservative and New Labour administrations, in relation to VSCs is quite apparent. On the one hand, consecutive Conservative administrations identified and reinforced the notion of the VSC as amateur, independent and best left to their own devices – the 'arms length principle' (Oakley and

Green, 2001) to act on their own behalf as they 'thought fit' (Coghlan, 1990). Whilst on the other hand for New Labour, VSCs form part of a coordinated attempt to engage citizens, are embedded into the wider strategic aims of government policy, and are integral to an underpinning framework based on a Putnamian view of social capital and a reinvigorated civil society. In this sense the POS for VSCs in the period 1979-1995 was rather different from that which followed. Ostensibly this amounts to the provision of structures that provide the 'institutionally thick arena' (Imrie and Raco, 2003) surrounding voluntary activity in general, the ease with which this reinforced arena allows formal and informal interaction at a variety of levels, and the configuration of power that facilitates and promotes the value of voluntary activity. However as Houlihan and White (2002) have noted the 'core policy paradigm', entailing traditional morality, the active self-reliant citizen and a mixed economy of welfare based on neo-liberalism has not greatly changed. The aim of creating '...more self-reliant, wealth-generating and ambitious individuals and communities' is as prescient for New Labour as it was for Conservative governments (Houlihan and White, 20002: 218).

The apparent importance attached to VSCs by New Labour; particularly as agents of sports development is evidenced by the close alignment of the DCMS, Sport England and NGBs perceptible after the 1998 National Lottery Act, the ESC rebranding exercise of 1998 and the publication of the SE Lottery Fund Strategy in 1999 (ESC, 1998, Sport England, 1999). Indeed the national strategy for PE, school sport and club links (PESSCL), an all-embracing strategy for young people which came into effect in 2003 (Flintoff, 2008), in counteracting some of the perceived institutional weaknesses (Collins, 2003) of VSCs as well as reinforcing the informality of practice, within a formal institutional arrangement, has hence served to indicate the strength of the contemporary POS for VSCs.

In establishing a coherent and direct relationship between governmental objectives – both wider social and specific sport related – and the potential for funding, VSCs have had to adopt a more congruent attitude to the issues presented by 'upper tier' authorities. Having previously stated that it was the manner in which the upper tier authorities

(DCMS, SE, NGBs) dealt informally with VSCs that largely resulted in 'exclusive or integrative' strategies (Kriesi, 1995), it should now be apparent that VSCs are neither simple reactive agents nor settled structural coordinates. Rather VSCs are proactive entities that orbit particular interests and encompass a range of individuals for whom the culture of 'the club' is everything. In this respect dominant cultural values that presuppose particular exclusive or integrative strategies are as much likely to be bottom up as top down. In view of governmental concerns for social capital creation within VSCs, and the importance attached to VSCs as key elements of an active civil society, the potential for VSCs to be non-compliant with issues such as social exclusion is worrying. Nichols et al (2004) have argued that VSC participation may actually emphasise exclusion, rather than integration, as these clubs tend to be self-selecting according to interests and values, as a consequence

> The very nature of voluntary clubs might lead them to exclude dissimilar people because, although they represent a plurality of interest groups, each group itself is a cluster of similar people with similar values (Nichols et al, 2004: 50).

This line of argument highlights the potential that VSCs may have for undermining the creation of social capital, particularly if social capital is interpreted and operationalised along Putnamian lines.

Conclusion

The growing importance of the VSC to the successful implementation of sports policy has been identified within this chapter and unmistakably this is linked to changes within the POS over the past twenty to thirty years. In particular the clear influence and incorporation of the democratic strain of social capital has come to underpin a discernible sports policy strand which has largely been concerned with development *through* sport. Indeed the importance of particular sport forms has been highlighted in terms of the potential for particular 'ideologies' (Bishop and Hoggett, 1986) or 'subcultures' (Horton-Smith, 2000) in specific sports to act normatively. This is of particular importance given

the apparent importance of mutual-aid to VSCs and the maintenance of it a priority to policymakers.

The chapter has also highlighted the dominance of the 'puritanical' over the 'Dionysian/epicurean', which has led to the hegemonic dominance of a view of sport as a utilitarian vehicle (Dunning and Waddington, 2003, Smith and Waddington, 2004). This view would appear to underpin much of what has passed as sports policy and also means that sport via the VSC become s a suitable and appropriate avenue for creating social capital. In illuminating this point the chapter has also identified a key tension arising from New Labour's enthusiastic reaffirmation of 'puritanical' utilitarianism. In this case the tension is formed from the promotion of sport as a tool for civic renewal and active citizenship on the one hand, and the promotion of sports volunteering as a means of achieving this outcome on the other. The problem in this respect is the continual ignoring of the 'Dionysian/epicurean' context in promoting and supporting both mutual-aid and the promotion of sport for the sake of it. In this respect both insight and empathy are also necessary to ensure that

> Any initiatives that seek to use clubs as agents of sports participation policy must therefore be sensitive to the needs of volunteers if the contribution that such volunteers make to sport is to be sustained (Weed et al, 2005: 42).

The philosophical context of VSCs also helps to explain the traditional separation between the voluntary sport sector and the voluntary sector per se. This notion of a sectoral separation has also been identified as sowing some of the seeds of discord which have tended to become manifest as an emergent tension between autonomy and compliance. Indeed, on this issue the use of the POS has further clarified the context within which associationalism in general and VSCs in particular can operate in the context of policy laden with a heavy social capital emphasis.

In establishing a POS for VSCs the chapter explicitly acknowledges the importance of political structures, institutions and contexts to the implementation of policy geared

specifically around the democratic strain of social capital. Indeed in clarifying the elements of the POS for VSCs it is possible to view New Labour's return to community, rather than society (Levitas, 2000), as reaffirming the concept of social capital as a means and method for a more detailed analysis of social structures and functions and hence a more nuanced understanding of social processes. In this regard the politicisation of sports volunteering can be seen as resting on the version of social capital employed, which under the gaze of modernisation, has resulted in quantitative rather than qualitative measures to ascertain the extent of social capital creation.

The analysis of the POS for VSCs has also revealed that governmental steerage of NGBs and VSCs is not only legitimated by the hegemonic ascendancy of New Labour's 'managed capitalism' (Rustin, 2004), but that steerage is but one of a variety tools that help explain the nature of power relationships between state and civil society. Indeed the whole notion of conditionality can be viewed as an exercise in 'preference shaping' (Hay, 2002) indicating the dominance of macro level policymaking over the subordinate but not necessarily supine meso and micro levels of policy making. This may well have implications for the dominant mutual-aid ethos of VSCs and the potential for VSCs to create social capital, either as a by-product or part of a conscious strategy. In this respect this chapter has implicitly addressed the potential conflict of perception in choosing a particular form of social capital as the particular unit of analysis. The indication being that policy determinants, contexts and agents need to be examined; first in relation to expected outcomes and outputs of policy, and second in relation to competing theoretical schools. The outcome of such an approach is likely to provide a clearer more coherent picture of how social capital is understood at the level of its operationalisation and the extent to which social capital can actually be viewed as fulfilling particular policy objectives.

The following chapter discusses and justifies the methodological approach taken to interrogate and evaluate a number of the conceptual themes and theoretical issues identified in the narrative. In particular, special focus is given to the interpretation of

social capital as a methodological construct and the relationship this has with the interpretation of the different strains within specific case study settings.

Chapter 5.
Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to consider and evaluate the methodology that will be employed in order to fulfil the research aims and objectives.

This research aims:

To examine the perceptions held by external stakeholders and voluntary sports club members of the role of voluntary sports clubs in forming and sustaining social capital.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

- To establish the New Labour political and policy context within which VSCs are perceived to be agents of social capital creation
- To establish the perceptions of external stakeholders concerning the role of the VSC in forming social capital within broader governmental policy agendas
- To establish the perceptions of VSC members concerning the role of their particular club in creating social capital and in meeting wider government objectives.
- To establish how individual VSCs identify and negotiate the relevant POS in relation to their local and sporting context.

To inform these objectives the key questions to be answered by this research are:

- How do individuals, who constitute the key external stakeholders, view the role of the VSC within changing policy contexts?
- How have factors surrounding the policy context of VSCs, in relation to social capital, impacted upon the principles and practices of their members?

- How do VSC members perceive the relationship between the POS, social capital and the local and sporting context of VSCs?

The Philosophical Basis of Research

> ...All research is informed by deep philosophical assumptions and commitments that shape the manner in which individuals and groups conceptualise both the nature and the purpose of the research enterprise (Sparkes, 1992: 2).

The primary issue, as suggested by the above quotation, in considering any one particular methodological framework, is the need to consider how the researcher can interpret the nature of social reality. Certainly without due consideration of particular philosophical discourses concerning how one looks at the world, one is left unable to postulate 'what kinds of answers could possibly be accepted' (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997: 3). Furthermore, competing paradigms not only suggest differing ways in which reality can be perceived but also offer competing interpretations of how the social world can be known. In this sense a paradigm is a set of linked assumptions, which provides the conceptual and philosophical framework to study the world, or in this case to approach the research. Essentially these are ontological and epistemological issues and further elaboration is required in order to avoid the sort of methodological pitfall envisaged by Deshpande

> ...the impact of implicitly stressing one theoretical paradigm in the conduct of the research necessarily brings with it the inherent biases associated with using that paradigm and its associated methodologies (1983:101).

To avoid these potential pitfalls it is necessary to first consider what Locke referred to as the 'underlabourer' role of the philosophy of the research problem (Locke, 1993). Logically the establishment of philosophical 'instrumental presuppositions' (Cicourel, 1964) enables a clear rationale for deriving research methods and avoids one's philosophical stance from being treated as a 'pullover', that is to be 'put on' when addressing such issues and 'taken off' when doing research (Marsh and Smith, 2001).

The social science research literature tends to identify two major schools of thought that tend to dominate social science research; positivism (naturalism) and interpretivism.

There is however a third school of critical realism which in many ways is midway on a perceptual spectrum or 'continuum' of ontological approaches to social science research (Wood and Kruger, 2000). Critical realism offers a number of substantial criticisms in respect of both the positivistic and interpretivistic schools of thought (Sparkes, 1992, Neuman, 2003, Gomm, 2004), and is acknowledged to have two competing strands of radical humanism and radical structuralism (notably Bryman, 2004, May 2001). The two strands of critical realism represent fundamentally differing interpretations as to how one can know the world, the former being closer to interpretivism with the latter closer to positivism (Sparkes, 1992). This should, of course, alert us to the false notion that within each school (or paradigms) there exists a coherent and agreed upon set of conditions and customs that enjoys a consensus amongst researchers. To this extent both positivism and interpretivism offer incomplete accounts of social behaviour through the neglect of political and ideological contexts (Cohen et al, 2000). Essentially therefore critical realism tries to '...bridge the object-subject gap' signifying that facts are not neutral, but rather '...require an interpretation from within a framework of values, theory, and meaning' (Neuman, 2003:85), which amounts to the view '...that there is more to life than which we apprehend' (Williams, 1998: 18).

Linked to the ontological and situated between it and the methodological is the epistemological, which is to acknowledge that once a position, concerning a particular social phenomenon, has been established questions then arise as to what is considered as acceptable knowledge in relation to the particular phenomena (Bryman, 1989, Neuman, 2003). Epistemology then, concerns the '...theory of the methods or grounds of knowledge; the nature of evidence and knowledge of things in the social world' (Cohen et al, 2000:6). Positivism, which '...proclaims the suitability of scientific method to all forms of knowledge' (Bryman, 1988) is idealised through the notion that reality consists in what is available to the senses, which gives rise to only two forms of knowledge, the logical and the empirical. Empirical knowledge derived from sensory data thus provides

the basis for all ideas, that is to say, the external world is made known to us; it is there to be discovered, at least in a 'brute' form (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997). The positivistic stance therefore adopts specific criteria needed to separate what is then considered knowledge from beliefs and understandings, which cannot qualify as knowledge (Giddens, 1977, Williams, 1998).

Table 2 A Summary of Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (adapted from Creswell, 2003)

Tend to or typically	Qualitative approaches	Quantitative approaches
Use these philosophical assumptions	Constructivist/ Advocacy/ Participatory	Positivist/Postpositivist
Employ these strategies of inquiry	Grounded theory, ethnography, case study, narrative	Surveys and experiments
Employ these methods	Open-ended questions, emerging approaches, text or image data	Close-ended questions, pre-determined approaches, numeric data
Use these practices of research, as the researcher	Interacts with the studied phenomena; Collaborates with participants and collects participant meanings; Brings personal values into study; Studies the context or setting of participants; Validates accuracy of the data; Interprets data; Creates an agenda for change.	Independence from study; Unbiased approach; Tests or verifies theories; Identifies variables; Relates variables in study; Uses standards of validity and reliability; Observes and measures information numerically; Employs statistical procedures.

Interpretivism, or phenomenology on the other hand is essentially humanistic and is cast in opposition to positivism and is predicated on the researcher's ability to identify and establish the 'subjective meaning of social action' (Bryman, 2004). Essentially, interpretivism refutes the claims made by positivism that social facts are waiting to be scientifically discovered. Instead the properties and features of the world emerge through studying and interpreting human experience, emotions and beliefs. In this sense however the ontological dominance of the parameters of social science research, by both positivism and interpretivism, is such that the empirical social science flowing from these contending positions has become largely focussed on the identification of two quite different methodological routes: namely qualitative and quantitative research (Williams,

1998). Each of these dependent research paradigms is subsequently a reflection or representation of different 'epistemological frameworks' (Filstead, 1972), which can in turn be concomitantly associated with specific and distinctive concepts and methods for data collection. A summary of qualitative and quantitative approaches with some of the attendant epistemological assumptions is shown in table 2.

The Research Paradigm

Ontologically this research is critically realist in intention. A position which whilst accepting that social reality exists, also accepts that knowledge is a social construct (Baert, 2005), and is therefore not necessarily considered an 'entity' or a fixed coordinate outside of its socio-historical and political setting. The acceptance of critical realism as a legitimate critical paradigm (within social science) has been linked to the work of Bhaskar (1975, 1979) in particular, who, in supporting a scientific approach to the social sciences, also provides a coherent critique of positivist epistemology (Baert, 2005). Critical realism shares certain dimensions with critical theory, but should not be confused or conflated with it. In particular they share attachments to the positivistic prediction of behaviour, an appreciation of hermeneutic and phenomenological approaches to interpreting people's realities and life-worlds and the 'emancipatory interest' (Gibson, 1986). According to Sayer (1997), in the context of the social sciences, this latter aspect is vital as a driver of critically informed practice that can help to free people from previous constraints.

Reality is therefore considered, in part, to stem from the negotiation processes identified by individuals and groups that give rise to specific meanings, values and identities upon which inter-subjective interpretations are based. The negotiations are likely to take place within, and be determined by, situations where unequal power relations are represented by issues such as social class, race, gender and socio-economic factors. In short the critical realist worldview subsequently identifies an epistemological stance that, whilst privileging knowledge based on the subjective perspective of participants, acknowledges structural factors as impinging unknowingly on individual's awareness of the social world. On this matter Sparkes comments that '...social reality is not constructed in a free

and voluntary process since negotiations are shaped by particular organisational relations, structures and conditions' (Sparkes, 1992: 39). Indeed in considering the importance of the structure-agency debate, to the concept of social capital, the VSC and in particular the POS, critical realism provides a means and a rationale for asserting that legitimate knowledge is inseparable from its context. Given this contextual predominance, knowledge is not treated as being ideologically and politically neutral, rather it is charged with identifying power relationships both apparent and hidden, and is both reflective and morally charged.

The critical realist position suggests that any analysis of social capital and voluntary sports clubs needs to take into account the appropriate and relevant context in all its formats. Indeed this level of analysis, as indicated by a number of writers, must focus on individual agency, in the form of both person and organisation, in terms of engagement with social capital creation at a process level. Moreover analysis must also accept that relevant context acts as a structuring structure (Bourdieu, 1977) that conditions as well as being the condition within which social practice operates (e.g. Stolle and Rochon 1998, Maloney et al 2000, Schuller, T et al 2000, Li et al 2002, Roche 2004). This level of analysis is necessary in order to a) interpret and understand how and why voluntary association membership impacts upon the creation, maintenance and distribution of social capital, b) how and why discourses of social capital operate as they do within VSCs and between and among the members of those VSCs, and c) to understand the extent to which power struggles impact on the 'knowledge and truth' of social capital distribution both within and outside the VSC (Danaher et al, 2000).

The adoption of the critical realist position, should not (as indicated above) bind the researcher to a particular research paradigm which can then become a constraint in the collection of data. Therefore the problem being investigated is crucial to the nature of the research pursued which, according to Bryman (1989), means that high-quality research should not be '...wedded to a method irrespective of the problem being examined' (p.254). Consequently whilst it is important to maintain one's research position and approach, Denscombe (2002) has argued that

> ...researchers will borrow from the other perspective when they feel it is necessary...in order to achieve the most robust and valuable findings that are possible under the circumstances (Denscombe, 2002: 23).

The following section will now consider the critical realist position in relation to some important methodological issues pertinent to this study.

Reflexivity and social capital research

At its simplest the issue at stake here is the level of detachment or involvement of the researcher in the research process, and the awareness that the researcher develops concerning the impact of his or her presence in relation to the research in question. The aim of this research in adopting the critical realist position is about 'uncovering and demystifying' ordinary events (Lane, 2000). In this case the focus is on the role of the VSC as conceptualised by social capital theory and situated within the overarching government concern for civic and social renewal. In this regard analysis of policy agendas should not be read as a form of policy advocacy per se.

The research aims to be disinterested and maintain an independence from the interests of the associations and organisations it seeks to investigate. Furthermore a critical realist epistemology does not accept that researcher and researched should remain independent of each other, rather there is an acceptance that the researcher is a part of the social world under investigation. Conversely, critical realism does not pander to those interpretivistic practices which place individual meanings as paramount to the analysis, and consequently does not need to overly indulge the notion of the 'double hermeneutic' (Habermas 1984, Jenkins, 1992). The outcome being that contextual analyses that identify both political and ideological factors, as well as uncovering power relationships, can help develop a more complete account of social behaviour than can the more interpretive accounts that focus on how individuals interpret their position in an already interpreted world.

The employment of critical realism within this research acknowledges that the researcher is part of the social world that is being studied. Consequently the accepted desirability of

'value neutrality' (Sparkes, 1992) or objectivity that is implicit in much social science research would, from this author's perspective, need to recognise that the ideological and experiential 'baggage' associated with the researcher can directly or indirectly influence the outcomes of such research.

In relation to data concerning social capital and VSCs, the concern for an ethnographic dominated approach, as advocated by Kirk and McPhail (2003), is both salient and supportive of the balanced contextual approach that is fundamental to this study. In the context of generating 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), where the researcher is immersed in particular research sites (i.e. the case studies), it is inevitable that the researcher will impact on, at least at an indirect level, the subjects of the research. Not least in this respect is whether individuals within clubs view themselves as the subjects of research or as part of the research (Sparkes, 1992). Given that this study approached the latter position, the necessity for an iterative and recursive approach meant that the research encountered elements of reciprocity between the researcher and researched (Bain, 1989). In this respect the notion that '...sports clubs are social institutions that have official and unofficial agendas' (Kirk and Macphail, 2003:26), within which social capital operates at both the individual and collective level, requires some understanding of the social and structural processes occurring within those sports clubs.

The empirical approach taken for this thesis assumes that social capital 'inheres in social relations' (Coleman, 1988), and is also '...related to the extent, quality and quantity of social actors' networks *and* their ability to mobilise these...[original emphasis]' (Blackshaw and Long, 2005: 251). As propounded in chapter 1, this orientation to social capital, as a relational rather than a psychological construct, may facilitate a better understanding of social capital within specific contexts as well as allowing individual negotiation to be recognised as part of that social process. The research itself, whilst employing a critical realist ontology to analyse and understand issues of power and ideology, may be construed as a political act in its own right. This may indeed be the case if social capital is identified as more closely aligned to the ability of social actors to be able to activate, develop and benefit from their social connections. Whilst this

research does not aim for overt political impact, it is perhaps inevitable that the reflexivity of the researcher may focus attention on to the integrity of the research, an issue that is considered further, below.

The issue of reflexivity to the methodological approach is important for three reasons. First to ensure that this research is valid and reliable, it is necessary to indicate the relationship of researcher to the researched. Second, because of the individual construction of social capital, involving both discursive practices and discursive events (Fairclough, 1992), the likely impact of the researcher needs to be acknowledged and anticipated. Third, in the social construction of the sports club, where individuals reside within specific positions within that club, the outsider status of the researcher may impact on both interviewees' responses as well as the researcher's interpretation of those responses. These are legitimate concerns and the author has sought to reinforce rigour and consistency through the application of a discourse analytic framework that acknowledges both the identity of the researcher, the context and how language is used within the interview situation (Taylor, 2001).

Qualitative and quantitative data in social capital research

Before examining the apparent division between the qualitative and the quantitative, which may represent a fallacy (Ackroyd and Hughes, 1992), it is perhaps necessary to differentiate research methods in relation to how they consider the sources of theories and hypotheses and how these are tested for validity (Gill and Johnson, 2002). The research process, in this regard, can be classified as either deductive or inductive. Essentially, a deductive approach entails the development of a theoretical structure prior to its testing through empirical observation. Thus, it begins with an abstract conceptualisation and then moves on to testing, through the application of theory, so as to create new observations. The outcome is the formulation of as yet un-falsified covering laws that explain the past and predict the future. Alternatively, it can lead to the falsification and discarding of theory, as advocated by Popper (1970).

Induction, on the other hand, is logically the reverse of deduction. It involves moving from a plane of observation of the empirical world to a construction of explanations and a theory regarding what has been observed. It represents learning by reflection on past experience, thus enabling the formulation of abstract concepts, theories and generalisations to explain past, and predict future, experience. Gill and Johnson (2002) identify two main arguments for adopting an inductive approach. First, that explanations are worthless unless grounded in observation and experience, which for many researchers involves establishing meaning within social milieu (Gomm, 2004). Second, that the intimate relationship between deduction and positivism means that the social world is treated in a similar causal manner to the natural world.

Deductive approaches are typified by quantitative methodologies, which tend to look for objective, statistical descriptions whereas inductive approaches often utilise qualitative methods in order to look for understanding or reasons for outcomes, from a more subjective approach. Quantitative research uses procedure to define, count and analyse its variables often using numbers and statistics as the key means to show the existence of tangible 'empirical entities' (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Implicit to positivist research is the exploitation of data in a predictive manner based on previous information. Although qualitative research can also be predictive, it does tend to be associated with describing and illuminating the social world from an interactive, interpretative and/or humanistic perspective (see Table 2 above). The philosophical hierarchy of assumptions underpinning research questions therefore acts to shape the type and nature of the data collected. Essentially those operating within certain ontological parameters will not only see the world in a particular way but will make epistemological choices concerning the manner and scope of the investigation, selecting appropriate methodologies and methodological instruments as well as interpreting and reporting findings in different ways (Sparkes, 1992).

In essence therefore assumptions are made regarding the underlying philosophy of the research, assumptions which in a logical hierarchy of philosophical and practical decisions usually predispose the researcher to either qualitative or quantitative

methodologies (e.g. Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Sparkes, 1992, Bryman, 1989, 2004, McFee, 2005). The need for philosophical anchors is vital, for research methods in and of themselves are not necessarily wedded to singular epistemological concerns of methodology and in this respect '...no technique or method of investigation...is self-validating' (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997: 12). The traditional philosophical one-dimensional approach does not have to be the case (Layder, 1998), as quantitative and qualitative approaches can also be seen as complementary. Moreover qualitative research can blend easily with other types of study as a result of its unstructured and exploratory nature. Indeed Miles and Huberman argue that qualitative data can provide 'the source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts' (1994: 1).

The debate over qualitative and quantitative methods when considered in the context of research into social capital is brought into sharp relief when one considers the orientation to studying the phenomenon taken by Robert Putnam. Putnam himself has described his research approach in the following terms

> What I do for a living is to count things; I try to count things that will instruct us in what's going on in our society and in our politics (BBC, 2006).

In this respect Putnam has taken a quantitative approach to interpreting and measuring social capital, using large volumes of statistical evidence to make a number of claims concerning the social efficacy of the term. Given Putnam's predilection for quantification and his basic definition of social capital which '...refers to social connections and the attendant norms and trust' (Putnam, 1995: 664-5), it is not surprising that significance is measured in terms of the strength of identifiable relationships between independent variables with social capital as the dependent variable. Importantly through his work, and particularly in *Bowling Alone* (2000), Putnam seeks to show the relationship between associational involvement, the volume of those associations and effects on the notion of a civic tradition and its discursive relationship with democratic practices. Crucially Putnam's prime source of empirical data comes from proxy sources largely conducted at the macro level: particularly the General Social Survey, National

Election Studies, DDB Needham Life Surveys and Social and Political Trends survey (Putnam, 2000: 415-24). In this respect Putnam's ontological position, in containing many of the assertions of positivism, seeks to identify the causes of the apparent decline in social capital in the USA, as mainly television and generational change. Furthermore, the creation of a social capital index in *Bowling Alone* (2000) implicitly located social capital within a realist-external ontology, thereby rendering the concept to the level of an existing social entity, i.e. something that exists whether we conceive of it or not – an objectivist epistemology – becoming something that is ready to be 'discovered' (Sparkes, 1992, Neuman, 2003). Whilst not denying the impact of much of Putnam's work, with its undoubted scholarly value and originality, one must question the value of establishing social capital within such a wide-ranging deductive theory.

The key point of interest here is how Putnam's ontological position has influenced his epistemological position both in terms of the concept itself and also what was considered as acceptable knowledge in this context. For Putnam and others, who have followed his logic (e.g. Hall, 1999, Rothstein, 2001, Warde and Tampubolon, 2002), the positivist ontological position gives rise to the legitimatisation of statistical and historical records to show how social capital operates within society. In short a desire to generalise at the societal level and establish causality that is based on 'hard data' has ensured that quantitative methods have been used, almost to the exclusion of qualitative data. Consequently Putnam's research has largely ignored how individuals and individual groups might interpret and negotiate elements of trust, reciprocity and the establishment of norms and values that are commonly taken to comprise social capital.

Putnam's theoretical position would subsequently appear quite limited, as few 'qualitative insights' are established and hence his theorising is based upon the rounding up of quantitative data within a methodologically individualistic approach contained within a positivistic framework (De Filippis, 2001, Blackshaw and Long, 2005). For Blackshaw and Long (2005), this implicit confusion within Putnam's research approach is both problematic and serves to undermine his stated theoretical position.

> Essentially, Putnam develops a theory of 'community', which is based on quantitative findings from individuals and their interpretations of their individual circumstances, but which he uses in a cumulative way to theorise social networks at various idealised levels, such as 'network', 'community' and 'association' (Blackshaw and Long, 2005:246).

Given these criticisms of quantitatively inspired research on social capital, this study adopts a largely qualitative approach that is at once reflexive and yet robust enough to offer an informed and contextual interpretation that as argued by Bryman, is the qualitative researchers' 'central motif' (Bryman, 1989). This of course is a double-edged sword, which despite its great potential for establishing understanding and meaning, in particular social situations, has been prone to criticism on account of perceived non-scientific grounds. Not least in this respect are the concerns, from naturalistic researchers, concerning lack of standardised techniques and lack of formulation over methods of analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994, Cohen et al, 2000, Yin, 2003), which has sustained the critics. These concerns will be discussed further below.

Measuring social capital

The majority of writers when commenting on the existence, prevalence and use of social capital within society have tended to view it from a rose-tinted point of view. In particular academics, politicians and some journalists have viewed social capital as a phenomenon, that when 'found' operates in a positive fashion improving social and political life for people at both the individual and collective level of social interaction. This is largely attributable to the dominance of the Putnamian perspective with its morally imbued and structural functional notion of social capital, and one that is measured by counting particular indicators of social capital.

Other commentators such as Bourdieu (1997), Portes (1998), Foley and Edwards (1997, 1999) and Evers (2003), have adopted a more critical perspective and taking their point of departure from the social constructivist nature of social capital, have alluded to the uneven distribution of social capital. As a consequence social capital can operate as a form of social and economic reproduction that reinforces power differentials within society and therefore acts to both exclude and disenfranchise in equal measure. In other

words, the Putnamian view of social capital is over socialised, largely uncritical in application and overly reliant on methodological individualism (Portes, 1996, 1998). This last point is especially important when considering the measurement of social capital. For if the unit of measurement is the individual then it follows that psychological traits such as trust can be measured, which presumably informs on notions of reciprocity, and consequently Putnamian orientated research therefore becomes both justifiable and self-justifying.

One of the major problems of quantitative work in this fashion is the well-documented issue concerning the aggregation of individual data upwards to the societal level, in order to make claims about community and the possession of social capital. In other words, Putnamian analyses attempt to demonstrate that there is a collective action outcome to something measured on an individual scale (see for e.g. Fine, 2001, DeFilippis, 2001, Skocpol, 1996). The point here is that Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 1996, 2000) in particular, uses this evidence to reinforce his definition of social capital as something that is possessed by individuals and can be transferred to groups (Ehrenberg, 2002). It is this sleight of hand in going from individuals realising social capital to something possessed by groups (DeFillipis, 2001), that enables Putnam to claim that 'Social capital can thus be simultaneously a private good and a public good' (Putnam, 2000:20). This methodologically individualistic approach means that Putnam measures the existence of social capital '...by simply taking individual attributes and aggregating up to the scale being measured' (DeFilippis, 2001:789). DeFilippis also points out there are two problems with this rationale, first that places are not things and second places are not simply the outcome of the characteristics of those within them.

For this research, the debate over the measurement of social capital raises four important methodological issues. First, the institutional capital of the VSC is presumed to possess something, both in the tangible and metaphorical sense, whereas communities may not (see DeFilippis, 2001). In this instance the research is questioning the extent to which VSCs can facilitate the realisation of social capital, both for individual members and the VSC itself. Second, the VSC as an institution is not simply the sum of the particular

qualities that individual sports club members possess. Rather VSCs are the product of a whole host of internal and external social, economic, political, cultural and power relationships. Third, the relationship between the type of social capital that can be formed through, within and by VSCs and particular communities needs to be qualified within the context of the power relationships that exist between particular communities and particular VSCs. Fourth, the functionalistic interpretation of the democratic strain of social capital is both uncritical and overly descriptive, and is problematic given the impact made on British policy making of late. Many of New Labour's policies, for example, both invoke community as a central 'motif' (Levitas, 2000) and then subsequently rely on a Putnamian theoretical and empirical concept of community (see chapter 3).

For sports policy geared towards VSCs, measurement and interpretation of social capital on this level harbours a number of potential supplementary effects. In the first instance sports policy runs the risk of being reduced to the utilitarian (see Jarvie, 2003 on this point), second the political opportunity structure of the VSC gets overlooked in the clamour for bottom-up approaches (Maloney et al, 2000b), and third the very nature of the vehicle itself (i.e. the VSC) becomes subject to the transformative, and potentially very damaging (see Horch, 1998, Weed et al, 2005), forces associated with normative policy making.

In terms of operationalising social capital it is arguable that the difference in conceptualising and interpreting what social capital is, what it comprises and what are its outcomes is what makes the measuring of it so tricky. This research employs operational measures of social capital in a manner suggested by Portes (1998) and Edwards and Foley (1998) who both differently argue that it is at the micro level that social capital holds most promise. Edwards and Foley state

> We would argue that for purposes of empirical research, social capital should be divested of any social-psychological value added and treated as a more restricted social-relational concept appropriate to social networks and organisation (Edwards and Foley, 1998: 136).

In the first instance therefore the indicators (operational measures) used to identify social capital within the fieldwork for this research need to be robust enough so that any inferences made can be considered both valid and reliable (Bryman, 2004). For this research the fieldwork tool of semi-structured interviews, was used to indirectly measure perceptions of social capital, which is arguably as close as the researcher can come to measuring social capital itself. This is an important distinction given that the VSC as a social phenomenon is an 'amalgam of practices' (Kirk and MacPhail, 2003) that is located in a wider social context and which acts in different and differentiating ways, in establishing different sports club members' perceptions of social capital.

Similarly, when considering the external key stakeholders to VSCs, it is the perception held by these stakeholders concerning the value of the product of VSCs that facilitates an interpretation and understanding of the social capital value of particular clubs. Accordingly, social capital can be taken to mean a number of things such as norms of cooperation, the broadening of social networks, the value accrued through the actual outcome of the VSCs, or the (transferable) skills one can develop as a member of a VSC. Furthermore the social structural resources of VSCs, that is 'The network of ties that an organisation is born with or develops...place a group in a unique position within a local community' (Eastis, 1998:69), are crucial to understanding the perceived wider social, cultural and political value of the VSC.

Necessarily it was accepted that each of the VSCs included in the research had a particular set of social structural resources that whilst not necessarily unique, impacted on the potential for the formation of social capital at both the internal and external level. In particular sources of patronage, the nature of affiliations with other institutions and the relationship a VSC has with the general public are all indicators of social capital as perceived by either club members or club outsiders. Moreover the apparent routine functioning of VSCs can be more readily identified, according to Eastis as a '...series of interlocking collective-action processes' (Eastis, 1998). These processes, which relate to the size, skill level and organisational base of particular VSCs, include membership recruitment, the production of norms and values and maintenance of the organisation.

Greater clarification of operational measures used within the fieldwork can be found below in the section on procedure.

Research Strategy

To ensure an appropriate level of criticality and to really be able to interrogate social capital in the context of the institution of the VSC under the gaze of public policy the principles that guided Bourdieu in his research are considered apposite for this research. According to Wacquant (1998) there are three closely related principles: *methodological polytheism*, that is the utilisation of whatever procedure of observation and verification best suited to the question; the granting of *equal epistemic attention to all operations* – every act of the research should be engaged in the 'theoretical framework that guides and commands it'; and *methodological reflexivity*, the 'relentless self questioning' of method even as a method is used and results collected being collated (Wacquant, 1998: 219 - original emphasis).

In considering the research strategy a number of other factors are identified by the literature as being both significant and important. These are the research objectives or questions, the background to the research and the availability of resources to the researcher (Hakim, 2000, Yin, 2004). In this research the first two factors were of prime importance given the literature review, the stated objectives and the above positioning of the research in relation to ontological and epistemological issues. In this respect the principle of polytheism determined that an approach that 'builds bridges' (May, 2001) with the subject, within a flexible qualitative method, was deemed appropriate. Moreover due to the lack of existing research in this area, which has largely allowed the context, role and meaning of the VSC to go unchallenged, the need for the study to be explanatory, exploratory and descriptive further reinforced the logic of a qualitative approach.

For this research an iterative or recursive approach was identified as a necessary tool to ensure compliance with the second research principle, identified by Wacquant, of

conceding equal epistemic attention to all operations (1998). This element of both the research, and analytic, strategy ensured that the theoretical focus of particular social capital theory was maintained throughout the collection and subsequent analysis of data (Green, 2004). Thus issues of interest arising from analysis were subsequently fed back into and informed the data collection process (Bryman, 2004). Indeed in comprehending and interpreting individual constructions of the VSC the qualitative method and iterative strategy was invaluable in accessing data that would have been difficult to identify and collect otherwise. Moreover embedding this research within a critical realist ontology established an agenda that interrogated the relationship(s) between social capital, VSCs and the wider political environment. In particular the research sought to: establish the role of VSCs in perpetuating or reducing inequality; identify how the role and meaning of the VSC is socially constructed; identify who defines the value of the VSC; clarify what ideological and political interests this serves, and how this contributes to social reproduction; establish how power is produced and reproduced through the legitimisation of VSCs; and explain whose interests are served by VSCs and how legitimate these are (Cohen et al, 2000). Given this agenda valid knowledge is likely to be rather more than either that which can be observed and or which is experienced.

The above agenda further suggests the need to reflect on the agency versus structure debate as it concerns both the lifeworld of the VSC and the construction of social capital in heuristic as well as explanatory terms. The tension between structure and agency has become evident in the debates over positivism and particularly the positivist concern for a passive behaviouralism. Human behaviour from this perspective often becomes viewed as passive, overly determined and controlled and subsequently ignores intention, freedom and individualism (Cohen et al, 2000). In similar fashion interpretivistic analysis has also been criticised for its emphasis on human agency, which consequently becomes problematic. The criticism here stems from the potential for interpretive approaches to become 'hermetically' sealed from outside of the lifeworld of individuals in terms of the tendency to neglect the power of external structural forces to shape the behaviour of individuals (Layder, 1994, Cohen et al, 2000). By adopting a critical realist position, this research is able to balance the structure/agency conflict: by first accepting that social

reality is multifaceted in nature and should not become bound up with a 'false dualism' where the subjective and objective are placed in opposition; second by describing and explaining the manner in which the agency of individuals negotiates and transforms social circumstances encountered in their everyday lives; and third by identifying the 'constraints and enablements' which stem from structural or systemic aspects that represent historically formed standing conditions transmitted and inherited from the past (Layder, 1998).

Given this critical realist balancing act, the heuristic value of social capital can be seen to reside in the subjective interpretation of the relationship between the VSC, social capital creation and government policy concerning the role of the VSC. Conversely, social capital as an explanatory tool must take into account structural considerations such as the role played by political activities and institutions (Maloney et al, 2000b) and not underestimate 'state agency' (Lowndes and Wilson, 2001). Given the concern of this research with social capital, the VSC and the wider political and policy process, a sufficiently flexible 'epistemological pluralism' is required, where pluralism

> ...indicates an explanatory openness, flexibility and adaptability in the face of the heterogeneity of social reality...[pointing to]...an epistemological capacity and readiness to represent (and adequately 'fit') the multifaceted nature of the social world (Layder, 1998: 91).

Research Design

The research design was predicated on a distinct two phase process designed to build logically and sequentially and enhance the validity of the research outcomes. Phase one involved a representative survey of all the key organisations in LA1 that can be said to be stakeholders or have an interest in VSCs. Phase two of the research involved a total of six VSCs each one of which was embedded within one of two local authority case studies. Both phases of the research employed the same qualitative technique of semi-structured interviews to collect the data, which iteratively ensured that each interview informed each successive interview.

Table 3 Summary of the methods used

Research Method	Research Purpose
Semi-Structured Interviews Document/Archival analysis	To establish, clarify and explore the views of individuals who represent the key organisations surrounding VSCs in relation to the role of the VSC in contributing to social capital
Semi-Structured Interviews Document/Archival analysis	To investigate the meaning of social capital within the VSC; to establish how the political opportunity structure impinges on VSC members and the operation of the club

Case based methodology

As identified above the methods of data collection for this research were situated within the logic of case based methodology, which, according to Yin is a form of empirical enquiry that 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident,' (Yin, 2003: 13). The case study is in this respect clearly not a data collection method in and of itself (Hakim, 2000). Yin also suggested that case study enquiry

- copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
- relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
- benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis

(Yin, 2003: 13-14)

A key strength of this methodology lies in the methodological polytheism, which assures a pragmatic approach to the boundaries of given cases (Bryman, 1989). For Hakim, the case study acts as the '...social research equivalent of the spotlight...' (Hakim, 2003: 59), because it facilitates the discovery and examination of variables which may appear insignificant across a sample or population, however when examined within the context of a case study, the same variables may offer noteworthy lines of investigation. This is important for description and essential for explanation, particularly where the case study requires understanding of parts of the case within the context of the whole. Case studies, as de Vaus (2001) has pointed out, are thus flexible, use a wide range of data collection methods, are suited to the use of a diverse range of units of analysis, and, as can be seen

for the context of this study, '...are particularly suited to situations involving a small number of cases with a large number of variables' (de Vaus, 2001: 231).

The case study as a legitimate research methodology has a variety of applications, of which, Yin (2003) has identified five: explanation, description, illustration, exploration and meta-evaluation. This research uses the explorative and explanatory applications of the case study method to meet the objectives set out in this chapter on page 135. The exploratory aspect of this research lies in the use of an approach to social capital that conceptualises it as a dependent rather than independent variable. This approach errs from the democratic strain, following instead the logic of the rational and critical strains of social capital, where social capital is conceived of as being embedded within specific social situations and 'inhering' within specific social relationships (Coleman, 1988). In this sense social capital is not only dependent on its context for its genesis but also in terms of its perceived usefulness as an asset or resource. Given the dominance of the democratic strain in social capital research, there is a lack of research that operationalises alternative versions of social capital within and surrounding specific institutional contexts such as the VSC. Consequently this study also seeks to establish how VSCs are perceived both by the members and key external stakeholders before exploring the impact that VSCs have.

Yin (2003) and Johnston et al (1999) suggest that one of the major criticisms levelled at the use of case studies is the issue of bias, which is closely related to the notions of rigour and objectivity. According to Robson '...even with good faith and intentions, biased and selective accounts are undoubtedly possible' (Robson, 1993:56). However, given the stance indicated above, concerning the researcher's reflexivity and epistemological position, the potential for bias is therefore contained within the theoretical approach which is both acknowledged and contextualised within the case study itself. Generalisation is also an issue in case study research, particular as it relates to the ability of the data to provide (or not) forms of quantification (Bryman, 1989). Indeed, as Bryman (2004) pointed out, case study researchers should not fool themselves as to the universal application of the sample they are working with. In this regard, it is important

to distinguish between analytical generalisation, which is the generation and expansion of theory, and statistical generalisation, which involves the computation of frequencies (de Vaus, 2001). The former being the rightful domain of case study data; the latter an issue for positivistic researchers who seek to quantify theories.

Within this research the above concerns were addressed in a number of ways. First the interviews are to be fully documented and transcribed, with the transcripts passed to each interviewee for authentication. The acknowledgement of the reflexivity of the researcher, as indicated above, and the use of qualitative content analysis (QCA), where the identity of the researcher becomes relevant, both invalidate the traditional notion of bias. A notion derived from the historical dominance of positivistic social research, and which has tended to equate the search for objectivity with the search for validity. Second, through rigorous analytical logic, this research aims to allow inferences to be drawn from the data, which as King et al (1994) have identified, and notwithstanding positivistic concerns outlined above, is both systematic and scientific. Third, there is a full justification of the criteria used for case selection in order to have established representativeness and reduced internal bias. Finally, the use of an embedded case design enabled the triangulation of data. Other concerns vis-à-vis cost, time, presentation of results and ethical issues, have been answered by Yin (2003) in particular, but also by de Vaus (2001) and Hakim (2000) and Miles and Huberman (1994).

Case Study design

Yin (2003) has identified four basic types of design for case studies, which involve the juxtaposition of four particular aspects, single versus multiple and holistic versus embedded design factors. Single case design has been the basis of much social research (Yin, 2003, Hakim, 2000, de Vaus, 2001, Stake, 2000) and can address a range of potentially instructive themes including: the testing of theory through the employment of a critical case, unique situations where multiple cases do not exist, such as in clinical psychology, a common or representative situation represented by a typical case, a revelatory situation which usually develops from previously unavailable case studies; and finally a longitudinal case which involves longer term analysis of a particular situation.

Single case designs tend to suffer from flawed inference and subsequent poor validity, which without replication and comparison and despite attempts to ensure validity, can result in subjective bias that can taint any generalisations made from the data (Stake, 2000). The main argument for the adoption of a multiple case design is aimed at addressing this key weakness.

Multiple case designs in contrast are underpinned by the logic of replication (Yin, 2003) and provide much sterner tests of theory. They usually are also more powerful and convincing and can provide more insights than single case designs (de Vaus, 2001). Yin further argues that multiple cases should replicate, in either a literal manner, that is the case would predict similar results, or theoretical manner, where the case predicts 'contrasting results for predictable reasons' (2003:47). In so doing, evidence to support particular theoretical propositions can be derived. However a major problem with replication concerns its narrow focus and Bryman (2004) has commented on the difficulty in ensuring this process. Bryman (2004) has suggested that comparative design is both an alternative and often the preferred choice for multiple case designs, because the logic of comparison ensures that information on the same variables is collected across the units of analysis. Comparison within and between cases necessitates a clear delineation of constancy and systematisation so that similar data is collected across all cases. This scientific approach has been labelled as 'quasi-experimental' because social systems are open, not closed (May 2001), and as such are subject to many forces at any one moment in time. As this research was primarily explanatory, information was collected on the same variables from the selected sample of case studies.

A further consideration for this research is whether the case studies should be holistic or embedded, which refers to the number of units of analysis to be used in each case study. Holistic case studies tend to rely on one source of evidence and aim to generate an overall picture of the phenomenon in question and are particularly advantageous where sub-units of analysis are hard to identify (Yin, 2003). The major problem with this type of case study lies in its validity and reliability, which because of limited sources of evidence, does not facilitate triangulation and feeds scepticism of conclusions (Yin, 2003).

Embedded designs however offer greater potential in enhancing the possibility of triangulating data, thereby increasing validity, evidence and research focus. This is largely because a number of sub-units of analysis are built into the design and which when used to their maximum can provide an overall picture that is substantiated by both the conclusions and inferences generated. This research therefore, followed a multiple case, embedded design based upon the logic of comparison.

Case study selection criteria

As suggested by various authors (e.g. Denscombe, 1998, Gill and Johnson, 2002), the selection of case studies should reflect different aspects of reality. For this research, the decision was taken that two local authorities within one county council would constitute suitable examples of local authorities in England, enabling the comparative logic to be operationalised. To ensure anonymity for the research participants the County council is referred to as Cultershire throughout, with the two local authorities referred to as LA1 and LA2 respectively. The two local authorities selected are both district councils, have similar sized populations, have both been through a Comprehensive Performance Assessment in the past three years, and are both geographically close with similar structural relationships with the County Council. Despite the apparent suitability of LA1 and LA2 s for this research there is no suggestion that they fulfil any further criteria for representativeness of local authorities in England (Bryman, 2004). Rather LA1 and LA2 can be said to be similar to other local authorities in sharing many familiar characteristics common to most local authorities in England. In this regard whilst bearing in mind issues of culture and context, selection and characteristics of participants, data collection and process of analysis, the transferability of findings is possible (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Given the multiple case, embedded design of the case study the three sports of rugby union, soccer and swimming were identified as suitable for the project, with each sport being represented by one club in each of the two local authorities. However in reality this research only managed to survey five clubs in total, two in LA1 and three in LA2; a football club in LA1 dropping out at the last minute. These sports were chosen on

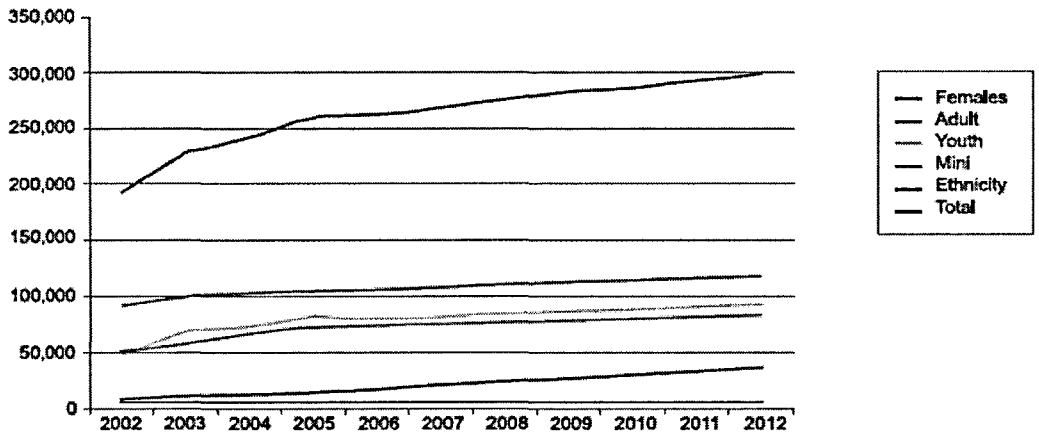
pragmatic grounds, and given the previous analysis of social capital theory, civil society organisations, and government sports policy, were considered appropriate for establishing how particular VSCs potentially contribute to social capital.

Rugby union is a major team sport, with growing participation (RFU, 2006), with the clubs often owning or having access to a dedicated clubhouse, which is traditionally at the cultural centre of the social life of rugby clubs. Rugby union is an adult male dominated sport with the junior game (mini and midi rugby) seeing extensive growth. The RFU predict that by 2012 83% of all players will come from youth and mini sections of community rugby clubs (VSCs). This together with the steady growth of women's rugby (predicted to increase by 18% in 2012) and a predicted trebling of the number of players from black and ethnic minorities by 2012 (see fig. 1) may pose cultural challenges to both the traditions and the traditional manner in which rugby clubs have been run (RFU, 2006: 41). Furthermore the success of the national team in winning the Rugby World Cup in 2003 and reaching the final in 2007 has given the sport greater media exposure, and a potential to market and extend the reach beyond its traditional borders. The profile of rugby union therefore makes it a suitable case study sport as the clubs have certain characteristics and raise certain issues, such as the issue of cultural change, which are both interesting and illuminating at a number of different levels.

Football is *the* major team sport in England with 4.8% of all adults taking part at least once a month (Carter Report, 2005), whilst the FA Chief Executive put the weekly participation figure at approximately seven million adults and five million children (FA, 2005). In similar fashion to rugby, football is adult male dominated but is also claimed, by the FA, to be the number one female participation sport in England (RFU, 2006, FA, 2005). Since 1993 (when the FA assumed control of the women's game) there has been consistent growth in participation in women's football with over 7,000 clubs and over 100,000 affiliated players (FA, 2005). Again, as with rugby, these changes to the sport raise tensions and issues within and across the many football clubs that exist at the community level (VSCs). Furthermore, the traditionally smaller and often transient structure of many football clubs (Collins, n.d) means that they may have a different

relationship to their playing and socialising facility than do rugby clubs. Thus the use of football as a case study, is largely justified by its position of pre-eminence in terms of participation, but also because its use raises a different but important set of issues and questions in relation to the relationship between the VSC and key external stakeholders and the wider community.

Fig1 Participation trends in rugby union 2002-2012



Source: RFU, 2006

Finally the choice of swimming as the third case study sport is logical on at least two accounts. First it is an individual sport which British Swimming in *A Vision for Swimming* has suggested is a 'life skill' (2003) and as such has a recreational constituency that is as at least as large and possibly supersedes, its competitive brethren. Moreover the inherent individualism of swimming acts as both a comparative vehicle and counterpoint to the team sports of rugby and football, and ensures that a broader range of issues and questions are addressed by the research. Second, swimming is the number one participation sport in England with estimates varying from 13.9% of all adults swimming at least once a month (Carter report, 2005), to 22% of adults and 50% of children swimming regularly (British Swimming, 2003). Whilst all of the above sports share a close relationship to their particular (playing) facility, the relationship that swimming has to its pool, and the pool service provider in particular, is likely to be more intimate. In part this is because of costs involved in building and running swimming pools, but also because many pools are not managed by the organisations that own them, particularly at

local authority level. In this regard pool usage and access is an issue as generally pools are programmed in terms of efficient usage, meaning that competitive swimming often has to compete with the recreational side of the sport. In this respect, and as part of its national facilities strategy, swimming has set out its need to lobby for the building of new facilities and the refurbishment of existing facilities (British swimming, 2004). For this research, swimming therefore presents a different set of characteristics which raise further questions about the value, purpose and meaning of the VSC, particularly in relation to social capital and wider policy outcomes.

The three sports chosen as the case study sports therefore provide a range of scenarios in relation to VSC structure and culture and ideology. The choosing of these sports suggests that in comparative terms alone there are enough similarities and differences to raise a suitable and sufficient cluster of issues and questions that enables this research to fulfill the objectives, set out previously, in establishing the key themes associated with the structure, functioning and organisation of VSCs in relation to social capital. A summary of the criteria for selecting the specific case study sports can be seen in table 4

Table 4. Criteria for selecting specific sports used

	Status	Popularity	Resource	Individual /Team	Formal/Informal volunteering
Rugby Union	England 2003 RWC champions. 2007 RWC finalists	RFU capitalised on RWC 2003 success – RFU estimates that participation has increased by 50 000	Clubhouse and pitches often owned or for sole use by club. some clubs in facilities owned by external organisations	Team	Mainly formal
Soccer	England ranked No.9 (out of 205) in the world**	Most popular team sport in England *	Majority of clubs share playing fields provided by a range of organisations	Team	Mainly formal, but lots of informal
Swimming	Key Olympic sport & most popular participatory sport*	Ranked first in England in terms of regular adult participation *	Almost entirely local authority or external organisation owned	Individual Team	Formal and informal

Sources: *Carter Report 2005, ** FIFA 2006,

Having selected the sports for the case study it still left the need to make a deliberative, transparent and rational selection of the specific units, i.e. the case study clubs. To this purpose the focused sampling technique, promoted by Hakim (2000), was used to choose the particular clubs for each of the local authority case studies. Indeed Hakim argued that this method was useful for case study research because it involved,

> ...the selective study of particular persons, groups or institutions, or of particular relationships, processes or interactions that are expected to offer especially illuminating examples, or to provide especially good tests for propositions of a broad nature (Hakim, 2000: 170).

Hakim also argues that focused sampling operates in opposition to the usual design procedures by establishing specific reasons for inclusion in the study rather than exclusion from it. She suggests that focused sampling is most appropriate when the focus of a particular project 'is a particular sub-group within the larger group being studied, [thereby ensuring that] the logical links between the two...are visible and easy to explain' (Hakim, 2000: 171). Focused sampling is very much in the purposive stable of sampling (see discussion below) and follows many of the tenets of pragmatism, which for Sleeper (2001) is essentially 'rooted in common sense'. In this manner Denscombe (1998) has identified three broad categories of criteria that could be employed to justify the selection of particular cases. Denscombe classifies these as suitability, pragmatic and 'no real choice' criteria (1998). Since selection does not have to be made on the basis of 'no real choice', consideration only has to be given to the inherent suitability and pragmatism.
In order to utilise the stated suitability and pragmatic criteria, a perspective had to be taken on how these should be applied to potential case studies, and consequently in what way they could be used to justify the cases selected. With respect to suitability, it was decided that characteristics salient to particular voluntary sports clubs should relate to stability, breadth of appeal, sustainability and organisational strength. The characteristics identified and the attendant rationale can be seen in table 5 below.

Table 5. Criteria and rationale for selection of case VSCs (embedded units)

Criteria	Rationale
In existence for at least 30 years	Allows for stability. Community links become evident. Likely to be sustainable. Links to NGB
Fielded more than one team on a regular basis	Diversity within club. Hierarchy evident within club. Relationships and networks evident across club. External links
Operated men's, women's and junior teams*	Social inclusion. Sports equity. External links. Networks & relationships across club. Links to community. Links with schools
Sport recognised by Sport England (SE)	Funding & strategic impact of SE. Club governance and sports policy. Context of club structure/governance
Visible organising committee	Hierarchy evident. Volunteers, their role in running the club & networks/relationships across club. Relationships outside of club

*The organisation of soccer meant that single clubs tended not to run men's, women's and youth teams

In terms of pragmatics, Denscombe's (1998) three pragmatic criteria of willingness to participate, a matter of convenience and intrinsically interesting were considered apposite. Given the difficulty in constructing a coherent case study using the embedded units (VSCs), a key requirement for this research, and indeed for any, was considered to be the willingness of subjects to participate in the process. A further consideration was convenience, given the researcher's base location, the potential length of time in completing the fieldwork and the cost involved it was considered necessary to undertake case studies that were within 'striking distance'. The third element of the pragmatic criteria was intrinsic interest of the case study. In this case the process had to ensure that the VSCs identified offered a suitable mix of relevant variables providing a suitably rigorous evaluation of the methodology. On the basis of these considerations six voluntary sports clubs, three from each of LA1 and LA2 were selected. It is important to note here that a range of other sports, VSCs and geographical locations could have been selected (see limitations p.180). Of the six case study clubs identified only five responded positively enough for fieldwork purposes, perhaps indicating the tenacity of Denscombe's (1998) pragmatic criteria

- Club A – LA1 Rugby Football Club
- Club B – LA1 Swimming Club
- Club C – LA2 Rugby Football Club

- Club D – LA2 Swimming Club
- Club E – LA2 Football Club

Methods included in the case study research

As outlined previously the methods of data collection and knowledge generation include an analysis of key documents, interviews with key personnel outside of VSC but within the context of the case study and interviews with sports club members themselves

Documents

Documentary analysis can involve a range of written material that is often used in conjunction with other research methods such as interviews or surveys (Bryman, 1989). Some authors have sought to clarify and distinguish between categories of written material, for example Lincoln and Guba (1985) have identified documents and records as having different properties, although where policy and strategy documents would fit into Lincoln and Guba's typology is unclear. May (2001) offers a more comprehensive and succinct classification of documents in suggesting that they fall into three main groups. First primary, secondary and tertiary documents; second, public and private documents, and third, unsolicited and solicited sources, the main characteristics of each class of document can be seen in table 6 below.

Table 6. Types of document (Adapted from May, 2001, Burgess, 1990)

Type of document	Characteristics	Value
Primary,	Written/collected by those witnessing events	Accuracy
Secondary	Written after event, interpreting interpretations	Reflection, contextual relevance
Tertiary	Facilitate location of references	Access of data
Public	Produced by the state machinery e.g. policy documents, registers	Large data sets Procedure and accountability
Private	Possibly difficult to access	Builds picture of the private self
Unsolicited	Produced for personal use	Diaries – subjective accuracy
Solicited	Produced with research in mind	Diaries – objective accuracy

Yin (2003) in indicating that a 'good' case study makes use of many sources of evidence, suggests that as a source of evidence documentation has four strengths. First, document analysis is stable in that documents can be viewed repeatedly, second it is unobtrusive as

it is not created as a result of the case study, third, it is exact, containing specific details and references of an event, and fourth has broad coverage in that it can cover a long span of time and settings. However Gomm (2004), Bryman (2004) and Yin (2003) all attest to the potential for bias, particularly in terms of who writes specific documents, who they are written for and why they were written in the first place. This is of particular importance to this study as issues relating to power and control and of representativeness both within and surrounding VSCs has a specific pertinence in addressing the research strategy identified above. In this respect research reports may reflect a) a range of subjective opinions, and b) a particular research agenda, and hence may be skewed towards particular beliefs, and not necessarily reflect an accurate appraisal of specific research. Similarly policy documents are likely to reflect the received approach to specific discourses and as such may reflect and seek to reinforce power relationships between different agencies, organisations and individuals, reflecting what Parsons refers to as 'deep theories' or 'approaches' (Parsons, 1995).

Yin (2004) in further warning against the 'literal use' of documents, recognises that for case studies, documents are most likely to be used to 'corroborate and augment evidence' from other sources and allow any inferences to be followed up by further research. For this study the documents that were identified came from a range of sources and utilised a number of key words and phrases to generate various abstract searches. The two main library catalogues used were those at Southampton Solent University and Loughborough University although material was also accessed from the British Library catalogue. In addition to and as part of the logical sifting process of document research, the range of printed material held by these two university library catalogues was accessed via databases that allowed suitable abstract searches to be conducted. Databases searched included Sports Discuss and the Social Science Citation Index and some of the key words included 'social capital', 'social inclusion', 'communitarianism', 'political opportunity', 'community sport', 'civil society' and 'volunteering'. This study also used policy documents and statements, websites and minutes of meetings to identify issues that needed closer examination, and to corroborate the findings from the interviews. Many of these were using the keyword and database search method, although minutes of meetings

and specific sport organisation documents were gathered via various interviewees. Bearing in mind Calvert's questions: is the document what it purports to be? What is the relationship of author and event? What is the record trying to show and what does the document mean? One is able to assess the suitability of documents, facilitating the use of appropriate and relevant documentation.

Interviews

For the qualitative enquirer the interview is a key tool and has been considered by both Burgess (1990) and Mason (1996) as a 'conversation with a purpose'. This may suggest that qualitative interviews are wholly interpretative episodes driven as much by interviewee as interviewer. However given that we live, according to Silverman, in an 'interview society' (1993) where people rely on the interview as a source of information, where 'interviewing results in true and accurate pictures of respondents' selves and lives' (Fontana and Frey, 2003). It is important to discuss briefly the interview format, process and context in order to convey the meaning of the interview itself for this research.

The interview was chosen as the most appropriate technique for the sample cases used largely because interviews can '...encourage the free flow of words, ideas, feelings, thoughts and images in response to stimulus subjects or words' (Goodyear, 1971: 49). In order to tap into the required data, and mindful of paying equal epistemic attention to all operations (Wacquant, 1998), three types of interview were considered for this research, structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The structured interview where the questions, their order and choice of responses are all fixed, was not considered an appropriate method for this study. This was largely due to the inflexibility of the method and its theoretical relationship with critical-realism, which suggests that the inappropriateness of this method resides in the inability of the method to consider the human agency of each respondent. In short structured interviews are better suited to different epistemologies. The unstructured interview involves no pre-determined set questions or order and consequently there is no choice of response. This method was also considered unsuitable because of the lack of focus on the specific questions and areas needed in order to achieve the objectives of this research. In similar fashion to structured

interviews, unstructured interviews were also rejected due to a poor epistemological correlation, with an over-reliance on a subject's frame of reference potentially distorting the data being collected.

The final style of interview considered was the semi-structured variety, which combines the structured interview with standardised open-ended questions (Cohen et al, 2000, Bryman, 2004). In choosing a style of interview, Oppenheim has pointed out that '...the more structured the interview the easier the analysis and the more comparable the responses, but the more limited the data' (Oppenheim, 1992: 47). With this in mind the style chosen for use in this research was the semi-structured approach, an approach that coupled standardisation of question areas with an unregimented hand to probe beyond answers given. Thus, open-ended questions followed by prompting and probing allow greater 'latitude' and can encourage the interviewee to expand on points that interest the researcher during the ensuing dialogue (May, 2001).

The interview process involves a relationship between interviewer and interviewee, and as such is prone to accusations of subjectivity, particularly in relation to how, within the interview process, interviewees' responses are influenced by the researcher's behaviour. In this study the researcher aimed to establish mutual trust or rapport with interviewees thereby demonstrating independence and non-partisanship, whilst accepting his place as reflexive practitioner and the non-independence of both interviewer and interviewee in the research process. Furthermore the impact of subjectivity can be reduced by the collection of evidence that relates to the phenomenon from a variety of sources within the case study sample and by the use of techniques which increase the validity of research. It is the intention to collect data from minutes and reports and any other unsolicited records, a method which has often been overlooked (Burgess, 1990) and which can hold valuable information (Bryman, 2004) as attested to above.

Analysis

Yin (2003) suggests that the analysis of case study evidence tends to be seen as problematic, largely due to the lack of clear and universally accepted techniques that are

often applied to case study data. This has tended to produce criticism relating to subjectivity and validity, which according to Yin can be prevented by using an analytical framework that outlined the priorities of what to analyse and why. The main objective of such a framework would be to '...treat the evidence fairly, produce compelling analytical conclusions, and rule out alternative interpretations' (Yin, 2003: 111). Yin also suggested that there are three general strategies for analysing case study evidence: first, to rely on theoretical propositions; second, to think about rival explanations; and third, to develop a case description. Yin (2003) considers the first strategy as the most preferred as it follows the theoretical propositions from the literature which lead to a set of research questions, which in turn establish the objectives and design of the case study. Moreover Yin (2003) argues that propositions should shape the data collection and therefore give priorities to the analytic strategy.

Yin went on to argue that there are four main techniques that can be used in the analysis of evidence that increases validity of the results, namely pattern-matching, explanation-building, time-series analysis and programme-logic modelling. For this research, which is primarily explanatory, it is explanation building that was most appropriate. Explanation building sets out to stipulate a set of causal links about phenomena by gradually building explanations, often involving the practice of matching patterns of evidence, through a process of refining theoretical propositions and the consideration of alternative explanations. The explanation building process may also facilitate cross-case analysis, which for this research was an important analytical staging post. The iterative nature of this process poses a danger that the researcher will drift away from the original topic of interest and constant references to the objectives of the research is necessary to reduce this problem (Yin, 2003). Within this analytic framework qualitative content analysis was used to examine the documents and interview data that were collected as part of this study.

Content analysis has a long tradition and can be conceived of as a technique that enables a researcher to make inferences through a systematic process that identifies special and specific traits of messages (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, Silverman, 2003, Miles &

Huberman, 1994 etc.). Content analysis has often been viewed as essentially a quantitative technique, however this may be misleading for, as Krippendorff has argued 'Ultimately, all reading of texts is qualitative, even when certain characteristics of a text are later converted into numbers' (2004:16). However to be clear, used in studies that employ qualitative approaches, such as this one, content analysis involves deconstructing and interpreting verbal and written text in both a systematic and relatively objective manner (Krippendorff, 2004, Silverman, 2004, 2005, Ryan & Bernard, 2003, Patton, 2002, Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Krippendorff has defined qualitative content analysis as a '...research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use' (2004:18). As such it is a 'scientific tool' that provides for an empirical, methodologically coherent and controlled analysis of text within its own substantive context. Patton (2002) in his overview of qualitative content analysis is more circumspect and tends to agree with Miles and Huberman's assertion that '...we have few agreed on canons for qualitative data analysis, in the sense of ground rules...' (1994: 16). Patton in commenting further on the difficulties faced by the use of qualitative content analysis argues that

> There are no formulas for determining significance. No ways exist of perfectly replicating the researcher's analytical thought processes. No straightforward tests can be applied for reliability and validity (Patton, 2002: 433).

Given this scenario concerning qualitative content analysis Patton advises the researcher 'To do your very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002: 433).

Despite the history and tradition surrounding content analysis there is no quantative necessity or driving logic inherent to its use. Indeed the realisation that text can have multiple meanings is not only a qualitative issue, but once again focuses attention towards the ontological position adopted for this research and moreover the epistemological reflexivity of the researcher. To this end the qualitative content analysis

used within this study has been informed by a number of 'sensitising' concepts drawn from the field of discourse analysis (Patton, 2002).

Qualitative content analysis is in keeping with the analytic framework proposed by Yin (2003) above, and to this extent this study used both inductive and deductive qualitative content analysis. Inductive qualitative content analysis involves establishing criteria from the research proposition, theoretical background and research questions. Categories are then identified and constantly revised as the interviews progress, gradually allowing broadly consensual themes to emerge from the nature of the enquiry (Gomm, 2004, Titscher et al, 2000). Deductive qualitative content analysis enables themes to be established prior to analysis logically allowing text to be designated according to the predetermined themes (Mayring, 2000). This part of the process allowed data to be generated on predetermined and specific research questions.

In this study the procedure of qualitative content analysis was largely quasi-inductive and deductive in procedure. Phase one followed the quasi-inductive logic given that specific but general questions were put to interviewees, with each question having a generating thematic logic, with answers then categorised and themed in order to develop questions for interviews in phase two of the study. Deductive qualitative analysis of phase two essentially allowed pre-analytic categories to be derived before allocating text to those categories during analysis (Graneheim and Lundman, 2003). A sample of the qualitative content analysis for one of the case studies can be found in appendix VI (p.436).

Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are important methodological issues that need to be considered by the researcher engaged in the collection of data through the methods detailed above. Taking the issue of validity first, it becomes clear that there are different types and different degrees of validity that are appropriate for a qualitative case study based methodology (Cohen et al, 2000). Construct validity is concerned with the establishment of appropriate operational measures for the concepts being studied and is often

problematic in qualitative research. It is often difficult to identify clear measures of change due to the interrelation of a multiple of variables acting upon the phenomena in question which can lead to subjective judgements when gathering information. Yin (2003) advises using multiple sources of evidence which Bryman (1989) and Mason (1996) both concur with as more 'exacting' in the measurement of the 'likely connection between the concept of interest and another concept' (Bryman, 1989: 59).

Cohen et al (2000) and Bryman (2004) however, argue that validity, in the context of qualitative research, is often located within the agenda of positivist research. Maxwell (1992) has argued that understanding is a more suitable term than validity, whilst Lincoln and Guba (1985) have suggested that within naturalistic enquiry trustworthiness and authenticity are the key criteria for judgment. Lincoln and Guba in discussing these issues in some depth argue that trustworthiness comprises four 'acceptable alternative criteria'. These are truth value, operationalised as credibility and equalling internal validity; applicability referring to transferability and equalling external validity; consistency referring to dependability and equalling reliability, and neutrality operationalised as confirmability and equalling objectivity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Credibility for this research involved triangulation of data from interviews, official documents and unsolicited documents and respondent validation through the feedback of interview transcripts to individual participants. Transferability is limited except for inferences, which have been generated through rigorous analytical logic, as detailed above, and as such may have theoretical value outside of the confines case study. Confirmability has already been discussed in some depth in the context of the researcher's reflexivity and the impossibility of social research to be totally objective. In this context the researcher has set out to establish 'good faith' within the research process, and this is detailed below.

Dependability as a parallel to reliability in quantitative research refers not so much to the replicability of the study (as in the established notion of reliability), but more to the quality of record keeping and logging of the different phases of the research. Thus from

this research interview transcripts and specific documents are available to third-party researchers thereby allowing data to be re-analysed. The methods and the careful recording of the detail of the procedure can also facilitate a similar, but not exact replica, of the study to be conducted. In this sense whilst the research protocol may remain fixed, the nature of the qualitative framework means that values, opinions and experiences may change between initial research and any subsequent replication of the study.

Whilst subjectivity is always an issue with qualitative research, the researcher by using reflexive accounting procedures (e.g. a journal), using more than one form of evidence fidelity and drawing out themes in an iterative manner can provide a reasonable basis for establishing dependability. Above all, as Cohen et al point out,

> In qualitative methodologies reliability includes fidelity to real life, context-and situation-specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail, honesty, depth of response and meaningfulness to the respondents (Cohen et al, 2000: 120).

Procedure

Phase 1: Interviews with key stakeholders and documentary analysis

These interviews targeted the key stakeholders/personnel who are likely to have an interest in the outcomes and outputs of VSCs on a local or regional basis. The emerging themes and issues from this first set of interviews contributed to the phase 2 interviews with members of the selected case study VSCs. This is a basic form of analytical induction, which has been described by Ryan and Bernard (2003) as 'an alternative' to statistical analysis and allows for the building up of causal and explanatory reasoning in relation to the close examination of cases.

Sample

A purposive sample of thirty one key stakeholders was chosen for interview based upon each individual's position in a particular organisation that has an expectation or set expectations concerning what a VSC can produce in light of wider policy considerations. Purposive sampling involved selecting respondents according to the researcher's

judgement of their 'typicality', allowing a sample to be built up that enables the researcher to satisfy their specific needs (Cohen et al, 2000). In other words purposive sampling is strategic in an attempt to build up a strong association between the research questions and the sample itself (Bryman, 2004). Furthermore the purposive sample required both boundaries and a frame, which were both theoretically and physically determined.

Curtis et al (2000: 4) suggest a further rationale for a purposive sampling strategy (and its relationship to this research) where they develop Miles and Huberman's (1994) attributes in relation to qualitative purposive sampling strategies. These include the following:

- The sampling strategy should be relevant to the conceptual framework and the questions being asked. This was applicable for this research because respondents were chosen on the basis that they had expert and specific knowledge concerning their specific expectations of the outcomes of VSCs in relation to their particular organisation's strategic view of social capital.
- The sample should generate rich information. This was also true for this research where informants were encouraged to talk and enlarge on their responses with specific data and information
- The sample should enhance the generalisability of the findings. This was the case for this research where the findings were aimed more at methodological generalisability than to statistical generalisability.
- The samples should produce believable explanations. In the first instance confirmation of accuracy was obtained by seeking advice from a senior sports development officer and a chief leisure officer about appropriateness of informants.
- The sampling plan should be feasible. This was important for the number and selection of respondents in terms of cost, timing and accessibility constraints. If the findings were to be generalised and representative to all local authorities and to all cases then a larger sample would have been required. However this was not the purpose of the research.

It was for these reasons that a purposive sampling strategy was considered the most appropriate for phase 1 of this research, although it is accepted that the identification of an entirely satisfactory sampling strategy within qualitative research is often a moot point amongst researchers. A list of interviewees is provided in Appendix I (p.410)

Table 7. Phase 1 research themes, questions, methods and rationale

Theme	Question category	Methods	Rationale
Connections and networks	What are your expectations of the club?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Identify the extent of any relationship between stakeholder and VSCs, what expectations the key stakeholders hold, whether VSCs are willing to link with external agencies, and how significant particular connections are.
Value of the club	What value do you place on the work of VSCs?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Provides an informed understanding of how significant VSCs are to stakeholders and their worth in establishing social capital.
Volunteering	What aspects of policy impact on sports volunteers?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Provides an illustration of perceptions about volunteer contributions within VSCs, how significant those contributions are and how the policy process surrounding VSCs impacts on those contributions.
Trust	What do you think the club contributes to the local neighbourhood?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Establishes whether there is a consensus on the value and contribution of VSCs to their communities. Identifies what stakeholders mean by social capital, how trust can be perceived, whether trust is generalisable to the whole population.
Community composition	How would you say local residents react to the sports club?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Establishes whether the relationship between a VSC and the host community is apparent. Illustrates how club contributes, how significant it is, and how it relates to the wider policy process.
Political Opportunity Structure	How would you describe the current political environment for voluntary associations?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Identifies what are the key strategic aspects of policy development that have facilitated the role of VSCs in the wider context of social capital.

Design

The objectives for the n=31 interviews conducted in phase 1 were to

1. Identify how key stakeholders worked with or identified VSCs as significant to achieving their particular policy goals
2. Understand how key stakeholders interpret the notion of social capital
3. Establish the value placed upon the volunteering itself occurring within VSCs

4. Interpret how key stakeholders perceived the role of VSCs in the creation and establishment of trust, as a key component of social capital, within and beyond the host community.
5. Identify if key stakeholders perceived clubs to be having an impact on their local community and whether VSCs valued their local community.
6. Identify the key aspects of the political environment that impact on policy processes that facilitate VSC activity

Table 7 provides a summary of the interview themes, type of questions and the methods used to answer those questions together with a rationale for the particular line of enquiry and how it relates to the objectives of the study. A full interview schedule featuring a fuller list of question and sub-question areas can be found in appendix II (p.411)

Interview Logistics

All phase one interviews were conducted between May and December 2006 following communication by letter and email outlining the context and content of the study as well as the importance of an individuals contribution to the overall research. Following Fontana and Frey (2003), the ethical considerations of informed consent, right to privacy and protection from harm were established as necessary and important guidelines for the conduct of the fieldwork. Thus, informed consent meant ensuring that respondents were provided with adequate information concerning the study and the purpose of the interview that could inform their judgement. Furthermore, consent was also sought for the interview to be recorded and transcribed whilst informing interviewees of the intention to anonymise all data relating to the case studies whenever possible. To this extent when an interviewee is referred to it is either via their role title or a pseudonym, a list of which can be found in appendix I (p, 411). Interviewees were also informed about the intentions of the researcher to use the interview data within a publicly available PhD thesis. Consent also extends to protection from harm and to this end interviewees were informed that they could say 'no' at any stage of their involvement (Denscombe, 2002). Consequently, interviewees could request to stop or pause the recording, or even withdraw from the interview at any point. The recordings of interviews were transcribed by a third party, bearing in mind the comments and principles identified by Taylor (2001), and checked for errors by the author. A copy of a single interview transcript can be found in appendix III (p.412).

Phase Two: Interviews with members of voluntary sports clubs

The first stage of the research helped sensitise the researcher to the issues that needed to be covered during this phase. This form of iterative or rolling approach, as identified above, was necessary to ensure 'equal epistemic attention to all operations' (Wacquant, 1998) as well as securing the researcher's fidelity to real life (Cohen et al, 2002).

Sample

For phase 2 semi-structured interviews with VSC members used a stratified sampling framework that was based on the principles set out in Schein's (2004) organisational typology. A stratified sample essentially applies a schema to the population being examined so that a representative sample is identified that accurately reflects that population in microcosm (Bryman, 2004). For this research the wider population can be considered to be the institution of the voluntary sports club itself and the strata or discrete levels of each VSC to be examined are those based upon Schein's (2004) intra-organisational typology.

In traditional organisational studies the common distinction of organisational levels is between management and labour, salaried and hourly paid people, and full-time and part-time individuals. Schein (2004) suggests another typology based in part on the nature of the task to be done and partly the occupational reference groups involved. For Schein reference groups are externally derived, and are essentially built on the education and skills of individuals as well as the current professional climate. Schein describes these as 'generic subcultures' and argues that all organisations need them in order to survive (2004: 196), he goes on to point out that although they are necessary they may lead to conflict which can compromise an organisations effectiveness.

Schein identifies these generic subcultures as: an operator culture, operators being the individuals who 'get the work done'; an engineering culture, engineers being the individuals who 'design the work product and processes', and are more concerned with 'innovation, improvement, and redesign'; and an executive culture, which principally

ensures the survival and effectiveness of the organisation as well as integrating the other two cultures to 'maximise long-run effectiveness' (Schein, 2004: 197).

In the case of VSCs the three cultures were translated to identify three strata representing the members within a club. Operators, or those predisposed to the operator culture, equate to the players, kit managers as well as those who help with the extras. Engineers equate to coaches, team captains, those who represent players' committees, and team managers. Finally, executives equate to committee members who should be 'in total control, and feeling indispensable', and who manage returns to 'shareholders and society' – shareholders being those who have a vested interest in the continued existence of the club (Schein, 2004: 198).

Table 8. Organisational typology of VSC members

Organisational typology	VSC individuals	Associated assumptions
Operators	Players, Individuals involved in an indirect outcome role Non-playing club members	Those who get the work done Directly achieve the aim of the club through performance
Engineers	Coaches Team captains Playing committee representatives Team managers	Design the product and processes Through facilitating preparation of individuals/teams Devising strategies and tactics for implementation by operators
Executives	Committee members	Ensure survival (and growth) of the club Ensure fulfilment of necessary commitments: viz club constitution, to NGB, fixtures, to external partners

Adapted from Schein 2004

Thus for each VSC, interviewees will be drawn from each of the strata identified by the criterion above using a sampling ratio of 2:2:2, this should have given a total of six interviews per club and a total sample of 36, however some intended interviews from two clubs in LA1 proved exceedingly elusive. The result was that of the two clubs surveyed in LA1 Club B provided six interviewees, whilst Club A provided three. The three clubs approached in LA2 each provided six interviewees meaning that the total number of interviews carried out for phase two was twenty 27 (*n2=27*). A list of VSC interviewees can be found in appendix IV (p.434). Similar to phase one, interviewees were assured

anonymity and interviewees are again referred to either by role or by a pseudonym. These can be found in appendix IV (p, 434).

The logistics and procedure for the phase 2 interviews followed that of phase 1.

Design
The objectives for the interviews conducted in phase 2 were to

1. Establish the relationship of the club to its immediate community
2. Establish how connected the club is in the context of networks both internal and external to the operation of the club
3. Identify and establish the value and meaning that volunteering has for club members
4. Establish how decision making processes are engineered within and by clubs in terms of engaging members and non-members
5. Establish the political and strategic context of the club as a basis for interpreting club members views on the norms, values and worth of the club
6. Identify whether individuals identify with the local community and perceive any form of reciprocal relationship between the club and its environs.

Table 9 provides a summary of the interview themes, type of questions and the methods used to answer those questions together with a rationale for the particular line of enquiry and how it relates to the objectives of the study. A full interview schedule featuring a fuller list of question and sub-question areas can be found in appendix V (p.435).

Table 9. Phase 2 research themes, questions, methods and rationale

Theme	Question category	Methods	Rationale
Community composition	How would you say residents' react to the sports club?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders	Establishes whether there is a consensus concerning club location vis-à-vis potential for social capital creation
Connections and networks	Does the club have links with other organisations (local, regional or national)	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders i) Documentary analysis	Identifies the type and value of connections and networks internal and external to the club. Illustrates who is involved and how connections and networks develop and whether (types of) social capital impact on the policy process
Community capacity and pro-activity	Do you fundraise for the local community	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Establishes the key features of the club's practical engagement with the local community
Involvement	For what reasons are	i) Semi-structured	Establishes the extent and context

and participation	you a member of the club?	interviews with key stakeholders	of the power relationships in the context of what it means to be a club member
Volunteering	What if any is the volunteering ethos of the club?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Establishes the value of volunteering to the club and to individuals, how significant that contribution is and how it relates to other contributions relevant to the creation of social capital in the policy process
Capacity to engage in decision-making processes	How does the club seek the views and opinions of members on how best to develop its activities?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Identifies how/where internal/external relationships are located within webs of power and how the balance of power operates to allow certain groups and individuals to have/be denied a voice Indicative of social capital orientated policy
POS	To what extent does the search for funding affect what you as a club do	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Illustrates whether factors external to the club impact on internal strategies and whether policy and politics impinge on the philosophy of club members to the activity of the club
Identity, belonging and perceptions of neighbourhood	Do feel a sense of community identity and/or commitment to this area?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders	Establishes whether membership has impacted on perceptions of and identification with the local community. Indicates whether reciprocity extends trough and beyond the club
Trust	How has your level of trust in others changed as a result of your involvement in the club?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Establishes how this standard indicator of social capital is perceived as an outcome and whether there is a consensus regarding the meaning and value of trust within and beyond the confines of the club
Satisfaction with life and well-being	If you could wave a magic wand and improve one thing in this organisation or area, what would it be?	i) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders ii) Documentary analysis	Illustrates of the normative aspect of club membership and indicates the value of the civil society context of the club. Identifies some of the current issues facing VSCs and is suggestive of the political/policy context for VSCs

Limitations

Qualitative research that seeks to interpret meaning and develop understanding from interview data permits the collection of rich and detailed material; however there are a number of limitations to such methods. There now follows a brief discussion that acknowledges both the limitations of this study and the measures taken to minimise them.

First interviewees in Phase 1 were chosen by the researcher. The iterative nature of the research meant that the focus of the study may have been swayed by this selection process and any attendant bias that this allows. Second, a number of intended interviewees in Phase 1 did not respond to the numerous e-mails requesting an interview. Third, in Phase 2 the football club dropped out at a late stage making replacement very difficult. Fourth, interview respondents in Phase 1 may not necessarily have reflected the views of the organisation they were deemed to represent. Fifth, interview respondents in Phase 2 may not have represented the breadth of views held within a VSC. Sixth, the sports chosen for Phase 2 may not be 'suitable' and consequently any conclusions may actually represent a skewing of an unrepresentative sample. Seventh, the same documents and interview data may be interpreted differently by an individual who perceives the world differently. Eighth, and as highlighted earlier within this chapter, the researcher acknowledges his potential for influencing an interpretative process, within which preferences, values and cultural context are bound to have a bearing. Finally, responses to interview questions (Phase 1 – May to December 2006, Phase 2 – November 2006 to June 2007) were with reference to policies and organisational arrangements at the time of the interview. Of course, interviewees may now provide different answers, even though the questions remain the same.

Drawing on the recommendations of Bryman (1989, 2004) and Yin (2003), many of the above limitations have been either overcome or at least accounted for within the analysis. First, the sample of Phase 1 interviews was influenced by the recommendations of those interviewed ensuring the sample was not just a reflection of key stakeholders as perceived by the author. Second, interview themes were derived from a rigorous coding process and tested within a pilot study prior to commencement. Third, the iterative nature of the process enabled new themes to emerge and existing themes to mutate according to the perceived importance attributed by interviewees. Fourth, an impartial third party transcribed the interviews thus decreasing the potential for bias in the recording of responses. Fifth, as this study was conducted at a specific time and in a particular context, the analysis may only be relevant to that context and thus it would be difficult to carry

out a comparable study. Despite this, all original interview material and documentation accrued can be made available to a different researcher who could analyse the same data and either confirm or offer an alternative interpretation.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed discussion of the methods used in order to achieve the aim and objectives of this research. In doing so it has discussed issues of general methodological interest and has justified and evaluated the methodology that was followed when trying to establish the extent to which VSC members and external stakeholders value and perceive the role of the VSC in the formation of social capital within particular policy frameworks. The proceeding chapters present the primary data as case studies: first at the county level then subsequently as two separate local authority cases.

Chapter 6.
County level case study

Introduction

Cultershire County Council administrative area is the third largest in England in terms of population with an estimated population of 1.25 million, seventy seven percent of its people live in urban areas although only fifteen percent of the county is classified as urban whilst eighty five percent is classified as rural (CCC 2006). The county covers an area 1420 square miles in size and is spread across 11 district or borough councils and 251 parish councils (ONS, 2001) and includes one established National Park. The two largest urban areas in the county are each unitary authorities respectively, and although administratively outside of county control, many citizens who live outside of these two cities use the facilities and resources that these two respective cities have to offer.

The population of the county is relatively homogeneous with a significant low proportion of ethnic minorities (2.2 per cent) compared either regionally (4.9 percent) or nationally (England 9.1 percent). The county population tends to be dominated by middle aged people, a point recognised by the County Council which in reacting to this demographic trend (more pensioners and fewer people of working age) allocated some £13 million for adult social care in their 2007/2008 budget. The slightly older population of the county also helps to explain the general profile of a prosperous and affluent county which, with a relatively strong economy worth some £17.4 billion, makes it the third largest shire economy in the country. Unsurprisingly citizen feedback about the county is positive with a MORI poll reporting that 86% of residents were satisfied with Cultershire as a place to live (Cultershire Council 2004/5). Educationally the general air of satisfaction with the quality of life is further enhanced and reinforced by an educational picture that suggests that human capital and cultural capital are important to the people of the county. The county has the tenth highest attainment for five or more GCSEs at grades A* - C or equivalent with 21% of the population having a degree or higher.

The county enjoys virtually full employment, which is boosted by the strong links with the armed forces who are also major landowners, although the recruitment and retention of key workers such as teachers and nurses is problematic. Given that the average house price in September 2007 was £254000 (compared to £210000 nationally) and that there was an above average number of homes in council tax bands E, F and G, it is reasonable to surmise on this latter issue that house price inflation is both a contributor and indicator of the general economic situation in the county (BBC, 2007). The county also has 46% of its authorities classified as Prospering with only one authority classified as a manufacturing town, comparatively speaking this means that on the whole the local authorities in the county are similar to many others in the south, whilst only one authority provides any real comparison on a national level.

The picture outlined tends to mask the fact that the county has some pockets of relative deprivation, especially in more affluent areas, that aren't recognised using the average score on the indices of deprivation. One district, for example has been classified as the least deprived in England, while three wards in another district are amongst the 10% most deprived in England. There are also some problems of rural deprivation in terms of access to housing and services for a number of communities in several districts although the significant pockets of economic deprivation that do exist tend to be in urban, rather than rural areas. (Office of National Statistics). The nature of armed forces life can also exacerbate pressures on education planning and healthcare provision, particularly for service families who move home frequently, but also for the more permanent residents of those communities.

The political picture of the Cultershire County Council is dominated by continuity with the Conservatives established as the dominant party followed by the Liberal Democrats in each of the past three elections. The Conservatives have gradually increased their number of seats on the council from 43 (out of 78) in 1997 to 46 in the May 2005 election; this amounted to 44% of the vote with Liberal Democrats gaining 34% in 2005. The Conservative-dominated County Council is rated a Four Star (excellent) council in the

most recent CPA (2007) and received a 67% satisfaction rating from residents in 2004-2005 (biannual residents' survey), which was a 2% increase on the previous year.

The council would claim that it has suffered since 2003 when the funding formula changed and southern counties suddenly faced a shortfall in revenue – this is, it is claimed, because of a shift in the spending priorities of New labour to match their electoral commitments which have acted to refocus monies to the urban and industrial areas of the north and the midlands. However, despite such protestations and following the *Gershon Review* in 2004 where 2.5% annual efficiency gains were sought the council has managed to identify 'improvements' and savings equivalent to 3.4% of the baseline budget (BBC, 2007). Whilst this surpasses the *Gershon* requirements and can be seen to demonstrate the council's long term commitment to increased efficiency, it also tends to contradict the council's earlier concern with the 'refocusing of monies' and the perceived lack of funding available.

Cultershire County Council will make £13 million efficiency savings in 2007-2008 adding to the £27 million identified in the last two years, and in accounting for this the council tax rise of 4.9% (for 2007-2008) leaves the amount county residents pay in council tax as amongst the lowest for counties in England. Whilst most services received some form of increase in spending in the 2007-2008 budget, recreation and heritage, which is where sport resides did not, indicating that the established view of sport and leisure services perhaps remains. The County Council's band D council tax is £40 below the average for county councils with combined fire authorities and is the lowest rate for the region, again suggesting that the traditional tax-cutting agenda of Conservative council is considered paramount to the policy making process.

In terms of the organisation of sport across the county the County Sport Partnership (CSP) has been charged by the County Council to take the lead. The *County* CSP established in 2000, and formally commissioned from April 2005, is a joint venture between Sport England, fifteen local authorities, and the national governing bodies of sport. Sports Coach UK, English Federation of Disability Sport, the Youth Sport Trust

and a number of education related organisations are also members of the Partnership. The CSP works with 11 core sports: girls' football, tennis, swimming, netball, basketball, rugby union, athletics, hockey, gymnastics, badminton and cricket. The CSP is one of the largest in the country and although it is located physically and structurally within the County Council, the Partnership includes three unitary authorities giving this aspect of sports organisation, management and development a true county-wide perspective. Initially Active Sports, from 1999 until 2004 (Hylton and Bramham, 2008), formed the main area of work for the Partnership, but as the Active Sports Partnership has evolved into the County Sports Partnership the work that both individuals within the Partnership, and partner organisations themselves, have been involved in has moved on considerably. In this respect the importance of school sport has emerged as a key strategic focal point for the work of the CSP, the importance of which is that the fifteen School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) in Cultershire, including those to be found in two of the unitary authorities, are represented by their respective Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) on the CSP.

The Partnership strategy provides a framework for the development of sport and physical activity and physical education for the Cultershire CSP up to 2010, and whilst one view of a strategic plan is that it should be identifying the specific initiatives necessary to achieve the vision of the Partnership. It also has to allow each partner the autonomy to develop their own annual plan, linked to their respective organisation's corporate, service specific and/or community strategies. The strategy also necessarily must be flexible enough to allow partners to determine what their priorities will be and what resources they have available to deliver those priorities. In light of this flexibility it is possible to see the County Sports Partnership strategy as more of a governance arrangement that formalises certain roles and responsibilities to facilitate sport across the whole of the county. The strategy has been formed with a number of key contextual documents in mind, these are: *Game Plan* (2002), *Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier* (2004), *South East Plan for Sport: Mission Possible* (2004) as well as the Long Term Athlete Development Model (Balyi, 2001) and local authority plans.

Strategic level issues

The purpose of this section is to examine the extent to which there exists a countywide strategic orientation to social capital outcomes in relation to voluntary sports clubs. In particular this section essentially considers theoretical and applied aspects of social capital as they relate to the interpretations of key stakeholders and VSC members in making sense of the translation of macro level social policy to micro level. In utilising this framework a range of issues are examined that relate to the direction, organisation and nature of the policy cascade that in turn impacts on the role of social capital in promoting voluntary sports clubs as agents of social policy.

The emergence of the modernisation agenda, identified in phase one of the research, as the overwhelmingly key strategic policy and political driver provides an overarching context for the examination of the county-level relationship between the concept of social capital, government policy and the voluntary sector in sport. The emphasis on modernisation within Cultershire also leads the analysis towards an investigation of nascent structural developments concerning the implementation and practice of VSC accreditation as a particular aspect of the modernisation process (picked up in the delivery structure section). Furthermore the extent to which sports clubs run by their members can be used as tools to achieve government policy objectives is discussed in light of theoretical and empirical data (picked up in the stakeholder expectations of VSCs section).

In considering whether social capital is discernible within county level policy it is important to note that as (see chaps 3 & 4) New Labour have largely accepted the Putnam model of social capital, then any subsequent analysis of policy cascades and specific implementation should evaluate outcomes and outputs in the context intended. However whilst accepting this premise, critical realist analysis must also accept that transitive objects of knowledge, in this case the antecedent theoretical tools available to the researcher, are necessary to examine intransitive objects of knowledge (Bhaskar, 1978). Intransitive objects of knowledge being those real events and structures that make up the world and which all exist independently of people's knowledge of them. The key point

being, as Bhaskar has argued, is that to produce knowledge of the intransitive, one needs the transitive. Thus in the case of social capital, whilst it is reasonable to accept a Putnamian conception as central to policy strategy it is necessary to use the tools advocated by the 'critical strain' and 'rational strain' of social capital theorising (Lewandowski, 2006), the main proponents of each 'strain' being Bourdieu and Coleman respectively, to produce knowledge that is both meaningful and situated (see chapter 2).

Before proceeding further it is worth reiterating the key points and contexts of both the Putnam version of social capital and modernisation. In the case of social capital essentially the Putnam version binds many if not all of the elements of modernisation together, particularly in regarding the proliferation of voluntary associational activity as a social 'good'. Indeed a major inference of *Bowling Alone* is that one's involvement and participation in the webs of associational activity that occur in any one particular community (location) have a normative function that helps develop what many policy makers refer to as 'quality of life'. In other words connections and connectivity generate both efficiency and obligations that '...greases the wheels that allow communities to advance smoothly...' whilst establishing and maintaining '...character traits that are good for the rest of society' (Putnam, 2000:288). Social capital in this sense is thus a normative group resource that posits a causal link between networks of trust and social norms and the practical meeting of democratic ideals which is referred to by Lewandowski as the 'democratic strain' (Lewandowski, 2006).

Modernisation can be seen as both a process and an outcome (see chap 3, p.65) and in the context of modernity, which requires the constant examination and alteration of social practices in the light of incoming information about those practices, necessitates reflexivity. In other words the outcome is the pursuance of the constant revision of social activity in the light of new knowledge and the collection of statistical information about populations and commerce by governments' in order to facilitate planning and marketing (Giddens, 1990). Politically modernisation has ensured that New Labour have been able to operate according to third way principles which, Fairclough (2006) has argued, have a pervasive meaning of 'not only but also' (rights and responsibilities) and establish a

'...team' a 'community' of some sort to be the body that both experiences and undertakes modernisation' (Finlayson, 2003: 96). In sport, current practices are consistently reviewed and the rhetorical and concrete aspects of modernisation (see chapter 3, p69) have facilitated the development of targets, performance indicators and service agreements. Furthermore government policy statements, commissioned reports and surveys have also become the norm within this framework. Additionally sports organisations at all levels have been encouraged to work in partnership, in sync with modernised governance structures, both within and outside of their traditional boundaries in order that they can become modernised themselves.

In the proceeding discussion all interviewees are referred to by a pseudonym. A list of pseudonyms and roles can be found in appendix I on page 411.

Accreditation

In sports practice modernisation at the club level has rather become translated into club accreditation and was singularly the most important strategic theme to emerge from phase one of the research. As a reflexive process observable in the extent to which the product matches the process, club accreditation has a number of potential strategic and structural implications for the creation and generation of social capital in practices that are both simultaneous and ordered. A common theme of the data, and particularly for representatives of the CSP and the NGBs, was the overriding importance of modernisation as a process-oriented tool that centred on the need to 'encourage' clubs to be the ones that 'experience' and 'undertake' the accreditation process. None put it more forcefully than Penny (CSP Director)

> 'So there is no misunderstanding, *club accreditation is the most important thing* for the national governing bodies, for the national organisations, for the county sports partnerships and also down to your local level, down to your districts and so on'.

Others referred to clubs 'coming on board' (Steve LA1 SDO); 'focussing in' on clubs that have been 'identified' (Ruth CSP Club and Volunteer Development Officer),

'adapting the way they [VSCs] deliver' (Lisa CSP Sport Development Manager), and there being some 'buy-in by the clubs' (Peter RFU Regional development manager).

The inference, particularly of the language used, is that not only is there a clear agenda, but that sports agencies increasingly have to adopt the managerialism inherent in central government corporatism in the form of a trickle down effect. The upshot for many VSCs is that in order to keep going they are going to have to adapt to new strategic and structural realities, which are predicated on more than just VSC survival. As Richard (LA2 Chief Leisure Officer) put it

> ...those clubs that are progressive and are going to embrace change and do things in a way that the Government, Sport England and the local authorities want them to do, they are going to be the clubs that are going to thrive.

Indeed many of the stakeholders applied suitable epithets such as 'forward thinking', 'proactive', 'development minded' and 'enlightened' to VSCs that were felt to be open to both the accreditation process and working in partnership with a range of sporting agencies to develop the activities of a particular club. Partnership working being an explicit realisation of the multiagency ethos, a key mechanism to 'mixed economies of welfare' (Giddens, 1998, 2000) and subsequently a given for the club accreditation process. This has at least three consequences important for a consideration of a strategic social capital position, to which respondents referred: first VSCs were encouraged to look to external agencies as partnership working becomes critical in the 'mixed economy', so that as Steve (LA1 SDO) noted

> it will encourage a club to make links with its local authority, sports development unit and all the sports clubs partnerships...[and] will start to encourage a club to look outwards rather than just being totally internally focused

Second support for VSCs becomes a structural necessity in establishing an appropriate 'institutionally thick arena' (Imrie and Raco, 2003), within which 'service level agreements' at the NGB/CSP established 'funding as a sort of carrot' (Ruth) thereby tying VSCs in further to both NGB and CSP strategic aims and objectives. Furthermore

in conjunction with the drive for partnerships, 'networking' was positively viewed as both a means to an end and as a modus operandi commensurate with a modernised approach. In this respect David (RSB member) explained,

> we would always encourage all our clubs to go outside the box and do different things, link in with different partners because it is a great way for them developing as a club or getting funding and being able to support themselves

Similarly but more succinctly Simon (FA Regional Development Manager) observed that 'The challenge is trying to get clubs to think outside their own structure'.

Stakeholders also viewed the club accreditation process as vital to ensure service quality within clubs, for one respondent it was meeting 'so called quality standards' (Glynis) or as the Director of the CSP put it

> ...something akin to umm, what we would call performance managing tooling in our sports development business...Those sorts of things that helps you look at your processes and your practises and your policies and your strategies and say, 'yep, you know, you're doing a good job here, it's quality assured' and so on. What we are hoping for...what I'd say about club accreditation is that it enables the club to reflect on their practices.

It is possible to note in these comments that the drive to undergo accreditation is conceived of as a relative performance need and is gradually shifted from any central agency to the VSC, particularly in relation to the need for reflective practice. This is perhaps indicative of the struggle between compulsion and individual liberty which bedevils much of New Labour's policy concerning civil society, particularly as much recent policymaking in this sphere has sought to develop a partnership between government itself and civil society. Thus if the government is able to ensure that VSCs are 'regulated', through a government 'nurturing' process (Labour Party, 1977) which amounts largely to the club accreditation process, then the government is more likely to be in a position to further any emergent partnership in accordance with its main policy objectives.

To be sure the whole notion of partnership working is a key feature of both the process of modernisation and an outcome in that the emphasis is on organisations to deliver their services in partnership with other organisations that might have expertise and experience of service delivery in specific areas of social and cultural life. Finlayson (2003) credits a sort of 'post-downsizing management theory' as the mechanism that has enabled 'Blairism' to invoke various management theories and guidelines as the modern way to run services. Thus the enabling role of central and local government is entrenched within an outsourcing culture that embraces the practices of the corporate world, which resonates with social capital theory in terms of developing and reinforcing the importance of 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973) and/or 'bridging capital' (Putnam, 2000) as desirable outcomes. For the stakeholders questioned, the invocation of VSCs to work within a web of increasingly complex partnerships, within a strategically directed framework, brought to the fore two related issues. First was the notion of service delivery and VSCs forming a fundamental part of a service ostensibly geared to increasing sports participation. Second, incorporation into a 'delivery system' raised the problematic issue of power and control in terms of decision making within any partnership between a VSC and partner organisation.

It was at this service level however that the language of some interviewees became rather corporate in tone, again signifying a strategic cascading of values and policy orientations in relation to both potential outcomes and outputs of VSCs. It is perhaps unsurprising in this respect that both Liam and William from Sport England each commented that when 'selecting a good quality club' they would ask whether the club has

> ...got child protection and equity policies in place, have they got good quality coaches and coaching systems, have they got a robust sports development plan? Do they know where they want to be going to? Have they got robust monitoring and evaluation figures in place, do they know at any time what the mix of participants within their club is, in comparison to what the local demographics are as well?

Moreover the constant referral to clubs as 'delivery agents' by the majority of SDOs, RDOs, CLOs CSP and SE representatives not only reflected Sport England's policy

document *The Delivery System for Sport in England* (2006), but suggests that the Community Sport PSA (increase numbers taking part and widening access to sport) has become ingrained within the language used by many sport professionals.

At the broader level it was interesting to see how a Conservative led council was keen to get involved in the provision of services in a self acclaimed paternalistic manner as Cliff (Director of Heritage and Recreation) commented

> ...increasingly we are saying and getting involved in the whole issue of intervention which means...if for example...the education welfare officers will take a team of young people to our outdoor centres or whatever to intervene in that kind of team building approach. One intervention which saves 'Jonathon' means the taxpayers aren't paying £300 000 a year.

However the implication suggests a rather utilitarian approach to social policy, both facilitating service provision and support as a raison d'être of what a council 'does', as well as being in tune with meeting wider policy outcomes. In this sense Cliff commented further

> ...there is a social policy recognition if you can divert some of the, stop the spend in a sense...there is less of a strain on the taxpayer.

The crux of the matter is that policy geared towards increasing sports participation is likely to a) have a rather prosaic outcome in essence because, according to Clive (Senior Education Officer)

> ...sport can be seen to actually to save the government, the country money, because if we get people more active then they are going to be less of a burden – so get them involved in clubs...then your going to be meeting your targets.

and b) suggests that VSCs are not only delivery agents of participation but are increasingly

> ...helping out with mainstream problems and challenges...themes [that] are becoming much more pronounced even within cultural services (CC, DHR).

Power structures and the locus of decision making within any partnership is an issue alluded to already, and it is a recurring theme within the research as evidenced above, that has a deep seated origin within the operationalisation of VSCs in wider strategic social policy agendas. Not least in this respect is the mutual aid nature of many VSCs which for some can be compromised by the utilitarian approach taken by many stakeholders. It was interesting to note that those stakeholders from a physical education background, the PDMs and the county education officer (sport), were a little more in tune with how the mutual aid aspect of a VSC impacts on the culture or ideology of a particular club. Furthermore Clive was clear how this misappropriation of VSCs could be problematic explaining that

> ...they [VSCs] don't *serve* necessarily, because the very nature of the voluntary club is a group of people who got together to do tiddlywinks, because they wanted to do tiddlywinks, not because they suddenly woke up one morning and had a road to Damascus experience and thought: We must provide tiddlywinks for this community.

Thus in any partnership any key decisions are made together by the relevant partners clearly signifying a shift or an acceptance that governance must take into account those aims and objectives of organisations outside of the VSC. This is of course entirely rational but as evidenced above does not necessarily take into account the mutual aid nature of the club and can be problematic when accreditation is driven by either one individual or a small group within a VSC. Again the ramifications for the potential to develop the democratic strain of social capital that acts as the social 'WD40' facilitating the democratic 'mores' and structures become circumscribed by the very nature of those individuals who come together within a VSC within civil society. In other words structure is conditioning agency which is itself reflexively impacting on the structure, that is to say actors must rely on structures, which are, by and large given and external, and yet at the same time they must interpret and affect structures. Actors can therefore act strategically and reproduce or change structures, whilst relatively enduring circumstances ensure stability (Baert, 2005).

This issue is thrown into sharp relief by Simon's anecdote about two football clubs in Cultershire.

> I had a classic story from Kidmore Council (not real name), there Farnsworth and Prescott (not real names) are two big clubs. Borough Council said – 'we'll build you a facility', because their clubs are fairly run down, Farnsworth and Prescott. So we get to the meeting and...the clubs turned it down because they didn't want to share with the other club and it was like both of their facilities are pretty much in a state where like, pretty ropey, they really need to do something yet they won't come together so it's a case of, Farnsworth particularly they are going to keep struggling, Prescott have got good support so they will probably be alright, but if they come together then it would be of benefit to both clubs but at the end of the day they thought no not going to work with them. Yet from the Council's point of view, they are like, we are not going to build two for you! We will build you one!

Taken together the points raised by the different respondents in relation to how they see the outcome or outputs of VSCs suggest that partnerships involving and formed by VSCs are both a necessary precursor to and output of the accreditation process. This process consequently ensures that networking and connectivity become embedded in the expectations that stakeholders have of VSCs. This is particularly so for the normative function that VSCs are perceived to have in creating or being vehicles for social capital creation. So on the one hand the Mark (CSP swimming development officer) can argue that '...for the ASA getting the accreditation is really important because it helps the clubs recognise their part in the swimmer pathway', whilst also recognising that 'They have kind of like got a ...a positive outlet there to meet other people and, so I think it is like definitely a good social thing for them'. Essentially the policy objectives alluded to in this example are indicative of the perspective of many different stakeholder respondents who tended to ignore much of the mutual aid infrastructure of VSCs in favour of potential outcomes for sport itself and for social policy. Indeed many of the main policy objectives centring on key issues such as neighbourhood renewal and community cohesion are very difficult to measure and demonstrate – a seemingly endemic problem/issue with the abstract nature of social capital theory.

Whether VSCs even tacitly acknowledge their potential for delivery of social capital outcomes is an issue that will be returned to in later case studies, nonetheless at the countywide level and in respect of increasing participation there would seem to be a clear

policy cascade from government via Sport England and the county sport partnerships to local authority strategies. For example Nick (LA2 SDO) identified that '...we have got our sport and recreation strategy that we work alongside and key objectives from government, raising participation rates for example'. Similarly, according to David, for the RSB, government targets are driving policy objectives '...the bottom line is whether [it] increases participation and anyone who could help in that regard would be supported' (RSB, M). Manifestly the policy hierarchy ties increasing participation in sport to current healthy population discourses whilst being more equivocal in relation to sustainable community discourses (Carter, 2005).

It is in this context of a policy hierarchy that accreditation provides a critical framework for thinking about social capital creation at both the policy and practical level. Importantly club accreditation can be seen as the translation of strategy into structure and as such carries a number of implications for social capital creation, particularly given that networking and linking is vital for partnerships to be both meaningful and productive. Again it is the potential for VSCs to move outside of their insularity, that accreditation can bring and in doing so perhaps acknowledge perceived weaknesses in both strategic and structural orientation to the legitimate role of a VSC. This is evidenced in an example provided by David

> I think that some local clubs will be reaching out to say, look we've set this up, we've got, I'll give an example Northton Cricket Club (not real name), umm, they developed a colts side, largely based on local schools and they said to Cultershire Cricket Club "right what support can you give us now, you know, we've got this entity here and we've got some really good kids what's the next step for them? We can't do it alone, what support can you give us". And Cultershire Cricket have been actually quite good because they have got a cricket academy so you could see the links there but... I think it's got to be a bit of both. You've got to have a governance of sport which says strategically we need local sports clubs, which will be the life blood of our sport, now what can we offer them? Equally local sports clubs have got to kind of say; "Hey, you know, we've got a couple of hundred youngsters here, what support are we getting from our governing body in terms of accrediting coaches about giving [supporting] volunteers, about giving our referees support, so it is definitely a bit of both.

Quality of Life

The apparent government abandonment of the arms length principle (Oakley & Green, 2001) in the practice of sport development has ensured that social capital outcomes have been interwoven into countywide structures both at a formal and informal level. Indeed the notion of quality of life can be seen to be a further 'politically useable resource' (Allison, 1986), which in addition to health, social order and local and national prestige is both indicative of governmental welfaristic leanings and a rationale for greater state interest and involvement in sport provision and the outcomes of sports participation. Although quality of life may be considered a somewhat vague and imprecise interpretation or measure of a variety of policy outcomes it has a resonance with both social capital and what has been referred to as 'atomised citizenship' (Pattie et al, 2004). Atomised citizenship essentially results from an over individualised and de-socialised approach to social policy outcomes, essentially where individuals anticipate the benefits of policy without active participation or acceptance of the implications or outcomes of particular policies. Pattie and his fellow writers suggest this risks 'policy fragmentation and failure' and cite NIMBYism, such as the '...car owners who want faster travel times but oppose local motorway construction or the] newly weds who turn into staunch opponents of local building projects once they have bought their first house' (2004: 276). In this respect quality of life is as much about counteracting such atomised citizenship as it is a key tactic implicit in the development of norms and values that cohere within and amongst communities. The Putnamian social capital approach predicated on voluntary activity is a key factor in establishing such normative connectivity which Cliff alluded to

> ...our social policy is that the County Council take the view that by supporting voluntary sports clubs or voluntary activity anyway is good for the quality of life for the County, across all disciplines.

Clearly the role of sport in developing one's perceived quality of life is not a new phenomenon, 'sport for all' in the 1970s was not only an attempt to ameliorate peoples' lives but moreover a continuation of the dominant welfarism and Keynesian approach to social policy through sport (Houlihan and White, 2002). Similar echoes can be heard in

the clear articulation, found within *Game Plan*, of the relationship between sports organisations and their ability to access government funding depended on sports organisations addressing broad social 'problems' such as obesity levels, crime reduction and social cohesion. Albeit that *Game Plan* addressed these issues in more managerial and neo-liberal terminology in terms of inefficiency, stating that '...voluntary provision might be inadequate in some way', requiring government intervention to increase 'social welfare' as a strategic outcome (DCMS, 2002:76). Indeed as Green (2004) has argued the relationship between sport and social outcomes is both 'symbiotic and overtly instrumental', and has precipitated a form of 'new localism' (Stoker, 2006) in sport development structures, not least in the reinvigoration of SE regional offices, but also RSBs, CSPs, and more recently CSNs.

Within Cultershire the embeddedness of this symbiosis within a social capital framework can be detected from *Enjoying Cultershire* the county's cultural strategy, which states that its aim 'is to enhance the quality of life'. The strategy further explains that 'Cultural activity has an intrinsic value [meaning that] individuals participate in sport, arts, countryside recreation and so on because of what they get out of these activities' (CCC, 2003: 11). Furthermore, Cliff was keen to reinforce this point and alluded to the Council's tradition of interventionist and welfaristic practice which has persisted even if it has been at odds with the government of the day.

> Cultershire County Council...have always taken the view that has transcended political parties...that the quality of life in Cultershire is why people live here. In a sense it all started with a leader...who was nineteen years leader [he was] a patrician conservative at the height of the Thatcherite era and Cultershire...invested heavily in schools etc. The theme here was very about the quality of life...[and] if you look at our grant aid programme across the whole of the county. The whole feel is essentially, that this business, is that we are here to run the big services but also here to support local communities...

The value ascribed to participating in sport for sports sake in the cultural strategy appears short lived, particularly as the allusion to quality of life is suggestive of a useable resource for the county council, but also as the strategy then goes on to describe culture as also being 'instrumental in achieving, or contributing to the achievement of the wider

objectives of a local authority', with sport being cited of value for health and community safety. It is in this context that Eric (Cultershire Council Leader) argued that

> ...we are charged by government with the wellbeing of the people of Cultershire and by well being is meant moving towards prevention rather than the cure...and in all of this sports as part of our culture, sports play a *very very* important role.

Evident in the Council Leader's comments above and in those of Cliff that '...if communities want to organise things and do things for themselves, the County Council has a role in supporting that...' is that sport is viewed primarily in social policy terms, reflecting the 'core policy paradigms' of New Labour: namely pragmatism, community and third way politics (Houlihan and White, 2002). Furthermore these core policy paradigms not only define New Labour but also tailor particular policy strands that have invigorated particular policy networks. Indeed the comments of Cliff, Director of Heritage and Recreation, are redolent of Brown's comments that the proper role of government is in 'enabling' individuals to do for themselves (Brown, 1994, see chapter 3, p61). In this respect liberal individualism is at the heart of third way governments and can readily be detected in the notion of wellbeing through individual choice, which results in a 'new culture' of self-reliance that is itself based in 'personal development and relationships' (Jordan, 2006:130). The outcome being that core issues such as modernisation, the mixed economy of welfare and social inclusion have become wrapped up in the promulgation of social capital through a reinvigorated civil society and in particular an attempt to reconnect citizens to each other and to their particular communities primarily via the voluntary associationalism of sports clubs.

Interestingly Saward (2003) regards these sorts of challenges as part of the inevitable complexity involved in moving from a focus on social infrastructure development (roads, schools, hospitals etc) to processes occurring within the structure. For many such as Giddens (1998) these are the necessary politics of lifestyle, which Stoker (2006) has termed 'soft wiring' of society and has suggested that local government, in part as a result of being modernised itself, has moved towards a model of multi-level governance (Stoker, 2004). Moreover the subsequent acknowledgement of the complexity issue

coupled with the technical difficultly involved in undertaking such a challenge has required '...a different form of organisation and accountability in light of these 'soft wiring' challenges' (Stoker, 2006: 174). It is notable in this respect that CCC not only relies on local cultural strategies (including the case study authorities involved in this project) to identify common concerns, but also embraces the aims of *The Cultural Agenda* (2002). The *Cultural Agenda* is produced by the Regional Cultural Consortium, which charged by DCMS to implement the regional cultural strategy, has identified the challenge of 'partnership and coherence' as one of the key objectives in meeting prescribed outcomes. This has been interpreted by the Regional Consortium as an essential framework for promoting a 'joined up approach' '...by ensuring that culture forms a main plank of wider regional policies and strategies across the region' (2002: 3). In so doing the evidence points to the way that the Cultershire's cultural strategy is linked vertically and horizontally to *The Cultural Agenda*, the corporate and community strategies of Cultershire, the district level strategies, as well as to the local strategic partnership. Based on this evidence therefore it is possible to surmise that 'soft wiring' implicitly embraces a Putnamian drive within a social capital orientated framework and that this framework has become a key part of Cultershire's' strategic armoury.

The greater perceived strategic onus that has apparently befallen VSCs as a consequence of the architecture of soft wiring has necessitated a restating of the value of sport and VSCs per se. This has been a largely functionalistic exercise and one deemed necessary in order to re-engineer and psychologically relocate in the public consciousness the role of sport and hence VSCs, as both indispensable and democratically necessary. Indeed Sport England (2006) together with a number of other government agencies has felt the need to publish a series of documents and also maintain a newsletter on their website under the title of *Sport Playing its Part.* This campaign claims that

> Sport can enrich people's quality of life, raise self esteem...It also has a much larger part to play in building stronger, safer communities, strengthening the economy and developing the skills of local people, meeting the needs of children and improving everyone's health (Sport England, 2006).

In light of the extended role and entrenchment of utilitarianism ascribed to VSCs it is no surprise that the elected politicians interviewed chose, in similar fashion to Sport England, to restate the value of sport as they saw it. The Council Leader identified a perceptible strategic value:

> I start from the base that sports, for me are vital, they are vital in the sense that they are character forming for the young. They are vital in the sense that they are an aid to better health. They are vital in our schools too, and I know there is a debate about it, to inculcate into our children in a pleasant way, a competitive element, because life is competitive. Life is part of striving and sport helps that.

Within this statement from the council leader, one can detect the sort of normalising and moralistic outlook necessary for a soft wiring upgrade and in doing so suggests that sport is being viewed as a social panacea. Given the functionalist nature of New Labour it is not surprising that this perception is in line with central government thinking thereby making sport an appropriate area for intervention. In similar fashion Jane, another elected politician, argued that the value of a sports club was '...almost immeasurable'.

> We cannot know, I don't think we can really know or fully appreciate the impact a sport might have on a young person's life. It can help solve all kinds of problems, it can help solve emotional problems, it can help solve physical problems.

Notwithstanding the problematic issue of measurement and direction of causality referred to by this respondent, it is again the combination of virtuous complacency and utilitarian value (see chapter 3) that are the dominant qualities assumed by someone in a policymaking position. However, it is not just politicians who are prone to moralistic eulogising, as David's following comments illustrate

> as a club...you have got a role to play in your community...what are you doing about improving children's' health, getting kids off the streets and not committing crimes...getting kids involved in sport doing something positive with their lives...

Similarly for the penny (CSP Director), sport brings '...all the health benefits, that feeling of well being...a social element...In some cases a sense of belonging, [as well as]...positive images of young people engaged in really positive activities...' In short, at

all levels of the policy cascade sport and VSCs were evidenced as being 'self evidently a good thing' (Rowe, 2005). This makes for an interesting analogy between sport and Putnamian social capital in that most, if not all, respondents had a positive view of sport and VSCs whilst Putnam has been criticised for seeing only the positive side to social capital. It would seem on this evidence that moral inflationism surrounding sport is rife and that VSCs as voluntary providers of sporting opportunities are doubly virtuous. Increasingly then VSCs are soft wired into the architecture of delivery implying that through their ability to be engines of social capital they are not just vital for the members of those clubs, but also vital to the quality of life of any particular community.

The VSC is therefore not only perceived as having a number of properties that politicians and policymakers feel are necessary to the quality of life of a community, but is also deemed a suitable vehicle to engender a particular interpretation of social capital. VSCs can subsequently help to develop what Almond and Verba (1963) have referred to as 'the civic culture' as a means to establishing New Labours communitarian desire for 'civic tradition' (Delanty, 2003) and hence civic renewal.

Organisational structure to deliver

A key thrust of this project is that political context matters, it matters in the way VSCs and sport itself are viewed by a range of actors and it has number of important ramifications for practices and procedures within and amongst various sporting agencies. The previous section has outlined the shape and direction of the countywide strategic orientation within Cultershire to social capital outcomes, and it is within this account that one finds both the anchor and the springboard for the following examination of the county's organisational structure to deliver on its social capital commitments. In so doing and in order to establish the role and position of the VSC, a number of questions are posed: what do the structures look like? How do they work? Who is involved? And what are the outputs and outcomes? In short how is strategy translated into structure? As a means of tackling these questions and to provide an overarching framework for this section, the explanatory concept of the political opportunity structure (first encountered in

chapter 2) is developed as a rationale for explaining and clarifying the organisational structure to deliver across the county.

Making sense of countywide organisational structures to deliver social capital: the political opportunity structure for voluntary sports clubs in Cultershire

The POS, as detailed in chapter 3, brings a number of categorised elements together as a means to explain how the '...the openings, weak spots, barriers and resources of the political system itself' (Eisinger, 1973: 11-12) can impact on the strategies adopted and fortunes enjoyed by particular agents in a particular field. Used initially in the context of 'contentious politics' (see chapter3, p81), the POS is used here as an explanatory vehicle to make sense of the organisational structure that, as explained in the previous section, would seem to include the VSC as a social policy delivery agent in its own right. In short by identifying the political context of the delivery mechanisms in relation to the establishment and development of social capital and identifying the position of the VSC in relation to those mechanisms, it should be possible to answer the above questions in relation to the overall countywide organisational structure to deliver.

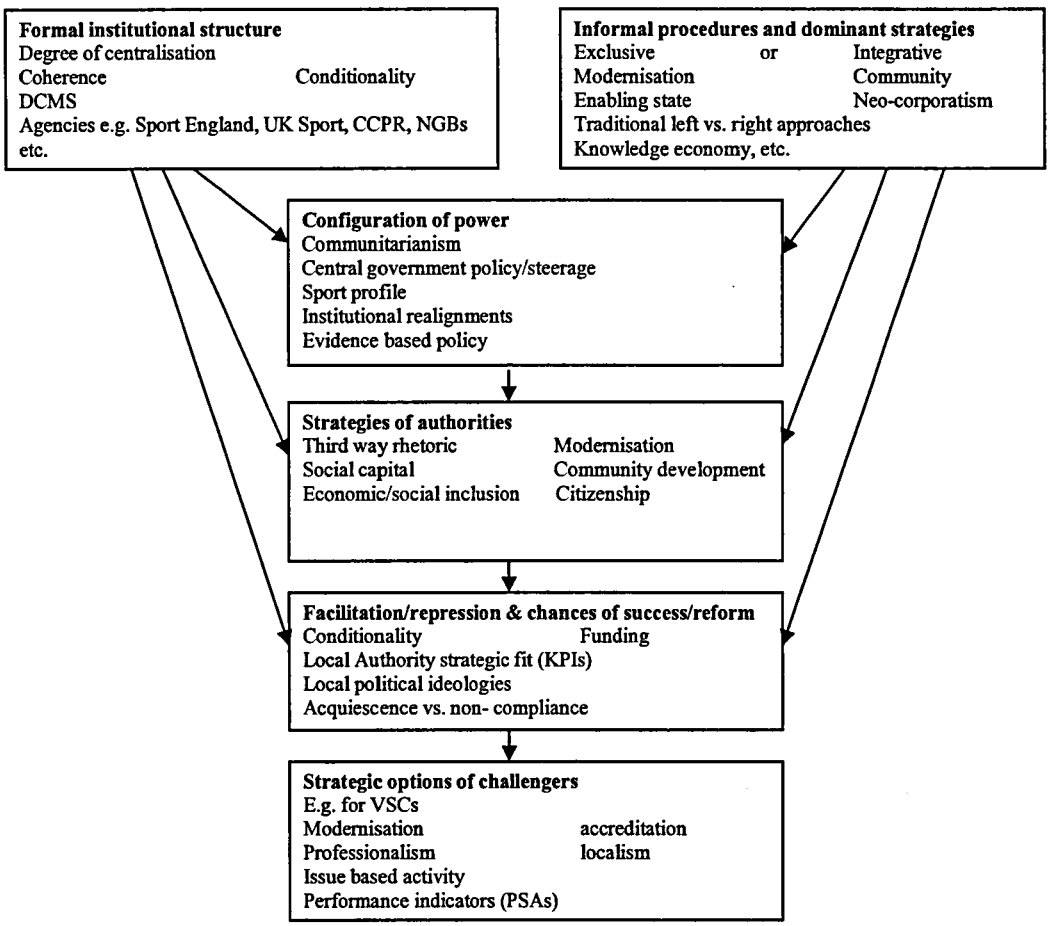
Although VSCs are not necessarily 'challengers' to the established status quo, neither can they be regarded as compliant vehicles for government (national, regional and local) policy. Indeed Garrett concludes his study of VSC responses to Sport England Lottery funding by stating 'The independence and self interestedness of VSCs can inhibit the implementation of sports policy because their interests and values may not always coincide with those of sports policy' (2004:27). VSCs have a tradition of self reliance and self governance that, as has been argued consistently throughout this project, is wrapped up in the notion of mutual aid and is implicit in the aphorism 'by the members for the members', further suggesting that VSCs when viewed on their own terms are best seen as Durkheimien (1970) or Tonniesian (1955) 'organic' entities.

The POS is not only suitable for examining contextual factors impinging and acting on VSCs, but here is used to offer a more critical insight into the operation of a particular organisational structure across the case study county. A critical note is needed because of

Putnam's emphasis on the ability of voluntary associational membership to impact on individuals' attitudes and norms as well as on social, political and economic institutions. Indeed this bottom up perspective which for some represents an 'over socialised' (Tarrow, 1996) approach tends to neglect the role played by political structures and institutions in shaping the context of associational activity and hence the creation of social capital (Maloney et al, 200b). A diagram of the conceptual POS framework for VSCs can be found below in diagram 2.

The concept of the POS is thus used to contextualise the case study findings and identify how the capacity to deliver has been translated from strategy to structure. Whilst the POS can be viewed as a comprehensive concept, in order to facilitate the following examination the analysis will address the POS sequentially beginning with the formal institutional structure, then the informal procedures and dominant strategies and finally the configuration of power.

Diagram 2. Conceptual POS Framework for VSCs



Formal institutional structure

One of the key points when considering the formal institutional structure is the extent to which formal access to the institutions of the state or political decision making processes have become institutionalised within the working practices of partner organisations. As has been shown, in seeking to enhance the 'quality of life' across the county for all its citizens CCC has sought to intervene and identify the VSC as an increasingly important vehicle for policy implementation. Moreover some stakeholders view the VSCs themselves as becoming complicit in the exercising of such policy, which for Nick (LA2 SDO) meant

> ...clubs...are not stupid, they understand that we have got other agendas, its not just sport for sports sake and if they could buy into that, that's normally where they can access further funding or additional support...

Arguably the structural climate of 'interpenetration' suggested here (Maloney et al, 2000b), that is the extent of contact, information exchange and financial support between public bodies and VSCs, is a result of the degree of decentralisation, the degree of coherence in the public administration and the level of conditionality therewith (see chapter 3). Indeed for VSCs the degree of decentralisation and administrative coherence are implicitly tied to forms of conditionality, particularly as VSCs are accountable on many different levels to many different organisations as well as being accountable too their members. For Peter (RFU Regional Development Manager) this manifested itself as a form of structural compliance

> ...once they understand that they are sharing the same objectives and goals well then, it's a matter of then how we can both work together...it is like everything with change, people are resistant to it at times, but if they can see the benefits of it I think they can buy into it a bit more, so we really have to sell it to them.

Whilst for Sean (LA2 PDM) this aspect of compliance was particularly appropriate for 'up and coming clubs' who are more 'proactive' and reflected a degree of coherence surrounding VSCs that has historically been lacking, resulting in 'organisational weakness' (Collins, 2003). The current climate stemming from a more coherent corporate cross-cutting approach that facilitates a more standardised and customer focused VSC can be detected in Sean's comments concerning the organisation of VSCs

> Some clubs I know, the paperwork's all over the place, they don't think it's important, in which case, it's not my job to advise them but there are other people that can. There are development officers within the NGB's sport that actually will work with the clubs to encourage them to become more organised.

At the CSP level it becomes apparent that the elements of decentralisation, administrative coherence and conditionality coalesce to structurally influence and effect the operation of individual VSCs. The outcome is that VSCs are perceived to be willingly accepting of the 'new' structure, which much like modernisation creates a perception of reality that is both pervasive and intrusive and one that clubs may not have much choice than to accept, as the following exchange with Lisa illustrates:

Q: You get a strategic planning forum and a strategic plan is developed in which clubs have to fit?

Lisa: I've got main stuff, like increasing participation, establishing links between schools and clubs, supporting coaches, volunteers, officials...if clubs can sign up to those things, then they are kind of on board, but if a club says to us we are not really into increasing our membership or we don't really want to work with juniors, you know there has to be some matching of the overall strategic objective.

Q: Do many clubs actually say that?

Lisa: No, well I don't know any that say that, they might do... We have had some clubs where perhaps things haven't worked out because they haven't got the resource to do it so the clubmark thing is a classic where not many of them [VSCs] in some sports have achieved it because understandably it is a kind of top down thing saying "you must do this". You don't always want to but sometimes I think they see benefit from it.

In many respects this discussion of the formal institutional structure has now gone full circle in that accreditation as a strategic focus necessitates an organisational structure to deliver. In the context of government social policy and in relation to the issue of social capital the issue is not just about developing partnerships as a modus operandi of social capital creation, but about facilitating what Coleman (1994) refers to as 'closure' among all agencies and organisations involved in the sports policy process. This has necessitated NGBs and VSCs having a clearer and closer relationship to political decision making, which has been reinforced structurally and operationally by the introduction of Community Sport Networks (CSNs).

CSNs have been identified by Sport England as an 'integral element of the delivery system [for sport]' (Sport England, 2007), essentially providing a 'sub-regional' platform for local stakeholders to come together to work in partnership to deliver core outcomes of the government's agenda for sport. In this respect they can be interpreted as implicit structural facilitators of social capital based on the Putnamian notion of developing network engagement from the bottom up. They have been charged by Sport England to create an action or delivery plan upon their establishment which should be instrumental in achieving a range of outcomes that relate to specific Local Area Agreements (LAAs)

and Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) frameworks. CSNs at a policy and funding level are envisaged to sit below the CSP, with whom they have a formal link, but above 'local deliverers (i.e. VSCs and other organisations providing sporting opportunities). They are expected to exhibit flexibility, thus enabling 'diversity and responsiveness' to become the key strength and to have been developed by local partners to meet local needs (Sport England, 2007).

Across the county eight CSNs have been established with each of the case study authorities having established their particular CSN in 2007 respectively. In LA1 the CSN comprises '...those with a direct interest in sport and physical activity as well as those who have an interest in the benefits and broader social outcomes' and is primarily concerned with leading '...the development and delivery of the multi agency strategy' (LA1 DC, 2006:3). In the context of the current discussion the importance of CSNs lies in their potential for allowing or facilitating access of VSCs and individuals to the political decision making process. For Steve the arrival of the CSN has enabled a more formal structure to be implemented right through to the grass roots level, which amounts to

> ...area groups which aren't just going to involve schools, they're going to involve parish councils, local schools, things like that. Pretty much linked to the community sport networks that [the CSP] are rolling out...[they will] give twice a year, maybe three times a year a more formal structure that clubs can come along to with specific issues.

In this instance the implication is that VSCs, through the introduction of the CSN, may become structurally closer to the locus of decision making and be able to share in those power networks that create local agendas rather than just react to them. However as Steve pointed out

> How successful its going to be I don't know because I think the sports clubs in **** have been used to not having that structure there, so I think predominately you will start off with getting the big clubs that always come to everything, the people that are always there, and it will be a bit more difficult to bring in the smaller clubs...

Again the top down nature of the mechanism implicit to CSNs and any attendant local groups becomes an issue not least because of the tendency for this type of network to be viewed as a manufactured element of civil society. In the example given above, the CSN may be at odds structurally with the traditions and expectation of existing VSC members – the 'subculture' or 'ideology' inherent to VSCs. Furthermore the mutual aid aspect of VSCs coupled with the sheer voluntaristic zeal of members, which when taken in tandem with structuring notions of VSC subculture and ideology may also suggest that the potential closeness of VSCs to the decision making process may produce some equivocal reactions, as Nick indicated when stating

> ...what we want to have with our CSN is have professional people involved because sometimes when you involve voluntary people they can't meet in the day, sometimes they can't come. What are they going to get out of it? They come with their own agenda.

This last statement may be indicative of surfacing tensions between the perceived subjectively driven rationale of voluntary associations and the objective rationalism of the professional. Although tensions may reflect shifting power structures within local authorities as the wider context of VSC modernisation impacts and impinges on current governance structures. This level of ambiguity about the organisation and structure of CSNs tended to be repeated across the CSP core team, possibly suggesting that the concept of a 'delivery system' of which CSNs are a key feature, has not had enough time to be understood as a practical aspect of the structure within which VSCs operate. However it became apparent that those in strategic positions within the CSP tended to see the possibility of CSNs in terms of their potential to '...complement that strategic planning bit' and '...provide a more effective bottom-up, top-down planning system...' (Glynis). This appeared not be clearly articulated and was, for David, no more than the '...local sports council or forum kind of thing'. Whilst those at a more operational level were ambivalent indicating that at present most sports clubs that

> ...could have an influence probably don't have a voice...I guess their influence is currently with their governing body...by going to their national AGMs, but most people don't go to their national AGMs do they! (Lisa).

Moreover a number of sports specific officers alluded to initiatives within their own particular sport that would seem to presage the development of CSNs. In the case of rugby Jeremy (CSP rugby development officer) noted that 'development groups' had been established, which

> ...basically started out with the RFU grabbing a handful of clubs that are situated in fairly local proximity...and...getting them to work together with models of good practice. Since then those groups have developed and they now are constituted as their own group, now applying for their own funding and writing their own development plans for what they can do on a much more local level.

However this manufactured structural climate whereby CSNs strategically draw in VSCs to broader agendas, and they become part of the 'delivery mechanism' was for Rob (regional Youth Offending Team Manager) perceived as detrimental for VSCs themselves and those organisations that operate within civil society.

> I think they can deliver things inadvertently and that they can, on occasion, do it in agreement with branches of the state if you like. It shouldn't be, its not what they have to do. I think we have to understand that its not the function of those groups to do that (Rob)

The decentralisation agenda that has been a recurring theme for New Labour with forms of devolution a high priority and an aspiration to empower local communities, was reaffirmed when Gordon Brown in a speech given less than one month after becoming prime minister signalled that he wanted '...a new partnership of individuals, independent community organisations and a government working together to empower and help all those working for social change' (Brown, 2007). Brown's rhetoric (or vision) is both a continuation and extension of an approach to governance that embraces the notion of civic enterprise which implores an active citizenry to not only 'work' within civil society, but also in partnership with statutory authorities. The implication is for an extension of the need for establishing partnerships, partnerships that both indicate the presence of social capital as well as stimulating its growth. This implies a small but significant change to 'Blairist' perceptions of the voluntary sector and for some offers a particularly 'Brownite' take on the role and potential of the voluntary sector

> While Tony Blair was fascinated by the idea of charities and social enterprises as contract providers of public services in competition with the state, Brown...sees them as partners with the state, influencing services (Butler, 2007:3).

In many respects the 'Brownite' position is yet another derivative of the partnership as governance debate which is impacting directly within the county, as can be seen with the development of CSNs. Essentially bringing previously non-interested or non-engaged organisations into closer formal contact with authority structures and policies, and thus ensuring that the notion of partnership is understood as a structural necessity. In this respect the Eric commented

> We probably have more partnerships – indeed government thinks we do, said so in a white paper – with the voluntary sector from the County point of view, districts and borough councils than many, many other places or in fact any other place in England .

Again this form of governance is a feature of the current formal institutional structure and together with long term approaches to synergistic government working has ensured that cross-cutting approaches to areas of public policy concern have ensured that an issue based approach to policy outcomes prevails. Governmental acceptance of the need to empower single issue groups (e.g. VSCs) to have a formal voice within the current framework for voluntary sector organisations further signals that the undercurrents of social capital are both enduring and durable particularly in terms of establishing more formal channels of participation and engagement with hitherto excluded groups (see governance green paper, July 2007). For example Cliff spoke of needing '...the focus and single issue focus', but also being 'reasonably clear about how that fits into recruiting people', indeed he qualified these remarks further

> I think we are committed to a pluralist approach which means that we don't mind how focussed you are about your sport and how excellent you want to be, but you need to be able to draw on as wide a group of people to do that and we are also clear that that there is a role for us in terms of developing and intervening...

Importantly some VSCs in this context have also acted to get themselves involved so that the notion of a VSC being excluded has been as much the choice of a particular club as it

has been by public authorities to omit them. Thus as much as policy seeks to push clubs towards inclusion, for a coherent approach clubs need to offer the pull factor – which is what the accreditation process is designed to prepare them and the public authorities for.

Given the abandoning of the arms length principle in the practice of sport development, and that there is a certain degree of coherence to the public administration, it is of no surprise that obligatory corporate cross-cutting has ensured that issue based institutional opportunities abound. In short, sport and VSCs are not just assumed, but targeted, braced and readied, to exercise their potential to contribute to non sport objectives, ensuring that a greater onus for community development, for engaging and activating citizens, is accepted by VSCs. As evidenced by Penny stating

> I was listening to a chief leisure officer talking the other day of working with a rugby club and making a big investment in facilities and club houses and so on in an area. But in return they will expect the club and you know, that's been part of the sort of on going talks, to be able to support the council in working with that local community to engage them, whether that's as a volunteer, whether that's as a participant in the activity that they are going to be providing us...

Clearly the other point made by the CSP director is indicated by the nod towards the level of conditionality that now exists in many of the partnerships between public authorities and VSCs. Often tied into particular funding streams there can exist an expectation that a VSC will fulfil certain outcomes, particularly those related to social problems such as increasing health, reducing crime, encouraging civic participation and enhancing citizenship. Indeed on this desire to pursue cross cutting aspects of wider policy a number of interviewees were forthcoming: for Eric the issue was 'implicit rather than explicit', commenting 'If we are funding a sports club that plays to well-being, it plays to actually a safer more secure Cultershire in some ways...', whilst in more explicit tone the Ruth (CSP Club and Volunteer Development Officer) stated that 'we would use the sports clubs...they might not be aware, [but] we kind of drag them into that whether they are aware of it or not...', a more senior CSP officer clarified the point

> Its clear when an organisation gets core funding on a year on year basis then I'd say yeah you can tie things into that core funding, you can leverage certain returns on that core funding' and in terms of occasional funding 'we wouldn't engage with the club, we wouldn't get involved in funding unless they were on board with the aims and objectives that that funding comes with (Glynis).

However the apparent coherence of the administration servicing the organisational structure is punctured somewhat by the rather unflattering comment made by Clive in response to a question about partnership working when he referred to the CSP core team as 'that lot over there'. Although a rather frivolous comment it is indicative of the ongoing separation of sport and sports development as directed by Sport England through the DCMS, and school sport and the development of sport from this route, as led by the DfES. Although not mirroring the pre-1997 situation it is an extension of a tension between sport and school sport that has existed for some time (Houlihan, 2000). Of issue here is the notion that a lack of coherence in the public administration can lead to clientelism and the building of departmental fiefdoms promoting different or competing policy initiatives that may result in a 'crowded policy space' (Houlihan, 2000). For the current discussion the key issue surrounds the application of this notion to sports development insofar that as school sport/PE has become a more coherent and bounded entity, sports development (involving young people in particular) has become centred on school sport. In this context the continual drive from Sport England to encourage participation, get clubs accredited, and for NGBs to take a more strategic role in club development (according to policy driven steerage primarily from Sport England) can be seen as Sport England's drive to reposition itself as the lead organisation on sports development, particularly development from the grass roots through to elite level, in England.

Informal procedures and dominant strategies

Whilst interpreting and understanding issues relating to the formal access to decision making processes is fundamental to the concept and application of the POS. When taken in tandem with an understanding of the procedures and strategies typically employed in the informal application of the formal institutional structure (Kriesi, 1995), not only does

the picture become clearer, but the analysis then becomes fundamentally linked to the third element of the POS – the configuration of power.

It has been argued previously (see chapter 3) that the extent to which informal aspects of VSCs are mobilised within the formal institutional structure can be crucial in interpreting the capacity that VSCs are likely to possess for the creation of social capital. Indeed in focussing on this aspect of the POS the possibilities for examining the distributive capacity of social capital should become evident. The evidence from those representing 'upper tier' authorities (the external stakeholders) was that the predominant culture was integrative, suggesting that the strategies one would find would be those that represent facilitative, cooperative and assimilative approaches. Comments such as 'bringing everyone together so we are singing from the same hymn sheet' (Sean), 'pulling together (Mike – LA1 PDM), 'you have got to support the voluntary sports clubs' (David), 'keep engaging with [all] clubs' (Penny), were commonplace. Whilst for both Liam and William from Sport England the cooperative became the assimilative when referring to partnership arrangements

> In terms of those local partnerships they are not in every case new...but its about trying to tweak those to the need of the local community. But certainly the structures are there to try and make a support system for local sport...to put a delivery system in place...to support community sport activity...

Indeed Eric in signifying a political consensus on this issue argued '...its not often that I agree with the government, but I believe the government is absolutely right to place a lot of emphasis on sport...', which for an opposition county councillor also meant that '...our policy is to try and work in partnership with people wherever possible' (Cedric). The reference to partnership working among respondents was not just a reoccurring theme or a governance agenda, but also reflected on the relationship between the expectations of VSCs members and the continually positive assumed outcome of social policy interventions via VSCs.

In the context of partnership working engendering networks and relationships that impact on social capital creation, it is notable that some stakeholders indicated differential approaches to different VSCs. For Penny, formality of approaches differed according to accreditation status '...it would be most formal when you working with clubs towards accreditation and more informal contact with clubs that you might be just *you know*'. In part this can be accounted for by the comment of Steve that

> ...clubs that have already achieved accreditation or are working towards it are clubs that have a good set up and have a number of people working together, because the accreditation process can't be done by one person.

In essence the sense of formality is driven by the perception that in forming a relationship with a specific club there will be a range of individuals within that club who are likely to be accountable and where responsibilities and decision making are shared. In contrast, for non-accredited clubs the perception was of 'a handful of people doing everything' or even 'one or two people doing absolutely everything' (Steve). In cases such as this as another SDO pointed out working with or establishing a relationship with this sort of VSC may come down to the more prosaic issue of whether 'I have got quite a personal relationship with that club' (NIck). Among many of the stakeholders with a sporting background, this informal approach that privileges one's contacts and one's norms and values in establishing contacts and relationships was fairly common and can be viewed as an extension of the notion of the imagined community (Anderson, 1991 see page 29). Particularly as trust and trustworthiness are the result of prior knowledge and anticipated reciprocity and are clearly reliant on individual reserves of social capital that facilitate the potential of these information channels in the first place. A view which is illustrated by the comments of Sean,

> My sport is basketball so I don't need formal links with them because I know the two clubs very well – I used to play for both of them. So there are times when I just give them a call and say "Hey have you got any free tickets for one of your games?"

In this instance the further development of social capital is dependant on some existing in the first place and reminds the reader of the 'bootstrap' problem (Whiteley, 1999) discussed previously (Chapter 1, p.19). Indeed when considering the potential for social

capital creation it is the informal application in direct practical terms that can facilitate relationships that at some point may leverage power and influence through the mobilisation of potential resources. In this respect Ruth suggested that,

> ...they [VSC members] are more likely to pick up the phone and if it is quite formal then you are writing letters and it makes more work for them. But if you just run in and "can I just..." it's much easier and they know if they have got a problem they can ring...they don't have to write or find out who they have got to go to.

In essence what is alluded to here is the presence of access nodes that enable those 'in' the network to use their social capital to connect upwards from the club, however this does presuppose that a) individuals will want to connect upwards and outwards and b) that individuals will have the necessary resources and skills to facilitate the appropriate knowledge enabling them to make and extend their networks. In this respect and alluding to the conceptual differences implicit to notions of bridging and bonding social capital, Jeremy suggested that when one becomes involved in a rugby club

> ...it is like a family environment and you are very trusting of those around you and you build those relationships, friendships...and I guess once you are out in the outside world, whilst not wanting to make it sound too drastic, not everybody is, as they are in the environment of the rugby club, so I guess you do become a bit more trusting.

Again in reiterating the PDM's comments it is the 'insider' knowledge of those clubs and norms and values within them that culturally predisposes this particular officer's informal approach to his relationships with his client base. The notion of a 'family environment' suggests that bonding type capital may predominate and that the officer in his sympathetic and empathetic approach may extend the bonding potential upwards towards the NGB. It is was on this point that a consensus existed among the NGB SDOs interviewed who each tended to perceive his or her particular role as functional in terms of it establishing the officer as the conduit to more bridging or vertical capital within their particular sport.

The practice of informal networking amongst clubs of the same sport was perceived as common and a form of good practice which as a dominant NGB strategy could extend

knowledge throughout those in a particular network. For Ruth it was the level of informality that provided the necessary connective tissue '...so you know, Bob at one club might know it's Mary at the other club and he will drop that in and say "Oh Bob told me to ring Mary'. In terms of social capital the illusion given here is reminiscent of Coleman's utility maximising individualism, which given the element of 'closure' alluded to by the CSP officer has in this instance created norms of behaviour which have become normative and reciprocative amongst those in the network. Indeed as Ruth commented further, utility was apparently at the forefront of the network connection '...as soon as they think we have money and stuff they are quite keen to get to know you, check you out and see what you can do for them'.

Nevertheless, for football countywide, the perceived informality in establishing networks and relationships was apparently compromised by the inability of the clubs to break out of that inward focused mould. Allied with perceived concerns over club identity and solidarity with the local football community, both real and imagined led Simon to comment,

> I know in rugby they have done a lot of good work they are having cluster groups where...they work together for the same goal, bringing in grants, whatever. The challenge is trying to get [football] clubs to think outside their own structure. They are very much "our club, our club" and "can you be supportive to one of the clubs who ain't your club". Again it's a culture thing where they are worried about their club and there's always going to be a competitive element, but its trying to get clubs to think wider than their own patch, which is difficult.

The point here is really that in contrast to rugby, football is perceived by Simon as seeking an informal level of communication between vertically placed organisations and VSCs, although the arrangements between football clubs and the NGB apparently rely on a rather more formal arrangement. In this respect Simon also referred to communication as necessarily 'becoming more formal' before going on to identify the Charter Standard (the FA's accreditation structure) as driving 'workshops', 'steering groups', 'annual monitoring', 'codes of conduct' and 'development plans'. In the main this was because

> ...clubs are used to surviving hand to mouth and it's been trying to change that culture and thinking "well okay, where do you want to be in three to five years time?

It is possible to observe in these comments elements of the differing cultures of football and rugby, which may be structural in relation to the sport concerned (size of club etc), but which also suggests that the type and level of social capital available and the extent to which it is mobilised within each sport varies enormously. On the whole social capital is once again treated as a private matter (in the Bourdieun sense) rather than as a direct community or public benefit.

Whilst there is and has been a clear central governmental policy driven steer to inculcate partnership working at all levels of sports delivery (see chapters 2 and 3), it is also clear that this has translated into a formal structure that facilitates informal relations. It is in this sense that partnership working is best seen as a potential social capital generator, which for many of the respondents was best articulated in terms of considering the social and cultural context of partnerships. This was evident in the comments of the regional or county development managers for the three sports investigated concerning individual preferences regarding informal channels of communication and network development. Peter (rugby RDM) was keen to state that he *didn't* work in a formal manner,

> I think because we are dealing with like-minded people who, in the main, are volunteers. I think that informal side comes with it and...within the sort of rugby club environment at different stages.

Whereas, Rodney (swimming RDM) was more focused on swimming (club) coordinators

> ...they are usually the more forward thinking people that you can influence a little bit better...a lot of them will see me around at competitions and I'll chat about all sorts of things and its important that we build that side of things as well as just being able to get something...you have that rapport with them.

For Simon, it boiled down to clubs

> ...that want to develop...we [will] work with them on a more regular basis...[allowing us] to build particular relationships with clubs and particular individuals.

The picture presented here is of partnership working within and through particular sports where the type of bonding capital, the 'we' phenomena (Tuomela, 1995) or superglue of Putnam (2000) is both tapped into and reinforced by the regional officers through their particular work programmes. There would appear to be a homogeneity in this form of network development, which at one level can be interpreted as a logical and appropriate way to operate, however at another level it is possible to observe this as a form of 'closure of social networks' (Coleman, 1988). In this respect closure may facilitate social capital amongst those sharing the ideological, cultural and normative conditions, but also ensures that potential social capital resources are not available to dissonant or outsider clubs and individuals.

Moreover it is in this latter regard, and particularly in light of the structural pressures of modernisation and club accreditation that the necessity for partnership working could impact on potential social capital resources. In this sense social capital resources are only shared and mobilised amongst those who are organised in with the mitigating factor being the extent to which a particular VSC is prepared to undertake accreditation and hence be part of that 'forward thinking' or 'enlightened' culture. This can make it difficult for other clubs (outsiders) to break into the network unless they too acquire and mobilise the appropriate social capital that will facilitate the necessary shared norms, values and expectations about the role and direction of a particular sport as a whole and the VSC itself.

Increasingly, as alluded to above, it would seem that countywide, NGBs are expecting their constituent VSCs to link horizontally, which is perhaps indicative of the impact of modernising structures, to encourage partnership working and encourage greater networking among individuals and social groups. In essence much of the network development engineered by a somewhat nascent delivery structure that underpins the countywide strategic vision of social capital reflects Putnam's more recent assertions that

'The newer forms of social participation are narrower, less bridging and less focused on collective or public-regarding purpose' and essentially it is possible to argue that '...the newer forms may be more liberating but less solidaristic – representing a kind of privatisation of social capital' (Putnam, 2004: 412). In this respect the constant reference to what 'they can get out of it' (Ruth) in referring to the potential tangible benefits a VSC can extract from a partnership or network, is evidence perhaps of this privatisation effect.

Configuration of Power

It should be apparent by now that the political context for the sports polity across Cultershire has largely been identified by the holistic nature of POS theory. Thus far POS theory has outlined the formal institutional structure and the informal procedures relating to a countywide orientation to creating social capital through VSCs. To complete the framework of the POS analysis this section examines stakeholder perceptions of national and regional contexts as they relate to perceived outcomes and outputs of VSCs across the county.

Political stability has been the dominant theme across the County Council with the Conservative Party maintaining control for the majority of the past twenty years. In terms of political alignments the distribution of power has been such that the council is apparently perceived by those in senior positions as not having needed to accede to wider national political currents. This was evidenced by Cliff in arguing that

> ...The County Council...have always taken the view that has transcended political parties that although it was important to make sure that we supported education, social services...that the value of the quality of life in [the county] was actually a really important reason why people live here.

Indeed the point being conveyed here is that the County Council has consistently been moderately interventionist, particularly when it has been merited in relation to enhancing perceived quality of life. Furthermore, Cliff was keen to point out that a 'patrician conservative leader' at the '*height* of the Thatcherite era' started this concern with quality of life in the county. Cliff also pointed out that the view of this leader and County

Council was to educate all children to a very high level, and was one of the first to 'go down the full comprehensive education [route]... and were one of the first to set up tertiary colleges'. In this respect it was not any apparent electoral instability that caused political elites across the county to seek support from other avenues, such as from voluntary organisations (see Tarrow, 1994), rather it was electoral stability that has enabled the political context to remain consistent and focused on the needs of the population. Indeed this context has apparently developed and normalised a parochial and somewhat paternalistic approach to relationships with voluntary organisations across the county. For the Conservative Council Leader, Eric, the continuity of Conservative stewardship has been given greater clarity and direction by a New Labour government.

> What I think New Labour has done is to add some focus to it [working with voluntary organisations and VSCs in particular] and with various initiatives has given some impetus to that clearer focus.

These comments are perhaps symptomatic of the desire for centre ground politics (see BBC, 2006), the importance allocated to civil society (chapter, 2) and the social process orientated thrust of social capital theory (chapter, 1). Indeed the notion of partnership working, particularly with the voluntary sector, has not only become paramount to the successful progress of service provision, but has become perceived as a necessity for organisations that do not wish to remain static. Indeed the reference to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) exercise by all County Council employees and elected members interviewed is indicative of the necessity for a sound evidence base upon which to justify their activities. In this sense the apparent difficulty faced by senior officers and elected members in 'mapping' partnerships suggests that relationships that were previously taken for granted have become formalised as evidence. This is not surprising given New Labour's explicit pragmatism and partiality for evidenced based policy, amounting to what Solesbury (2001: 7) has described as the mantra of 'what matters is what works'.

Additionally the configuration of power or political context for volunteering in general has become very positive, and explicitly so since 1997 (see chapter3). This national level policy environment is reflected by Cultershire's Voluntary Sector Compact (2004) which

set out a number of guidelines concerning how voluntary and community groups and public bodies should work to deliver mutual benefits. The county Compact is essentially a statement of intent to ensure and encourage more multi-agency working between voluntary and public sector organisations, without the voluntary groups fearing that they will lose their autonomy and identity when submerged by a much larger public sector bureaucracy. The intention of the Compact is that, by all partners agreeing to follow a 'Compact' way of working across the county, there will be more ongoing dialogue between the two sectors and hence less need for formal consultation. This would certainly appear to be the case as perceived by the majority of stakeholders who tend to agree that VSCs have taken onboard the almost hegemonic message that working with rather than against other agencies is the desired outcome. In many instances this political context has presaged both the formal and informal dimensions of the POS. For the Senior Education Officer this amounted to '...an awareness creeping in that clubs need to modernise and that when you talk about CRB checking they don't look at you and say "What's that?". Whilst for Ruth the formal and informal dimensions of the POS would appear to rest on the promotion of partnerships as a necessary and important tool for network development

> ...when sports clubs come along we will find that we are sitting there with a club and maybe someone from the Health Authority and someone from crime and that sort of thing and because there are so many people around the table more projects have come about where...it has meant that the club has been involved in different projects.

Furthermore this increased interaction can impact on the potential for social capital creation, particularly as social capital is sensitive to changes in the POS (Maloney et al, 2000). This may again weigh against the established Putnamian view of social capital and perhaps be more indicative of the utilitarian value of the concept within a specific context. For Clive this is part of the inevitable symbiosis '...they [VSCs] are not going to get involved with us unless there is something in it for them, so it has to be a two way process'. In this respect Ruth, in commenting on a bowls club who were having a problem with some 'disaffected youths', suggested that they were able to mobilise the

skills and resources as well as developing the confidence to use their social capital to solve the problem

> ...the bowls club contacted the school and said "they [the disaffected youth] are from your school, we were wondering whether you would like to bring some of your pupils down to play bowls" and the kids absolutely love it and the bowls club has stopped having any trouble down there...

Whether this is an example of the power of structural resources to facilitate social capital both horizontally and vertically or rather a case that 'those already well connected tend to get better connected' as concluded by Skidmore et al (2006), is a moot point. However there is something of a mixed message within a political context that paradoxically seeks to measure and formalise the identification of partnership working with VSCs and yet wishes to ensure a more informal practice within those partnerships. It is quite possible that this potential confusion forms a backdrop to the issue of club accreditation, which itself is crucial in enabling individuals within VSCs access to valuable social capital resources.

Used within this section to identify and explain the extent to which strategy has been translated into structure. The POS offers a rather more contextualised analysis that has illustrated how formal structures, informal relations and the political context across the County Council impact on the perceived potential of VSCs to be part of a wider sport delivery structure. Moreover by analysing the nature of the POS it is possible to reach a deeper understanding of the ways in which access to and the creation of social capital are operationalised within the wider structure charged with delivering a range of strategic outputs.

Stakeholder expectations of VSCs

Whilst the first part of this case study has detailed the countywide strategic orientation to establishing social capital outcomes with the second part examining the organisational structure to deliver those strategic positions. This third part examines the perceptions among the stakeholders of the extent to which VSC s are themselves aware of the role

they play in this policy rich arena. Moreover, given the countywide strategic position concerning the importance and value of social capital, the following analysis surveys the extent to which stakeholders hold expectations of what and how VSCs can contribute to and benefit local communities.

The discussion in chapters 2 and 3 clearly outlined the Putnamian social capital framework adopted by New Labour in their approach to civic renewal which has involved the privileging of voluntary activity and associations. The assumption has been that of 'altruistic welfare' (Coalter, 2007) which is driven by the notion of the public good and the importance of collective action (see chapter 1) spurred by civic concern for the good society. The apparent problem as highlighted by Hodgson's allusion to a 'manufactured civil society' (2004) reflects Coleman's concern that '...the essence of social capital is that it consists of activities and relationships freely engaged in by individuals, which could only suffer if government stepped in and replaced them' (Field 2003:118). It is in this context that stakeholder perceptions of VSCs are considered within, what can be viewed as, the practical application of the strategic orientation via the organisational structure in place within the county. This exploration also serves to remind the reader of the importance of this case study in meeting objectives one and two of this study (see box 1).

Box 1. Objectives one and two

- To establish New Labour's political and policy context, within which VSCs are perceived to be agents of social capital creation
- To establish the perceptions of external stakeholders concerning the role of the VSC in forming social capital within broader governmental policy agendas

From macro to micro: perceptions of the awareness within VSCs of a policy cascade

Evidence of a policy cascade relating to VSCs' potential role for social capital creation tends to coalesce around stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which VSCs can contribute to what Coalter (2007) calls the 'sport for good' agenda. In many instances

the allusion to social capital needs to be inferred given its abstract nature (see chapter 4 for more). For example Eric (Council Leader) spoke of VSCs bringing

> '...a sense of place around which communities can certainly, the right word is coalesce, although I think its more the success of that particular club that brings the community closer'.

In this instance this senior politician is referring to identity and the supposed value that a VSC is perceived to have as a uniting factor within a community. For the CSP Director, VSCs were perceived as serving a social function as having a '...service beyond that of the players', again the allusion was to identity and what was referred to by a number of interviewees as 'embeddedness'. In many instances this was viewed as much as an inevitability as it was a desired outcome, which was interpreted by Penny (CSP Director) in relation to a gymnastics club as a symbiotic act, which ultimately had a civic basis

> ...they will be out at school fetes during the summer. That will partly be about that club promoting itself in the community and saying "have you ever thought about trying out gymnastics? Come along. Here we are". But it's also about supporting communities isn't it.

This was indeed a common perception amongst the majority of stakeholders, although for the CSP officers, club accreditation, which emphasised 'looking outwards' as opposed to being 'internally focused' (Penny), could be interpreted as a concern about the role of a VSC in relation to community development and it's particular local context rather than on the internal development of the club itself. It was in relation to this point that the comments of the Richard (LA2 CLO) bore some resemblance, particularly concerning the path (cascade) of policy from strategy through structure into practice

> ...what we are trying to do is help them [VSCs] to see and develop in a way which means that they reach their potential in terms of the value that they contribute to the community.

Indeed when considering the level of awareness of policy priorities, it is worth noting that some VSCs may choose, in Garrett's term, to be 'non-compliant' (2004). This position is perhaps reflective of the operational reality within which policy is negotiated and

implemented, although the policy cascade was also viewed as problematic in relation to the differentiated polity of varying VSCs

> ...we have certain agendas...basketball being one of our really challenging sports to move forward because what we have found is...where you've got existing adult clubs, [it is] very hard to engage them in terms of junior development, but that's only us coming at them with an agenda. They're actually a bunch of guys quite happy playing on a Sunday morning doing their own thing and who are we to say that not right. But in terms of the development priorities..., that's a frustration [and] I don't like to say I don't value them, but in development terms...I would be happy to say I value some [VSCs] more than others (Glynis).

The nub of the issue here concerns the apparent paradox involved in seeking policy implementation through partnership working, whilst recognising at the same time that although VSCs may be aware of the intended policy outcomes, the issue of free engagement supersedes any obligation on the part of VSC members.

As a counterpoint to the policy orientated 'manufacturing' impetus that can cause a senior CSP officer to reluctantly admit that some clubs are valued more in terms of meeting strategic objectives than others, the issue of awareness came to the fore. In particular it became apparent that measuring VSC take up of accreditation, as an indicator of the level of awareness and expectation placed on and accepted by a VSC, was a non-starter given the Penny's recognition that across the county 'so few clubs are accredited'. Indeed nationwide across England it would appear that there are 'approximately only 2500' (Liam) accredited clubs. Given the level of importance seemingly attached to the club accreditation process by CSP and Sport England officers it is noteworthy that club accreditation has not had greater take up amongst the VSCs. For Liam and William (Sport England) it was a case of 'mistaken identity' in that '...Clubmark was never about funding...it was about firstly to get the safety standards up [and secondly] help clubs organising'. In this respect it is possible to infer that as a development tool accreditation has been relatively unsuccessful to date and has had to be promoted in accordance with how it can directly benefit VSCs themselves. Consequently any Putnamian social capital emphasis of developing the civic culture would appear to have been superseded more by a more prosaic emphasis on self-interest and club goods which perhaps is more indicative

of Coleman's rational approach or even Bourdieu's stratified interpretation of social capital outcomes.

To be sure, for many interviewees the perception was that VSCs were largely unaware of the policy cascade, and if a club was to fulfil a policy objective then it is likely to be relatively unaware that they were doing so. Clive spoke of 'self-preservation' rather than a comprehensive sense of their community impact in relation to the essence of most clubs. 'I would say generally speaking that the level of awareness of the greater good is probably some way down their list of why they are doing it'. Furthermore the same respondent highlighted the importance of the statutory requirement of the 2004 Children's Act in pointing out that the County Council were doing a

> ...massive amount with voluntary organisations, and I certainly don't mean this arrogantly but, we perceive a strategic benefit...whereas individual sports clubs wont realise it is part of our strategy, but it will just know that there is support and that we want to work with them, but probably wont necessarily realise why.

When seen in the context of the overarching County Council policy priority of 'maximising wellbeing', which is primarily about 'maintaining and improving quality of life' (Cultershire, 2007), the often implicit rather than explicit allusion to the level of awareness within VSCs of their potential value can be viewed as both a reflection on the 'sport as a self evidently good thing' perspective and the naturalness of the perceived embedded nature of VSCs within communities. Moreover, the potential and value of social capital is therefore constituted within the overall interaction process that is presumed to occur between and within VSCs and their local community. It is in this manner that the general attributions relating to particular outcomes and outputs of VSCs can be made, particularly where an exemplar club and community can be used to highlight the potential value of sport. The following example from Richard in highlighting this point also suggests that in terms of social capital many of the positive examples of interactions between VSCs, communities and other organisations fail to take into account the distributive nature of social capital (Foley and Edwards, 1999). That is that many of the relationships and networks formed within a particular frame of reference

or locality are horizontal rather than vertical, and may be 'resource poor' (Portes and Landolt, 2000) which may hinder rather than help the ability to mobilise necessary resources.

> ...some sports clubs are very much community based and actually sprang up out of the community and they tend to be very important focal points for, if you like, the community effort, the neighbourhood effort, and they become kind of points around which communities can revolve. I remember I was involved in the setting up of St Dominic's Football Club in Dean Park [not real name] and there was no sports club in Dean Park at that time. There are now something like 2 to 3 hundred children involved in that sports club and all their parents, so it is now the biggest community organisation in Dean Park. Not only does it provide an opportunity for young people to learn to play football, provide them with a healthy, regular exercise, but at a community level it has actually brought lots of people together who would never have worked together before but are now working together in a voluntary capacity for the mutual benefits of their children, and the knock on effects of that have been fantastic. For example, they organise fund raising events where you can have carnival days and where the whole community comes along and enjoys themselves whilst paying money for things which the club then reaps the benefit of and reinvests the money. So out of what started as a small football team, grew to a big football club has become a real focus of community effort and community development. So they can have tremendous spin offs in lots of ways that you don't originally plan for.

The notion of a spin off suggests that the particular stakeholder above does not necessarily expect VSCs to deliver on wider social policy driven agendas of national and local government. However, the interview data suggests not only that across the broad range of stakeholders there is variance on this issue, but that there was also disagreement between and among individuals employed by particular stakeholders. Some senior CSP officers tended to adopt an approach that implied a certain level of deference to VSCs, which subsequently reflected both a lack of expectation on the part of VSCs in terms of 'delivery', and the tendency for the majority of CSP officers to be actively engaged in sports volunteering themselves. In this respect Lisa was quite forthright

> Why should government expect voluntary people to be delivering their policies really? It's a voluntary sports club; you can't have an expectation that they would deliver that...

Whilst for others the crucial factor appeared to be whether a VSC has taken or applied for funding. In this respect the receiving of funding can be construed of as a symbolic act that predisposes a VSC to be accepting of 'delivery' objectives. In some instances the apparent distribution of funding and level of expectation were even linked to the level of informality in the process experienced by some senior CSP officers, as the following comments illustrate

> ...it's more a pot [of money] arrives and you have to decide how you are going to use it. I think that would happen more maybe, not so much in terms of how the club might benefit, but in terms of how the club might be able to help us. I suppose it's "god we need a volunteer for something and they've [a particular club] been brilliant at giving us junior volunteers to do something, let's phone that club (Glynis).

Furthermore Ruth spoke in similar vein using terms such as 'what we want' and about being 'upfront about what we would expect' and in terms of aims and objectives meeting 'our targets, whatever we are trying to get out of that project. In other words once a VSC has signalled that they will apply and are prepared to receive external funding then they are perceived to be aware of and accepting of a situation that with funding there are likely to be conditions that need to be met. An observation reaffirmed by the comments of Liam

> I think there's an expectation for someone that you have had an intervention with, if you are talking about that club that you have had no contact or intervention with then no I wouldn't expect them necessarily to be cutting across agendas.

It is in the context of external funding that the issue of partnership working can become a bone of contention between the stakeholders and VSCs, not least because of the apparent shift in the locus of decision making that can occur within the boundaries of these relationships. In the main there was a consensus among the stakeholders that it was the clubs who made the key decisions, the key decisions being those that affected or were likely to impact on the aims and objectives of the club itself. However, it was notable that the perceived allocation of the locus of power in the decision making process began to shift depending on particular stakeholders' strategic positions. For those dealing on a more day to day basis with VSCs the process was definitely 'led by the clubs', whilst those a little way removed from direct access to VSCs tended to argue more for a shared

decision making process or one within which VSCs were cajoled into making the 'correct' decision. In this context the comments of John (President of Cultershire RFU) are indicative of the nature of the power that exists in many relationships and once again questions some of the bland assumptions made concerning social capital as a morally virtuous force '...from within the county's partnership with its clubs we would endeavour to present the case to the clubs to get the decision we wanted'.

Furthermore stakeholder decision making is mostly made by those who have had or who are keenly involved in sport facilitating a social capital that is limited by cultural as well as social boundaries. In this respect John commented further that '...only rarely would we...not get that because all of us involved at the County level have all been involved in the clubs anyway'. Whilst some stakeholders indicated that decision making was potentially a proxy for the balance of power in 'partnerships', it was also evident that unanimity of agreement existed in relation to the nature of partnerships with volunteers, specifically that decision making had to be 'mutually agreed'. For Penny it was the nature of the partnership

> ...you wouldn't have one key decision maker in that sense because its got to be by negotiation because at the end of the day you know your working with volunteers, you can't direct.

This potential for the mutual aid aspect of VSCs to not only complicate partnership working is significant in that it alerts the reader to the potentially problematic nature of incorporating civic society organisations that are culturally predisposed to their internal mutuality and particularly when considered in the context of social capital.

Stakeholder perceptions of the volunteering effort within VSCs

A key point identified already in this case study is the extent to which stakeholders tend to view VSCs as embedded units within specific geographic communities. Complicit to this notion of embeddedness are interpretations and assumptions made concerning the nature, value and importance of the actual volunteering that not only goes on within VSCs, but also enables those clubs to exist as they do in the first place. Furthermore, in seeking to trace perceptions of the policy hierarchy or cascade to the micro level,

individuals who volunteer are not only the epitome of the active citizen (Coalter, 2007b), but are also active in creating social capital and perceived to be at the forefront of 'the development of their communities' (Sport England, 1999).

Arguably at the forefront of a social policy aimed at creating or reinvigorating the whole notion of an active citizenry, volunteers and particularly volunteering in VSCs was unsurprisingly viewed as an overwhelmingly positive activity. Comments such as 'putting something back', 'makes you feel good', 'a feel good factor' and 'satisfaction' were numerous and plentiful. Although these comments reflect on the commonality of an altruism that is widely perceived to be inherent to much volunteering, it would appear that in relation to VSCs a number of assumptions are made by some stakeholders concerning motivation and potential outcomes. Not least in this respect is the apparent blurring of the distinction, in terms of outputs, between volunteering per se and volunteering within a VSC. For Cedric (County Councillor) it was an either/or issue

> It is usually people who want to put something back into the community...the people who run the clubs and organise things either want to help that particular sport or help that community.

Indeed the implication here is one of overarching community development. Whether that is in terms of contributing to a VSC in a voluntary capacity or volunteering directly within the wider community, the thrust is that the community will benefit in some way or other. This perceived duality was another commonality that tended to cut across the different stakeholders involved and perhaps suggests that approaches to volunteering in VSCs are concerned with on the one hand the potential direct output of that voluntary activity whilst on the other hand the more indirect sporting impacts on particular communities.

In considering the nature of the duality mentioned above it is possible that rather than one's organisational position or the organisational structure dictating one's perspective held of volunteering as an aspect of club or community development. That it is the relative proximity to measurable outcomes, in the form of public service agreements, local area agreements and other mandatory targets as well as the impact of the CPA that

is the key to interpreting particular stakeholder perceptions. In relation to community development voluntary activity can be seen as broad-reaching, socially inclusive and hence utilises social capital in the Putnamian sense as a public good. The networks one gains access to subsequently provide opportunities for individuals and clubs to both become part of the community and to facilitate community development from a bottom up direction. In contrast club development outcomes suggest that voluntary activity can be seen to generate a form of social capital commensurate with the rational approach of Coleman. In this sense a utilitarian interpretation of privatised social capital facilitates an individualised interpretation of volunteering as both narrow and focused on the club only, producing a 'club good'.

There was also an assumption in many of the stakeholders' views that communities are easily distinguishable, being essentially viewed as geographic entities which allows for the sharing of some notion of community spirit. For many of the stakeholders the connection between community and VSCs produced some rather nebulous comments. For Jenny (Cultershire Connexions Manager) the contribution of VSCs was '...a community thing...people of all ages in that community hopefully sharing a common passion, a common activity isn't it?'. The implication is that a community enjoys a certain homogeneity and will coalesce to produce a positive outcome within the presence of a VSC, indeed as Rob indicated 'I would argue that a community that has a sports club is likely to be more cohesive than one which doesn't'. Implicit to this train of thought is an assumption that the benefit of social capital resources is both public and equitable, but quite how a community absorbs notions of trustworthiness or reciprocity was not clearly articulated by any one stakeholder during the course of the research. In part this can be attributed to the concept of community as both contested and contestable within the many definitions and rationales that abound concerning what actually constitutes a community (see chap 4, 77). Moreover, many of the assumptions held by the broad range of stakeholders can be attributed to perceptions held of VSCs as open and accessible social entities with community taken to mean those who voluntarily became involved in the activities of a particular VSC. For instance Glynis, commenting on the potential for a VSC to become a 'community outlet', remarked in relation to netball that

> Many clubs who've started from nothing...they've done great things and it's a real community club, which parents are involved in the volunteering...it has become kind of a hub where parents and young people and the coaches all [come together], well it's a new...community organisation.

In this example whilst a distinction is drawn between community and community organisation, the implication is that the VSC as a community organisation not only serves that particular community but also helps to provide what Cliff referred to as a shared 'community cultural space'. Whereas a flipside to this particular debate would tend to suggest that the organisation, in this case a VSC only effectively serves those individuals who are predisposed to participate in that particular activity within a club setting. To be sure whilst many stakeholders were very positive about the potential for VSCs to be inclusive, open and 'reach out' within the broader context of community development, a number did also temper their comments with a recognition that VSCs can maintain a veneer of exclusivity that is both constrictive and restrictive. In this respect Eric was able to reflect on the membership of a golf club 'While it may be exclusive, you then find the individual members are the doing things out in the community'. Clearly here the focus is on the output of individuals from a club within a community rather than on the ability of a club to empower and involve local citizens and be a community space for those citizens. In relation to social capital it is possible to argue that the necessary resources for its creation in first place are kept within the golf club. In this respect the local community is not necessarily able to mobilise those resources other than in a rather ineffectual horizontal manner, for the apparent exclusivity reinforces power differentials resulting in action that is perhaps more akin to charity than community development.

This issue of perceived exclusivity, whilst only acknowledged by a small proportion of respondents, is important given a consensus among the stakeholders that VSCs tended to generate volunteers internally. In this respect Fraser (Manager of LA1's Volunteering Centre) commented that '...if they are looking to recruit volunteers they tend to recruit either from the parents of the people who come or from the friends they know'. In the case of VSCs there was also an expectation that many volunteers (non-playing roles) would also have been former players. This scenario, which although considered laudable

by the majority of interviewees for its potential in ensuring sustainability, was occasionally noted for its potential to '...become very insular and the volunteers they recruit can be from very similar social groupings' (Fraser). For Glynis this manifested itself culturally and attitudinally

> just the experience of being in different club settings or observing different clubs with different – the whole norms and values stuff...each sport and then each club within that sport has it's own norms and values and its sub-culture.

On the whole the potential exclusivity of VSCs was perceived to be superseded by the overwhelming contribution that a VSC can make to community. In short adoption of the Putnamian approach to social capital has imbued social policy to such an extent that the apparent shortcomings in relation to the potential for VSCs to generate social capital are overlooked in favour of perceived and anticipated broader brush welfaristic outcomes. For David the outcomes were clear

> Well I just think they are the life blood of a local area. I would say that because I have been involved in sport all my life but if you are looking for a sense of belonging in a community then joining a club and being part of a competitive environment, but equally a part of...that community – then I think there is also this business about, it's a kind of social entrepreneur, you are building up expertise, people will come into a club and suddenly say well actually I can't be competitive any longer but I certainly can be an administrator, I can be treasurer of the club, I can be secretary, I could be a coach, I could look after the youngsters, I can look after the junior club so its this business about self sustaining.

Interestingly many of the benefits that stakeholders perceive of as accruing from the volunteering that takes place in VSCs are linked to private goods rather than public goods, particularly in the form of skills, knowledge and practical experience (as suggested by the above quotation). This is perhaps indicative of a more instrumental approach to volunteering and is suggestive of Putnam's (2004) view that social capital is becoming increasingly privatised. For Mike (LA1 PDM) it was about 'communication skills, working with others, its an avenue' whilst for Penny the comment that 'we are doing far more to recognise volunteers than we did before' was prefigured by an

observation that suggested that not all stakeholder concerns for volunteers are as sincere as those of the CSP

> ...certainly politicians are very keen to look at recognising the volunteers. Recognising the volunteers being a kind of strap line that's been around for a couple of years, and I think its very much been taken, been tarnished by political members.

It is perhaps in the formalisation of volunteer support, the proliferation of policies and the overt politicisation involved in promoting volunteering as a civic duty that the comments of the CSP director can best be understood.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that there is a clear emphasis on the rhetorical function of modernisation among stakeholders and that they expect aspects of this modernisation to at least filter through to the VSCs across the county. Many of the stakeholders apparently interpret VSC modernisation as club accreditation and although there is no widespread expectation that VSCs will undergo the accreditation process, it is seen as a desirable status to have. Indeed the common view suggests that those VSCs that are perceived to be accepting the drive towards modernisation are the ones embracing change and accepting that that change may mean that they have to accept top down aspects of managerialism. In this respect the voluntary acceptance of forms of compulsion is therefore an issue of governance, and may influence how a club goes about its business, however it is also likely to mean that a club will do well.

A key aspect of stakeholders concerns for the role of VSCs tended to reside in the importance largely attributed to partnership working, largely because evidently partnerships are not just a central tenet of the whole modernisation process itself, but something that many organisations are measured against. Certainly the evidence from stakeholders' suggests that club accreditation in establishing partnership working and reflective practices at the club performance level, tends to shift the onus towards the VSC itself. The critical issue in this respect is the struggle between compulsion and individual liberty, which was signalled to a certain extent by some evident disagreement between

certain stakeholders. In particular stakeholders representing sports organisations tended to differ with elected politicians concerning the extent to which VSCs could be expected to be delivery agents of broader policy outcomes. Notwithstanding the broad agreement concerning the importance of partnerships and the potential for new modes of governance, this divergence was also significant in indicating that stakeholders, from a non-sport background, were generally not full cognisant of the importance attached to the mutual aid infrastructure of many VSCs.

The evidence from stakeholders presented above also tends to suggest that a policy cascade is evident in the culture of targets that have come to be institutionalised within club accreditation. In particular the dominant sports policy context of increasing participation has not only filtered through to the club level, but also drives the subliminal social capital framework that exists at a much deeper paradigmatic level (Houlihan and White, 2002). In this respect most sport organisation stakeholders tended to view accreditation as the transfer of strategy to structure with the emphasis laid upon partnerships and networks crucial for taking VSCs out of their own perceived insularity. For those stakeholders charged with making or activating policy quality of life was considered a useful concept in meeting a range of outcomes that were clearly linked to the desire to develop stronger communities. An inference of these expressed desires surely indicates that Putnamian notions of social capital that have been shown to be influential in discourses concerning macro level social policy, have become a firmament of the local policy landscape. Indeed the evidence suggests that although a vague concept quality of life is useful as a politically usable resource, because of that very fact and that this allows policymakers to support VSCs almost unconditionally. On this note many of the stakeholders questioned were able to argue that the mere presence of VSC in an area is indicative of the civic strength of that area implying that not only are VSCs are doubly virtuous, but that their soft wiring into the architecture of delivery is crucial. The comment made by a member of the Regional Sports Board that VSCs 'are the life blood of a local area', not only evidences the apparent political value of VSCs but also places the Putnamian thesis at the forefront of countywide interpretations of social capital.

The evidence form the case study indicates that political context matters and that the use of the POS concept facilitated a more detailed and contextualised approach to interpreting many of the perceptions of stakeholders. To be sure the issues of partnership, networking and liaising are not only fundamental to modernising processes (including club accreditation), but implicitly bring VSCs closer to agents of the state. Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the organisational structure to deliver countywide commitments to social capital is through the establishment of CSNs. For many stakeholders these were seen as bringing VSCs closer to the decision making process and subsequently facilitating the potential of VSCs to have and exercise a voice, whilst this has implications for notions of bottom up social capital it also signals potential changes to VSC governance arrangements. The emergence of the governance debate was also significant for stakeholders in that it once again put partnerships centre stage in a county where support for VSCs was perceived to be readily available and reinforced for stakeholders the apparent importance of VSCs to broader social policy agendas. Interestingly the web of support for VSCs across the county was viewed as having a multiplicity of access nodes which individuals from specific VSCs could access. For stakeholders in this respect the apparent inference was of an expectation that individuals from VSCs would access appropriate social capital resources, and necessarily be able to mobilise these points of access when necessary.

It was also noteworthy that stakeholders identified the political stability of the county as a factor in developing such an inclusive approach to partnerships and that Cultershire's own Compact with the voluntary sector has given the political impetus to work with such organisations greater purchase. Moreover the evidence indicates that at the county council level there is a willingness to guide or steer local authorities towards maximising VSC contributions towards communities. This is perhaps indicative of the ability to exercise forms of power and although there wasn't a consensus on this issue it was interesting to note that those stakeholders closer to the clubs tended to attribute the power to make decisions to the clubs themselves. For those stakeholders who were further removed from the organisation and operation of VSCs power tended to be perceived of more as a shared entity.

Importantly for stakeholders, communities were viewed of as geographic entities only and in this respect VSCs were often considered in that context and were hence viewed as 'belonging' to a particular community. This not only reflects on issues of embeddedness and a 'sense of place', but also suggests that VSCs have a responsibility themselves to be proactive in their communities. It was on this point that some stakeholders acknowledged the possibility that VSCs may be exclusive as well as inclusive, and that for some clubs being active within a community is not the same as community involvement.

Chapter 7.

Local authority one case study (LA1)

Introduction

Local authority 1 is one of eleven district councils in Cultershire and administers an area of some 250 square miles that is primarily rural with a noticeable contrast between the county town and the remainder of the District. Over half of the District lies within a designated area of outstanding natural beauty with the county town designated as a heritage city, attracting some four million visitors each year. The District has a population of some 110,000 people of whom approximately 35,000 reside in the county town with the result that the overall population density for the District is the lowest across the county. There are 26 electoral wards across the District which are all rated better than the national average.

Table 10. LA1 District key facts and figures

Population	107 000 (2001 Census)
Size	250 square miles
Unemployment rate	0.8%
Proportion of population economically inactive	30% - slightly higher than countywide norm, but below national average (census 2001)
Working from home	12% (County average 9.1%)[1]
Education	30% qualified to degree level or above (national norm of some 19%)

The District has a small manufacturing base (LSC Socio-economic profile for Mid and North Cultershire, 2003) with business tending to be dominated by the service sector and especially public services. The telecom, ICT and creative sectors are important aspects of the District's economy and have helped to boost the economy of the county town in particular (Cultershire economic profile, 2003). Unemployment across the District is low at approximately 1.3 per cent, and has led to some labour shortages in some service employment sectors which have been corrected by recent immigration into the region from Eastern Europe.

Ethnically the population is predominately 'white British' with only 2.1 per cent of the population identifying themselves as 'other', a figure that is well below the national average for both England (13 percent) and the South East (8.7 percent) respectively (Census, 2001). Within the District the population has grown at nearly twice the regional average, and there is a bias towards older age groups which is offset within the county town by a sizeable student population (5.2% Census, 2001). Deprivation levels are generally low, with all wards being above average and half the wards in the top ten percent least deprived, furthermore at least 30% of the population are educated to degree level or above which is perhaps reflective of stability and an older aged population (see table 10 above), but also suggests that residents are likely to have high expectations of services and is an indicator of the relative affluence of the District. On this last point the table below highlights the District's relative affluence with the majority of households having an annual income in excess of £30,000. Additionally housing data suggests that most houses within the District are of the larger type with detached residences representing the greatest volume of sales.

Table 11. LA1 Housing stock and market

Number of homes	43 000
Council owned homes	5000 (12.5%)
Owner-occupiers	51% outright owners 13% paying less than £350/month 14% paying more than £750/month
Household income	14% have incomes less than £10 000/annum (average for UK is 28%) 51% have incomes more than £30 000/annum
Proportion of (semi) detached & bungalows	72.8% (national average 54.1%)
Cheapest location in district	£23500 income needed to buy 1 bed flat £35500 income for 2 bed terraced house
All other areas	£33500 income needed to buy 1 bed flat £43000 income for 2 bed terraced house
Largest volume of house sales	Detached houses (35.7%) at average price of £370555

Source: Housing Needs Survey 2002, NOMIS, Annual population survey, [Cultershire] Economic Partnership – Informing Our Future 2003 http://neighbourhoodstatistics.gov.uk

Overall the District has a fairly affluent population, suffers low crime and low unemployment and enjoys a high level of cultural capital as indicated by the high number having at least a university degree. Given this scenario it is little wonder that the local

Council has stated that 'Overall the District offers a very good quality of life' (albeit that there are specific areas that do experience deprivation).

The District council is made up of a total of fifty seven councillors representing some twenty six wards and is dominated by the Conservative Party which has twenty nine seats. The Liberal Democrats make up the next largest group on the council with twenty three seats, whilst Labour has one seat and there are also four independent councillors. The Conservatives retained control of the council in 2007 after becoming the dominant party in the 2006 District elections when they took overall control from the Liberal Democrats who had won previously in 2002. In terms of administrative responsibility the District Council has a Chief Executive's Department and six Directorates – Development Services, Health and Housing, Finance, Personnel, Community Services, and the City Secretary and Solicitor's department. The Directorates have become more important in light of central Government modernisation, which in streamlining decision making processes, has meant that the Cabinet has assumed more responsibility for making decisions in a number of areas that were traditionally made by the full Council. The general affluence of the area is again reinforced by a council that is both debt free and has high reserve levels (LA1 community strategy 2004, CPA, 2004).

Responsibility for sport is located within the Leisure and Culture department of the local authority with the Community Sport Network (CSN), established in July 2006, as the lead body for sport within with the District. The CSN has produced a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, which has set out a vision for the future of the District until 2012, and is also responsible for producing a yearly action plan related to that strategy. The chair of the CSN sits on the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and therefore the CSN gets the equivalent representational status as some other groups such as the Community Safety Partnership in respect of the LSP. The role of the CSN in this particular Local authority is that of a deliverer as well as a strategic lead for sport across the District. It is notable in this respect that the role of CSNs may vary depending upon the specific circumstance of particular CSNs. For LA1 the development of the CSN coincided with the development of the District sports strategy, which enabled a draft strategy to be taken to the CSN for

ratification thus allowing the CSN to have immediate authority as the producing body for the District Sport and Recreation Strategy. There are two School Sport Partnerships that the local authority tends to work with, one of which is represented on the District CSN. It noteworthy that one of the Partnerships is based in a Specialist Sports College Outside of the District but does include two secondary schools within the district as part of the second phase of this particular Partnership.

The Council has indicated that access to sports facilities is a priority and they would like to move from a situation where a minority of citizens are within a twenty minute travel time of a sports facility to one by 2012 where the majority can have this twenty minute access. As part of this strategy there has been some investment through a partnership with a local Higher Education Institution which has developed both an athletics track and an all weather hockey pitch. There is, however, no indication in the corporate strategy of any resources or detailed plans to stimulate access via public transport other than continued support for existing transport schemes for particular target group. This facility led, Best Value approach is indicative of the focus on performance indicators, and consequently allows the council to claim that 94.72 percent of residents think that over the past three years (for their local area) that sports and leisure facilities have got better or stayed the same (ODPM, Best Value General Survey).

Strategic issues

The Cultershire County level case study in highlighting the extent to which a strategic orientation to social capital has become the dominant structural and policy context for considering the output of VSCs, has also indicated that ideologically and financially VSCs can be viewed as a policy tool within the broader social policy arena. This chapter examines the views and opinions of VSC members within one local authority in relation to this structural and policy context, which necessarily is both at the micro level of analysis and informs on differing interpretations of social capital theory given this broader framework. It is in this respect that the inferential nature of the data is acknowledged both as a consequence of the framework for analysis and as an underpinning concern for any analysis of social capital itself.

This chapter outlines three areas of analytic concern in following the structure set by the previous case study. First, modernisation, accreditation and attendant notions of partnership working are considered within the broader context of perceived strategic orientations to social capital outcomes. Second, partnerships and networks with various sports agencies, VSC autonomy and the nature of club processes are examined within the framework of having an organisational structure for delivery. Finally, the chapter examines the views of club members in assessing the perceived community role and value of their particular VSC, which examines the context of stakeholder expectations within the broader notion of quality of life.

In the proceeding discussion all interviewees are referred to by a pseudonym. A list of pseudonyms and role in a particular VSC can be found in appendix IV on page 435.

Modernisation processes

The county level case study identified modernisation as both the key process and outcome necessary for 'enlightened clubs' to emerge and be recognised by higher level authorities. The tendency for the VSC members in LA1, who identified a form of modernisation was to view it not as an intended outcome impacting on their particular club and generating a particular product, but rather as a process that was influencing some of what they do, as well as the practices occurring within the club to facilitate its functioning. In this respect modernisation as perceived by VSC members in LA1 can be said to be multi-dimensional involving a double process of influencing first, the apparently superficial but vitally important actual operational procedures of a VSC and second, the process being concerned with change or evolution of what Houlihan and White (2002) have referred to as the 'dominant core policy paradigm' (see in chapter 2 and 3).

This latter process is arguably more consequential for both VSCs and wider society given that it addresses issues relating to the 'service-specific' nature of VSC rationalisation and development. It is in this context that debates and discourses concerning the impact of

modernisation come to the fore. Not least in this respect is the apparent search for transparency and evidence and more specifically the search for partnerships and networks that are according to Atkinson a 'holy grail' (Atkinson, 2000) for New Labour, and are part and parcel of the new dominant core policy paradigm surrounding sports development in the UK. Furthermore in accepting Finlayson's (2003) assertion that as a strategy of governance, modernisation 'diagnoses problems and establishes solutions in the management of public services' (p, 67-8), the pursuance of a mixed economy of welfare becomes indicative of the move from government to governance (Rhodes, 2000). It is in this context that the relationship between VSCs and their potential as social capital generators must be understood, in part because modernisation has not only been instrumental in establishing a coherent delivery framework (Sport England, 2007) but has also ensured that formalisation and professionalisation have become fundamentally interwoven into the fabric of contemporary sports development (Houlihan & White, 2002). It is also in this context that local authorities have been obliged to address, in the production and implementation of a raft of strategies, this reality thereby ensuring that delivery frameworks reflect this modernisation as governance approach. For those in VSCs the emphasis accorded them in terms of social capital creation is thus wrapped up in a range of wider policy considerations, not least of which is increasing participation, however more pertinently are the potential changes in VSC governance that perhaps signify the extent of VSC acceptance of the 'new reality'(Levitas, 1998).

For club A this 'reality' is detectable in their employment of Harry (Chief Executive), who being a member of the club from boyhood has played and volunteered and now gets paid to do his 'hobby'

> I am in a full time paid position as Sponsorship, Marketing and Fundraising Manager but my roles within the club, as I am the only full time employee, do go right across the range from community development work, coaching, to chief cook and bottle washer.

Indeed this club was the only VSC involved in the whole study to have gone down the route of paying an individual who has had a long association with a particular VSC, referred to by Cuskelly as a 'stalwart' (2004) to take on a more managerial and business

orientated role within and for the club. This commercial professionalism is in sharp contrast to an emphasis on volunteering as the modus operandi for individual involvement within the club, which organisationally means that 'every coach within the club is a volunteer. There is no professional coach within the club whatsoever' (Harry). It is also in contrast to club B where Angus'(Chairman) reservations concerning volunteers must be seen in light of an opportunity structure that is itself predicated on modernisation:

> There is a difference between volunteering where someone says "can you help out" and volunteering where you are having to do all the work and make all of the decisions. It does concern me that we have an awful lot of volunteers doing an awful lot of management activity on the back of this sport for all, government funding yada yada yada and not seeing much coming out if it.

It is worth separating the two issues here. First managing a VSC as indicated by the comments above, is becoming more complex and increasingly business focused as the necessity for partnership working, as indicated by the county case study, is becoming more commonplace. Second there is the issue of what the VSCs produce, which as mutual aid organisations is the particular sports activity that is the purpose of the club, which for all the VSCs in LA1 amounted to increasing participation in rugby or competitive swimming. It was on this point that some differences between the ethos of the two clubs emerged, particularly as Euan (Chairman of club A) and Harry both identified that the club's purpose was broader inasmuch to 'get as many people playing sport' and moreover to become 'a centre of excellence for sport'. Importantly the club can be viewed as a social construct in that its tangibility ensures that the club exists outside of its members and as such is considered 'accessible' allowing the club to '...open our doors to anybody who wants to come in the door' (Harry). Whereas for Club B there existed an apparently more individualistic ethos, which according to Max (Assistant Head Coach) was concerned with getting 'swimmers to compete to the highest level possible', amounting to what one senior swimmer identified as a '*definite* focus on competitive swimming'. Indeed this apparent culture of individualism would appear to be embedded within the ASA itself, and appears more concerned with producing individual success than with developing the sport's club structure and ethos. It is in this context that

the comments of Rodney (Regional Swimming Development Manager) appear both prophetic and prosaic.

> ...they [swimming clubs] need to recognise that they do the bit that they can do really well and then pass the child on to a different club to progress and they should be athlete centred as opposed to club centred...

This apparent lack of concern for the broader role of the 'club' as a social construct, suggests both that the notion of a delivery system has become entrenched within governing body thinking and that service to the individual has become the raison d'être of club life. Furthermore these comments from the RDM were given further resonance and perspective by Angus who argued that the failure of the club to find or be offered a permanent home was a key factor in the expression of their particular club culture when he stated that

> We don't have a home base, anywhere where people can meet up, football clubs will have a place people can meet even if they are not training, they can just meet up. We don't have anything like that infrastructure so it's very much a virtual network and people are meeting up at training sessions.

Returning to the first issue of complexity and formalisation within the running of VSCs, Derek (Club B Head Coach) was careful to explain that he found the idea of professionalism important both as a signifier of the necessary attitudes and particular skills to fulfil a particular role, as well as something that could and should not be left to volunteers. For Derek this issue was also about gaining control of both what was done and ensuring that a certain level of commitment was exhibited in terms of delivery. Indeed the notion of control and the extent to which volunteer involvement could reduce or impair the ability of Derek to direct and exert power over those very same volunteers was alluded to a number of times by both of the senior swimming coaches. Derek making the point that

> The volunteers when I came to the club were doing the teaching and coaching, it was very unprofessional...once they were paid I could gain control and say this is how its going to be done... payment has allowed... [me] to know that there was going to be someone there when I needed them

A key point here is not the interpretation of volunteers as unreliable, a point which says as much about a performance and outcome orientated coach as it does in regards the actual individual commitment of sports volunteers, which is generally accepted to be quite high (Stebbins, 1997, Nichols, 2003). Rather it is the pervading climate within which VSCs operate, determined by and large by modernisation processes, which has ensured that the dominant approach to VSC structure, organisation and management is one of professionalism. Within the particular culture or ideology of the swimming club this has meant that the apparent payment of coaches was viewed positively as a means of enhancing this notion of professionalism. As the comments above indicate, for Derek, the imposition of a pay structure has ensured accountability, measurability and transparency for both him and the wider club. For Ryan (a swimmer) this form of professionalism was welcomed as 'better for individual performance', whilst volunteers were viewed as important in 'assisting' the running of the club and that paying coaches was vital for 'improving the club'. When considered in relation to the twin aspects of club process and club product it is possible to view the issues of accountability, measurability and transparency as part of the reflective condition under which modernisation thrives. Furthermore reflection of this sort has facilitated a synergy between modernisation processes and VSC club culture to the extent that professionalism has become synchronised with the established norms and pervading values of the particular sport concerned.

The upshot is that in marked contrast to Club B, members of Club A rejected payment as a professionalising construct, focussing instead on the mutual aid enthusiasm of its volunteers as its professionalising structure. This was epitomised by Euan in his comment that 'the voluntary ethos is [that] you are doing it for the good of the game'. The point here in reiterating the social nature of the rugby club, again tends to focus attention onto 'the game' or 'the club' as the dominant aspects for the establishment of a more collective approach to the structure and organisation and indeed professionalisation of the sport. Indeed the RFU in its strategic plan has indicated that the game should encourage participation from all sections of society '...in a safe modern environment and use the

game's ethos and culture together with its social and health benefits to market the game' (RFU, 2007).

This aspect of modernisation does have serious implications for the way VSCs can be viewed in relation to social capital theory, particularly when considered in light of the individualistic ethos that would seem to be at the heart of the sport of swimming and the apparent club structure. Reminiscent of some of the conclusions of Stolle and Rochon (1998) that not all voluntary associations are alike and that social capital created therein is different for the individuals concerned depending on the nature of the particular voluntary organisation involved (see chapter 2, p 22). It is possible to suggest that a) that the social capital produced by the professionalism going on in the rugby club is likely to produce a different social capital than that produced in the swimming club. Whilst this assertion may be unremarkable, what is concerning is the apparent inability of the policy cascade running from national to local level, to differentiate and distinguish between these possible outcomes. For example the LA1 *Sport and Physical Activity Strategy* consistently refers to sport in a generic fashion and asserts that sport

> Plays a part in addressing more general inequalities and provides opportunities for social interaction, helping to build community networks and reduce isolation (LA1, p.2)

There is an obvious succession to the LA Community Strategy where sport and physical activity are identified as a medium to 'promote community cohesion and sustainability' (LA1 Community Strategy, p.39). Moreover at the national level *Game Plan* (2002) has referred to the use of sport in the community 'to build social capital' (p.60). Given this policy hierarchy it is possible to suggest that local authorities should be in a position to tailor policies to the needs of the particular sports organisations in their area. However the following comments from Angus suggest that the local authority is doing little to help the club broaden its appeal to the wider community, little in terms of improving and enhancing community capacity for social capital and little in terms of meeting the objective set out above

> The local leisure centre was refurbished a year or so back and they were spending £1.25m...and I raised the issue then [with the local council] that the pool wasn't fit for our training...and it's a crying shame that we've got these people out there representing the town and the best analogy I can give you is that we've got a football pitch with one goal, so we can train at it but we cant compete. There's not the focus, the council doesn't have the focus and there's no drive or incentive to fix it.

Accreditation and partnership working

At the county level it is apparent that Penny (CSP Director) sees club accreditation as the single most important aspect of the work they do, and that most of the stakeholders interviewed identified the process as 'vital'. As might be expected those at player level within VSCs had little knowledge of accreditation and saw it making little difference to them, as Ryan suggested 'I don't see much effect really and I haven't seen any change within the club because of it'. Even at the more senior levels, individuals within VSCs seem ambivalent towards both the value of accreditation as well as the process associated with it. For Harry the value of accreditation lay in its potential to confer some objective evaluation to the activities of the club activity, although he tempered this thought by suggesting that for some clubs the need to 'prove' what they do may not be as great as for others.

> I suppose if truth be known, if you want to see yourselves as a quality club then you must be able to prove it. So if Seal of Approval proves it then it's very important. If you are quite happy to work within your own mind and not be bothered by what people think of you its not so important, because you can still be doing a bloody good job, but you're just not bothered whether people measure it or not.

These comments from Club A's Chief Executive suggest that not all clubs, even those with accredited status such Club A, recognise the implicit value of club accreditation. In particular they appear wary of the potential imposition to the apparent delicate balance between the dominant mutual aid club ethos of VSCs, the NGB desire to facilitate club development and the impact it can have on the volunteers who run those clubs. To be sure in relation to the accreditation process the time cost was identified as a major factor as well as the onus placed upon volunteers to do that work, which coupled with the apparent top down nature of the process itself caused most respondents to question its

value. Angus argued that whilst the club was 'aware' of Swim 21 (the ASA accreditation programme) and it being 'driven by the ASA' there was an apparent tension between the costs and benefits to volunteers in helping the club get accredited status

> I can see the benefits behind it which is basically saying that as a club you have a structure and the processes in place...and the reward they put on the back of it is that you can get some, financial benefit is probably the wrong word. You can get some reduced cost for using certain facilities, which helps a little bit. But again its an awful lot of effort to get that accreditation set up and managed and that's being done by volunteers and it takes people time and effort and they are not being rewarded for doing it outside of the satisfaction of their children doing the swimming.

Furthermore both senior coaches at club B were not convinced that achieving accreditation would do anything in terms of actually improving the quality available to swimmers and coaches. Max argued for example that it's like a lot of these things...its tick the boxes. Does it really enhance the quality of coaching? "No I don't think so". Does it make the club better? "No I don't think so". Similarly Derek commented that

> I think Swim 21 is doing a service but ...I can't see a tangible benefit to the kids in the water at the moment. I know its doing great administrative work, its tying all the things in...but I'm yet to see how it will affect my 9-15 yr olds. If it was taken away tomorrow there would be no detriment to the club.

It was interesting to note that the notion of evidence based policy had become part of the apparent administrative furniture of VSCs, that potential financial incentives associated with accreditation were perceived and that it was largely seen as having important administrative value. However a key point is surely that the accreditation process itself was generally viewed as a burden with Angus identifying that the club was '...fortunate that one of our parents is a member of the CSP and is now putting some of their effort into getting us on to the accreditation scheme'. Whilst on one level this again reinforces the perception that more is being asked of those who run VSCs, it also points to a rational strain interpretation of social capital. In particular this form of closure and mobilisation of social capital resources, which although expeditious in the running of the club, can serve to erect and maintain barriers by reinforcing the club's normative internal processes. Furthermore whilst all of the individuals questioned, acknowledged the value of

volunteers to the running of the club, there was also unanimity that the focus of those volunteers had to be on running the club for the benefit of the members, rather than the governing body. This position was succinctly explained by Euan in stating that 'By being a voluntary organisation it means you concentrate on the main reason for being here, you don't get distracted by the bigger issues'.

Whilst the consensus concerning the individual workload of VSC volunteers was apparent, it was also noticeable that among VSC members the dominant view was that members themselves expected their particular clubs to be more proactive in ensuring the effective management and running of through effective partnership working. This consensus also extended to the prospects that the structural arrangements for those partnerships would embed modernised aspects of governance within VSCs themselves. Subsequently the outward facing aspect of VSCs has thus become a key part of the reality or opportunity structure in which most VSCs operate and which was summed up by the comments of a senior coach that 'You have to go to these people [CSP] rather than them come to you' (Max).

It is possible that in terms of governance a preponderance of partnerships may facilitate the operations of VSCs and provide opportunities for the creation or extension of networks. What this approach may fail to do however is to identify which partnerships are beneficial to the wider community and how the mechanisms involved facilitate greater community involvement. In this respect the Steve (LA1 SDO) made the case that partnership building was a necessary precursor to 'capacity building' within VSCs, stating that

> ...it's clubs that have got themselves organised and maybe have specific junior committees, have a number of volunteers, whether they are coaches, parents or anything that actually work together and can sort of build up and move forward and take on board new ideas, new initiatives and new ways of thinking.

However the Steve's comments also tend to assume that the taking on of new ideas and new ways of thinking is directly related to the capacity to become organised effectively

within a VSC. This assumption belies a simple and apparently necessary philosophical change in VSC ethos in that the modernising undercurrent largely does not 'flow with the flow' (Coalter, 1999), but rather flows against the tide of mutuality that is at the heart of VSC participation. In this sense the volunteers of the VSCs surveyed, participate within those clubs because of a desire on their part rather than some external instrumentality to assert wider government policy agendas. This was summed up by the comments of the respective chairmen of the rugby and swimming clubs that 'We don't see our role as getting involved in wider social civic areas' (Angus), and more elaborately that

> I am in rugby now as a thank you for what its done for me and my family' and most of the junior coaches are equally motivated in that way in what its done for their children (Euan).

In many respects it became apparent that club A had taken on board this reality or opportunity structure, which for Harry meant that 'sometimes you have to go a little bit further away from the nucleus of people who know the game'. This evident outward focus was attributable to a number of factors related to the search for funding, which Euan referred to as needing to 'feed the beast'. The factors in this instance were concerned with establishing VSC capacity to engage in activities that were an adjunct to the main purpose of the club as well as ensuring a level of congruence in meeting VSC and NGB aims and objectives. Moreover, given that one of the RFU's objectives is for fifty percent of it's clubs to gain accreditation status 'so that local empowerment can take place' utilising a 'bottom up' approach (RFU, 2008), it is possible to surmise that the RFU anticipate that accreditation will free many clubs from national constraints whilst establishing national levels of standardisation in the administration of clubs. In terms of the strategic thrust of the RFU and the desire for more community orientated or outward facing activity from member clubs the following comments from Euan (Chairman of club A) again in relation to funding, suggest that although on the one hand as an accredited club they are sympathetic and in tune with NGB aims, on the other the onus of conditionality is potentially detrimental to the successful running of the club in relation to it's core business.

> ...there are funding streams but its like everything to apply for one of these funding streams you've got to do something for it and sometimes its very difficult. If we had someone who we could regularly put into schools on a weekly basis we could apply to the [RFU] community rugby fund. We don't have that person.

In this respect given that the club does not have the capacity to meet the wider strategic aims and hence loses out in terms of accessing potential funds, the RFU's notion of a bottom-up approach and local empowerment would not only appear to contradict the evidence, but also serves to remind the reader of Horch's (1998) concern for the 'self destroying processes' associated with meddling with the internal affairs of VSCs. Furthermore it is evident that the local policy hierarchy reflects the national (of which the RFU strategy is a part) in highlighting how VSCs as part of the architecture of modernised local authority services are becoming integrated into a service delivery framework. The emphasis in the District Sport and Physical Activity Strategy in relation to VSCs is that they '*will make*' a significant contribution to the 'vision' of the District Community Strategy. In addition the District Sport and Physical Activity Strategy identified VSCs as contributing by helping to provide a greater 'range of opportunities...to participate' as well as being a medium to facilitate 'community safety', promoting 'community cohesion and sustainability', promoting notions of well-being and encouraging 'involvement in the local community' (LA1, 2006, p.2).

When considering the potential for VSCs to generate social capital within this strategically positive opportunity structure there is some merit in separating notions of partnerships from networks. Particularly as the notion of partnership working is predominantly construed of at the organisational level whilst networks are often considered within the context of the individual. In this respect whilst the drive for partnership working has cemented Putnamian approaches to creating social capital within an overarching policy framework, establishing many of the core aspects of the social inclusion agenda within a policy hierarchy where VSCs have become earmarked as essential 'for the public good' (Szreter, 2002). Subsequently VSCs have become apparently keen to 'prove' or identify their partnerships with local communities as a

means of fulfilling some of the policy expectations identified previously. For example Harry was keen to point out that

> The local community definitely benefit from the aspect and the social angle, the way we run the club and use it in that manner...it's quite good, it's a venue that they can hold and host parties in, it's a playing field that they can walk their dogs in. Some of them use it for car parking during the summer and come and have a picnic on the grass so actually for the local community, it is used fairly frequently.

Interestingly the comments made by the Chief Executive do not speak of the club itself as a socially inclusive location, rather the physical venue is offered as a functional facility and consequently the expectation that a voluntary organisation with this form of partnership will produce a social capital proficient at meeting collective interest outside of the club itself.

In the main however the data suggested that networks were given greater value when they related to how the club itself would benefit from the successful realisation of those networks. In this instance partnership working that has allowed clubs to link formally as well as informally within Cultershire was most valued. Noteworthy in this respect is that this drive for local partnerships within particular sports is largely driven by NGBs and in many ways can be viewed as a form of bonding capital between and amongst like minded individuals. For swimming though it became apparent that partnerships were more informal than for rugby and detectable in the following comments of Derek (Head Coach) a degree of irritation with this particular governing body directive.

> As a club were linked in to **** North, we *try* to work together as a swim group and we *try* to share duties at competitions and link up to provider stronger teams – it's a thing that nationally *they* [ASA] want you to do.

In contrast the emphasis on personal networks and their value to the clubs was as might be expected within mutual aid organisations, given not only greater credence, but assigned more importance in terms of the running, organisation and structure of their particular clubs by all VSC members. In terms of accessing sponsorship and funding observations included 'Someone will know someone who will advertise here... [that's] how we go about our sponsorship' (Harry), 'I suppose a big club they have a big network

they can call on to get sponsorship from different places'(Chris – senior swimmer), 'We have to [use parents' networks] we're an amateur club, we're voluntary. That's the only resources we've got to exploit' (Angus).

More fundamentally some of the observations concerning the very existence of the clubs concerned, spoke volumes for the importance of a particular version of social capital and alerts the reader to the problematic nature of differentiating between bonding and bridging capital in empirical studies. The following anecdote from Harry is indicative of the 'inequitable distribution' (Foley and Edwards, 1999) of resources when considering social capital and the networks that promote its creation

> ...back in the early '90s we were down and out and didn't have a penny to spend. Along comes a millionaire and says "I'd like to take over the club and look after it for you"...and then in 1998 said, "No I've had enough of that now thank you. I want to retain being owner of the club so that you can lease it off me"...we have [now] secured the long term lease of the building and the ground, it is actually in his son's name, who is a member of the club, he's not but his son is now, because his son's a little bit older and it is in trust to him.

Furthermore this aspect of social capital creation reaffirms that the internal nature of communication within this club is more important in relation to the ability to mobilise resources, than the plethora of external partnerships that the club is apparently involved with. To this extent the following comments from Euan (Chairman) reveal the rather prosaic nature of social capital creation at the heart of the club ethos 'The best forms of communication in this club are standing at the bar on a Saturday and Sunday and talking to people'.

In similar fashion the swimming club also relied on internal networks to the extent that as Derek explained his appointment and membership of the club was essentially via an old boy's network 'I actually knew the old Head Coach, he was my coach and he asked me to come up'. More to the point in terms of securing their facility (in this case one out of the four pools that the swimming club uses) in similar fashion to club A the mobilisation of

social capital resources perhaps enabled the verticalisation of previously horizontal networks.

> The ATR [Army Training Regiment] pool, a new facility. That came about because somebody in the army joined the club and said "Why don't you use ATR"...this chap was a Major in the army... [he] put a good word in, he's since left the club (Max).

The evidence from the VSC members in this local authority suggest that by and large modernisation processes are contributing towards a perception of partnership and network development as instrumental processes in the Coleman or Bourdieun sense. In this sense the social capital apparent here does not appear to be indicative of the spread of a civic culture, rather it would seem to be more closely related to the strategic or conscious actions of individuals in relation to its development and use.

Structural issues

> The structures aren't there to support, but it's dangerous because you don't necessarily want big brother telling you how to do things and it could be that there is a pay off.

The above comments from Angus signal two important issues that are at once separate but in a climate of organisational 'interpenetration' are more likely to be related and sequential. The issues at stake are the perceived nature of the support and the structures that facilitate that support, and the notion of relative autonomy in the face of potential increases in forms and structures of support that may be available to a VSC.

In order to examine the salience of these issues and contexts as well as the prospective relationship to social capital in LA1 a more comprehensive approach to the use of the POS analytical framework for VSCs is used here. At the County level it was evident that the expectations stakeholders held of VSCs were not only tempered by a particular POS, but in distilling the separate elements of the POS social capital was able to receive a fuller exegesis relevant to its operationalisation within a structure geared towards delivering certain strategic outputs. From the previous section it should now be apparent that the social capital commitments implicit to much of Cultershire's strategic direction,

can also be detected in more local policy development. The District Community Plan for example places a clear emphasis on '...a broad partnership of organisations which is committed to working with all interested groups and individuals to achieve a good quality of life for the people of this district' (LA1, 2004). This policy framework necessarily has set the tone or the structural framework within LA1 for what is referred to as the contribution sport and physical activity can make to the 'Big Picture' (LA1, 2006).

Importantly it is worth being reminded that within one local authority the POS may be different for different clubs which is likely in the long run to impact on the value that upper tier authorities place on particular clubs (see chapter 6). In this respect the evidence from the two different clubs suggested that whilst the POS for the rugby club was largely positive, the swimming club was faced with a rather more uncertain or ambiguous POS. So for example whilst Angus complained that

> You get a bit cynical about the support you're supposed to get and we are just left to do it on our own and like most volunteers you don't get thanked for things going right, you do get blamed when things go wrong.

Harry was able to point out that 'We like to be associated as a sports club to local sports authorities. We do have a good working relationship with **** City Council's sports rep'. In part one might attribute this closer and more open working relationship to the relative popularity of the respective sports, given in particular that rugby union has seen some success at a national level since 2003 and that club A has seen success at the national level with its under thirteen team in 2005. Swimming has repeatedly been identified as Britain's most popular participation sport (Sport England, 2006, Carter Report, 2005) and club B has had some success nationally in producing a Commonwealth medallist in 2006. Whilst the relative popularity of a particular sport is obviously a factor, what appears to be of more relevance is ably alluded to by Max the Assistant Head Coach of Club B 'Swimming although a highly popular sport, the participation in the sport is tremendous, but really it's a low profile sport...'. Indeed the perception of a sport's profile is important not least because of the potential for a particular local authority to be able to incorporate the outputs of VSCs as part of a wider contribution to

the 'big picture', but also because the profile of a sport is a key contextual factor in forming networks and partnerships and hence contributing to the potential for social capital creation.

In considering the profile of a particular sport and its value in relation to wider social policy issues Steve indicated that '...predominately it is rugby and football that are very good at bringing, as being a diversionary tactic really, whereas some of the other sports aren't'. In terms of the contribution to the 'big picture' it is clear that this SDO expects more from a sport such as rugby than he does of other sports such as swimming. This apparent expectation may be as much to do with the established heritage or tradition of a sport in producing a particular ideology (Horton-Smith, 2000) or subculture (Bishop and Hogget, 1986) that is more amenable to the utilitarian aspects of public policy as voiced above, than to do with the actual realities of addressing some of the fundamental issues relating to social exclusion (see Chapter 3, p.6). So for example the Harry was able to point towards the club's longevity and heritage as key aspects of its current existence in that

> Tradition at the club, if you just look around the room we are sat in, we have got tradition all over the walls. Very proud of the tradition, where we grew from, how it's supported, how other teams have done in the past, all very important...But the sport of rugby is a tradition driven sport, the camaraderie the social standing of rugby.

In a sense the reader is reminded of Dunning and Waddington's (2003) debate concerning the 'Dionysian' and the 'Stoical' aspects of sport (see chapter 4, p. 111), and in particular the compromises and concessions that are made within club A in order to ensure that the tension between the 'Dionysian' and the 'stoical' remain contained within the existing ethos of the club. In the context of club A it is notable that the 'Dionysian' traits of pleasure and self-fulfilment that have traditionally been expressed through the extolling of alcohol consumption and heterosexual manliness, have given way to an apparent emphasis on the more stoical utilitarian outcomes of moral and physical development. For Harry this was identifiable in a form of cultural change to rugby clubs in general

> Yes it [tradition] has changed the spit and sawdust, beer drinking, song singing, swearing rugby player is no longer about, well they are but they are out in the depths of the middle of nowhere. The rugby clubs, the way rugby clubs have changed is through equality, dramatically and we now actively seek for the girlfriends and the wives to come into the club because we like the social scene of that, it means that husband, partner whatever, stays a little bit longer.

However whilst accepting that cultural change is evidently part of the fabric of this particular VSC it is also important to note that the causal factors may be varied and widespread and although modernisation and/or accreditation are key driving processes one needs to be circumspect that change is anything more than surface level. To be sure in light of the RFU (2006) *Equity Policy* the emphasis on equality stressed above by the Chief Executive can be seen as entirely utilitarian. It is axiomatic that equity has been identified as a dominant aspect for this particular club given that it has accredited status, and that RFU policy in this matter is clear in stating a need 'To adopt a planned approach to eliminating perceived barriers which discriminate against particular groups' (RFU, 2006:5). In light of which, it is reasonable to suggest that bottom up approaches to club structure and organisation that potentially impact on a club's ethos are largely superseded by top down processes as part of the wider structural development of the sport. In this regard, the apparent contradiction between practice and output lays bear the extent to which cultural change can really be that evident, particularly when Harry in commenting on the recruitment of new club members states that

> As far as getting new members in it is invariably most successfully undertaken by word of mouth, by personal contact and personal friendships...and website makes a difference...[its] very rare to get someone walk in off the street. We also have some long term family connections that go on for generations: sons of son of sons that have played here...both my sons played here... you do get a certain family ties.

In essence the evidence would suggest the existence of a tension between how the club is viewed and wishes to present itself and how the ethos of the club still appears to revolve around what a number of respondents referred to as the 'rugby network'. Furthermore in relation to social capital the notion of a rugby network alluded to both by stakeholders

and VSC members is suggestive of a self selecting and exclusive network that facilitates bonding perhaps more than it does bridging capital. It is not suggestive of an open and socially inclusive arena and perhaps excludes wider views and opinions consideration, thereby reducing opportunities to decision making processes for those outside of that 'rugby network'. Indeed these issues are evident in comments from the Chairman Euan that '...because I only come across rugby people its very difficult for me to gauge what local people might think' and Harry that 'I do strongly rely on word of mouth and networking, that works okay and with a membership of between 650 and 700 people...'.

Above all the implication is that mutual aid, which is still a key driving force within the club and an issue that will be returned to in due course, dominates a rather Colemanian interpretation of social capital. In particular the reliance and expectation that enmeshed networks are the key agents for interaction, where forms of closure govern those various interaction processes is indicative of Coleman's emphasis on the importance of social control and dense ties. In this respect and in light of the comments of the VSC members, Coleman's concerns that constructed forms of organisation would be too weak to provide 'the normative cohesion and network closure' (Field, 2003: 27) may be borne out. For although VSCs such as club A, which because of their mutual aid foundations retain a strong normative factor despite apparent structural change, emergent tensions between club ethos and modernising processes may impact on future capacity to create the dense networks necessary for social capital to be effectively created.

In contrast to Club A, Club B does not have accredited status, does not have a 'home' where mementos of past and recent successes can give weight and tangibility to any form of club ethos. In particular, individualism appeared to permeate and dominate the ethos of Club B as evidenced by comments such as 'People are just focussed on their own swimming...we're always told its teamwork...but actually [for] each individual swim its just down to you... (Ryan), 'We have no formal or official set up...its more about meeting needs of certain individuals' and that 'Your rewards are going to come primarily by proving yourself individually' (Angus). In light of the previous debate concerning the 'Januform' (see chapter 3, p111) nature of sport it is possible to identify the stoical as

dominating the club ethos. Particularly as swimming is predominantly viewed as a performance based, largely individual activity and in the case of this particular swimming club the swimmers' hard work, and discipline exerted by the two senior coaches has apparently contributed to the epitome of a healthy and wholesome sport.

Furthermore competitive swimming is primarily focussed on younger individuals and as such parental interest and proactivity is the essential mainstay of the club itself. Which for Ryan was summed up as '...basically it's the parents of swimmers who run the club and so anything the swimmers are going to say, they [parents] will listen to them'. In this respect Club B can be acknowledged as largely untainted by Dionysian interests as well as having a relatively closed network amongst participants and the potential volunteers who run the club. Particularly as the Max confirmed the swimmer's perception of the importance of parents in that

> Most swimming clubs have a committee of 12-16 people and they will invariably be parents of swimmers or ex-swimmers plus around 20-30 helpers who will also be parents without which the club would not survive.

The allusion to survival reflects on the closed nature of membership and the mutual aid ethos which is suggestive of a group bonding together to overcome adversity. This inference has potentially important ramifications for social capital, particularly as the processes associated with Club B indicate more of an inward than outward focus. This observation can be detected in the comments of Derek – 'The inner core is the committee...who have been hooked, and then there's people around that who realise that they're going to be spending a lot of time [at the pool]', and Angus – 'We recruit members from parents, they're the ones watching and recruit by talking to them and asking them'. However Angus also perceived a short-termism in parents' willingness to volunteer which manifests itself in a situation where 'Once the child's gone most of the parents have gone as well' as well as indicating that 'It's a challenge' to get parents involved.

What is discernible in the above comments is that although mutual aid is a key factor in the running of the club, the inherent individualism of the sport apparently produces a

streak of utility maximisation which in persuading individuals that club outcomes are private goods presupposes an orientation to service. In this regard Angus commented that

> We had someone recently who was asked if they wouldn't mind helping out and they said "no I want to watch my child swim", they were being self centred...most people are more open minded.

Moreover the Chairman's apparent reluctance (or diffidence) to volunteer, evidenced by his comment that his involvement began '...because I wanted my daughters to be capable swimmers' [and] I became Chairman because less people voted against me...I've sort of fallen into it'. Whilst this seemingly circumstantial take up of voluntary roles is not uncommon (see Taylor et al, 2003) it further suggests that the mutual aid of the club is focused more on individual performance enhancement and ensuring private objectives are met rather than the continued development of 'the club' as a whole. Indeed in comparing the comments of Euan the Chairman of Club A with those above – 'I felt rugby gave me an awful lot from the game as a player, the camaraderie of the game was fantastic, the lessons for life' tend to confirm the different interpretations of mutual aid that perhaps exists in the two clubs. The existence of this perceptible dichotomy between mutual aid as emphasised by the social values and club camaraderie of the sport, versus mutual aid as privatised output generator possibly helps to explain why perhaps one sport is identified as valuable to achieving LA1's vision of the 'big picture' and the other isn't.

Once again the evidence suggests an internal tension between in this case the development of an individualistic club ethos where notions of mutual aid concern outputs rather than inputs. Furthermore whilst it is arguable that the stoical foundations of Club B herald greater potential value within a wider policy process focused on the 'big picture'. The lack of a fixed home for this particular club is a moot point given further significance in terms of conditioning individual club members to focus on the outcomes of the club rather than actually what it is that makes the club. These findings tend to support those of the conclusions of Sport England's 2002 report *Sport Volunteering in England,* in particular that two club cultures existed. In addition the report identified three types of volunteer: key, 'motivated by shared enthusiasm, social benefits and desire for the club to do well'; shorter term, 'motivated by the creation of opportunities for their children, or

themselves': and young people, 'motivated by interest, altruism and the desire to enhance their curriculum vitae as a way of enhancing their employability' (Nichols et al, 2005:44). Taking into account these typologies together with the relevant club culture it is possible to identify and place those factors that conspire to ensure that Club B's profile in this locality is perhaps lower than it should be and facilitating an interpretation of an opportunity structure for delivering on notions of social capital that is very different to that of Club A.

Returning to the notion of 'interpenetration' (Maloney et al, 2000), not only sensitises the reader to the way VSC members perceive and utilise the particular opportunity structure afforded them, it also enables clarity in terms of identifying the nature and value of the inter-organisational exchange structures instituted as part of the wider delivery structure (Sport England, 2007b). Whilst the strategic drive for these partnership structures is indicative of central government preoccupations with Putnamian social capital (see chapter 3), particularly in a climate of evidence based policy and targeted achievement (Solesbury, 2001), it is less clear whether the potential for social capital is in the Colemanian or Bourdieun sense rather than the Putnamian sense. This is particularly so given the necessity of local authorities to ensure that targets are formalised within a statutory requirement to produce a performance plan that considers the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rating.

With a rating of 'fair' LA1 has been identified as 'increasing its rate of improvement', although significantly the CPA also identifies the Council as not being focussed enough in that its 'ambitions...are not underpinned by community engagement and ownership' and that the Council 'has not fully catered for the whole community' (LA1, CPA, 2004). Given that the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have recognised in the recent White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities* that cultural activities and focal points of community life (i.e. sports clubs and facilities) are vital for connecting young people to broader economic streams and that a Citizenship Survey, conducted every two years from 2001, has collected data on previous targets of involving one million more people in their communities (Murphy et al, 2005). The lack of

measurable community engagement identified within LA1 stands perhaps in stark contrast to the emphasis on measurability and accountability surrounding VSCs as indicated by Jane (Sport and Recreation Portfolio holder for LA1)

> Well the voluntary sports club, no matter what its size, whether small or large, they do have to present a business plan, it need not be complicated, but we need to know what their intentions are. We need to know what their funding bid is for and we need evidence provided that they have done what they said they would do.

In this respect the opportunity structure surrounding VSCs in LA1 is further conditioned by the need to clarify communication, integration and partnership working to fulfil broader statutory requirements. In turn the dominant policy context where the notion of modernisation as governance has become embedded and where partnership working has become the dominant tool of network development, it is perhaps no surprise that VSCs have succumbed to the 'structuring structure' within which all parties concerned must necessarily participate. It is in this context that the externalising of networks and external linkages has enabled Club A to work

> ...through the natural RFU, Cultershire RFU links, and through...[the] City sports development officers. They obviously come into the club and talk to us – "can we do this that and the other" (Harry),

Moreover the desire for a bottom-up approach to partnership working and network development has become embedded within British sports policy in the form of community sports networks and specific NGB initiatives to link up clubs in specific localities. However unlike many of the stakeholders who tended to view CSNs enthusiastically as a potentially positive step forward for VSCs to bring their resources to the strategic decision making process, the evidence would suggest little awareness of the CSN initiative amongst VSC members in this locality. Indeed given much more importance were the intra sport networks formed within particular sport largely under the auspices of the governing body. For Harry this meant that

> ...there are so many clubs within the county that they have now broken them into Cluster areas. We actually sit within the North East Cluster [and] we actually actively seek funding for that Cluster. Now out of that

> we will arrange coaching courses for our coaches or first aid courses for our coaches and that will be funded by the Cluster, group of us within the Cluster to fund it will say, right two from that club, two from that, two from that...to come in and benefit from this and that has turned a corner and that's actually working quite nicely.

Whilst the 'Clusters' are driven by the Cultershire rugby union there is an apparent acceptance and trust that the NGB will make the right decisions and choices that are in the best interests of the clubs. For Club A this reciprocity could be traced to the bottom-up involvement of club volunteers within Cultershire RFU structures so that the club is able to influence the structure within which it operates. Thus the following comments from Harry concerning standing 'in line' are not a signal of reduced autonomy rather they are an appreciation of the club's relative closeness to the decision making process.

> .....I suppose we are quite prepared to stand in line and follow other people's lead but because of the size of the club that we are, we actually, for arguments sake say Cultershire RFU, we would actually form part of their committee because we have got so many members that are involved in the game. I sit on the Cultershire Youth Section, we have got a guy that sits on the senior side of it, so we actively participate on it, I think we would be foolish if we didn't fall in line and do as we are told really.

In similar fashion, albeit in rather more tentative manner Club B is also part of a countywide structure, which for Derek meant that

> As a club were linked in to Cultershire-North, we try to work together as a swim group and we try to share duties at competitions and link up to provider stronger teams – it's a thing that nationally they [ASA] want you to do

Again, in relation to the notion of a swimming cluster, it is evident that an individualism was pervading the social capital potential of this particular intra sport grouping, in particular for Max the apparent lack of reciprocity was creating the potential for 'free-riding' in the sense that

> ...the Cultershire North swim squad which is on thin ground because perhaps people from other clubs aren't willing to get off their butts to do the work and it is being left perhaps to the dominant club...aim [of the

> squad] is to pool ideas, pool training times etc... [it] would appear to be struggling at the moment because the Head Coach at **** is doing all the work

The relationship of Club B to its NGB was also viewed in a rather negative light with Derek identifying a completely top down driven approach that led him to argue that 'I think the aims of the governing bodies are being forced into the clubs from various directions' and Max to remark that '...I have no faith in them [the ASA] at all'. For Angus the problem appeared to be the balance between elite and grass roots level support as well as the perceived wealth of the governing body itself compared to the perceived struggle that Club A faces

> We've got this governing body who I presume are getting large amounts of money, but I don't see it coming down to provide training courses...its costing you money to be a volunteer and it doesn't seem to balance out right. The governing body do have lots of people who are salaried, [and] I don't see it flowing down to the clubs who are paying their membership.

In terms of considering the POS of the VSCs in LA1 and the subsequent potential and value in terms of social capital, each club can be said to have a different POS, which places each of the clubs in a different position in terms of its value and potential in relation to the dominant policy context. The translation of strategy into structure, which both conditions and is conditioned by the existing structure, once again belies Putnamian notions of bottom up voluntary organisational development as precursors to creating the necessary conditions for the creation of social capital. In particular Club A with its willing compliance and adaptation to the prevailing structural context, which necessarily takes account of the dominant policy context is active beyond the scope of its sporting limitations. Indeed it was apparent that Club A faced and responded to an assimilative and cooperative context, particularly through the governing body which ensured that partnerships with fellow clubs were productive as well as socially reinforcing.

Club B in contrast has a different ethos with individuals within the club apparently seeking to further and look after their own interests in the first instance, and this issue of club and sport ethos is an important one when considering the output of a particular VSC in terms of social capital. Again reminiscent of the work of Stolle and Rochon (1998) and

Eastis, (1998), VSCs can produce potentially different outputs in terms of social capital in this regard the output of Club B may be explained as towards the Colemanian rather than the Putnamian. In particular the club was apparently dominated by short term volunteers who tended to look to benefit their children and themselves before benefiting the club itself. A situation alluded to by Derek in stating that

> Self interest – so they can try and know how the wheels are working or control decisions. Things are very divisive in clubs and if you haven't had this in other clubs people haven't been talking straight – you've been getting a rose tinted view.

Of course the VSCs considered in LA1 are not merely vehicles or receptacles for policy driven outcome and outputs and although respective volunteer members' motivations may have been different, each of the clubs maintained a dominant core of mutual aid around which the club ethos orbited. In this respect the political context for volunteering or the configuration of power is not only very positive but, in following the County level Compact (2004), explicitly identifies in the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy a key aim of increasing the number of sport coaches, officials and volunteers with a target of '10% volunteers (age 16+) spending 1 hour a week helping a sport club or event on a voluntary basis' (LA1, 2006: 7).

Thus within the broader context of modernisation, which has set the tone for much of the interaction within and between clubs as well as between clubs and external agencies. The extent of informal and/or informal working across and within VSCs is not only dependent on the ethos of the club, which tends to give rise to subjective expectations of whether external agents such as SDOs and RDOs, will do more to formalise the development of a particular club. It is also dependant on the type and level of social capital available within that club, particularly the balance between bonding and bridging as well as the more important aspect of vertical or linking social capital. In this regard a structure commensurate with that of the dominant structure within which a particular club operates would suggest that the opportunity for greater access to power and the decision making process can result from the ability to marshal social capital resources within and through processes that themselves impact directly on the 'structuring structure'. To this extent the

failure of any of the VSCs to acknowledge the development of the CSN is as much to do with the clubs' social capital resources as it is the context within which they can be mobilised. The evidence suggests that the sport specific networks of which VSCs are a part can be interpreted as a structural resource which in facilitating a club's access to power and decision making processes also provides the transitional power necessary to marry the apparent tension between club orientated mutual aid characteristics and the more utilitarian service orientated aspects of modernisation and club accreditation. Additionally this evidence also suggests that an apparent lack of interest in the broader decision making process rejecting the more dogmatic aspects of the drive towards modernisation and instead establishing a more circumscribed position where social capital resources are harnessed for mutual aid benefits in the first instance rather than in meeting broader objectives.

Community issues

The discussion thus far has detailed VSC member's perceptions of modernisation and accreditation processes as they have been interpreted as impacting on both the voluntary organisation itself as well as on the voluntary activity of those VSC members. The case study has also outlined the nature of a particular club ethos, its evolutionary path and its relationship to the apparent changing structure within which VSCs are enmeshed. Throughout this case study the importance of inferences made in relation to possibilities of social capital should serve to remind the reader of the importance attached to the concept at the county level. Given the embedded nature of the research design (Yin, 2003) it is of no surprise that contextual policy hierarchies should be evident in explicit as well as implicit ways. This is perhaps a necessary and desirable outcome of the case study research design that enables a 'spotlighting' approach (Hakim, 2003). This third part maintains the continuation of analytical themes from the County level case study in examining VSC members' interpretations and perceptions of their particular clubs role, value and/or relationship to its particular community or locality.

Whilst the potential for creating social capital is dependent on the establishment of networks and connections, it is as the majority of the literature has identified, context dependent and consequently social capital has little value without some grounding in a form of community. In the main the theory suggests that social capital is generated: in the democratic strain by and for the community as a collective resource, a public good available to all members of that community; in the rational strain through individual utility maximisation where it becomes a sought after commodity that enables collective action via the facilitation of closure; in the critical strain as an individual resource located within groups that is used, often strategically to differentiate and distinguish oneself or a group within a particular community (Lewandowski, 2006, Field, 2003). It is in this context of the heuristic approach to social capital theory that VSC members' perceptions of the place and position of their particular clubs in relation to notions of community are considered, particularly given the emphasis of VSC-community relationships identified from the County case study. Furthermore this examination also serves to remind the reader of the importance of this case study in meeting objective three of this study (see box two).

Box 2. Objective three

- To establish the perceptions of VSC members concerning the role of their particular club in creating social capital and in meeting wider government objectives.

Identifying the club community relationship

In terms of evidencing perceived notions of a policy cascade concerning social capital creation as well as identifying the extent of the hegemonic accepting by VSCs of the need to be community orientated and focused – which in itself speaks volumes for the dominance of modernisation and club accreditation agendas. It is perhaps worth addressing some of the concerns held by various stakeholders in relation to perceptions of the product or output of VSCs and the consequent relationship with the policy context.

Embeddedness

In the Council Leader's allusion to 'a sense of place' when discussing VSCs, one not only detects tacit notions of local identity and social function to which VSCs are expected to play, but also that VSCs have a civic duty which at a removed distance establishes them as tools for addressing the sport for good agenda (Coalter, 2007). It is in this regard that the following comments made by Harry can be interpreted

> ...it's a venue that they can hold and host parties in, it's a playing field that they can walk their dogs in. Some of them use it for car parking during the summer and come and have a picnic on the grass so actually for the local community, it is used fairly frequently.

To be sure it is notable in these comments how the perception of the club is now focused on its physical environs and is thus interpreted or identified in relation to the club's community relationship as a venue or facility. The implication being that whilst Club A has its home in these facilities the club, people are welcome to the physical fabric of the club, but the club as group of people interested in rugby is really for the members only. Indeed this inference was reinforced and clarified by Harry in arguing that

> I would like us to as a...club be a fun and active place for people to come and play rugby. As a community centre, a place where people feel they could use to meet and greet, and as a business, an opportunity for people to get value for money for hiring the functions and facilities to host such a visit.

Whilst this functional approach to the rationale for an accredited club is entirely logical it is also suggestive of a situation where the club exists for itself, perhaps in accordance with the dominant mutual aid function, whilst also ticking boxes in relation to its community focus. However given that Club A is located in an affluent area and has 'quite an affluent membership' it is perhaps not surprising that the club feels that it can open it's doors to all, indeed Harry alluded to the relative affluence as a factor in the club's willingness to openness in suggesting that 'If you were in a lesser area you probably wouldn't have as many doors open'. Furthermore the social reach of the club as explained by Euan was also circumscribed by the networks and social relationships of the members and the way in which the club worked to attract different people to the club. For

example in relation to social events there appeared little interest in attracting members of the wider community other than through those existing connections such that 'If we have any events we do get an eclectic mix, but its usually members bringing friends & family, [as well as] school friends'.

Whilst committee members of Club A consider the club to be a community club, Club B members showed little consideration for their perceived community relationship. For example Chris commented that 'I don't see us being that integrated with the community really – we seem quite separate', whilst for Ryan it was a similar story 'I don't think we work with the local population, the community round here'. Indeed for Derek the issue was viewed from a service level perspective in that

> For the local community I think the leisure centre provides more than the club does, it [the swimming club] is only offering another competitive service not offered by DC Leisure [the facility operators]. The only outlet they don't offer is competitive swimming.

It is interesting to note in the perceptions of this member/paid employee the confluence of the activity or output of the club with the notion of service, which in one sense calls into question the perceived mutual aid aspect of Club B whilst in another suggests that the hegemony of modernisation has been integrated within this particular clubs dominant individualised ethos. In particular in suggesting that the swimming club in offering a service, almost as part of community leisure provision, is rather disingenuous particularly as all of the commentators interviewed have noted the expense and hence the propensity for middle class involvement in the sport of swimming. For Chris the club composition was an issue, 'I don't know if it's just now, but there seems to be an awful lot of private school children in my squad at the moment and it has been referred as being a posh club'. In this regard the potential for social capital creation is strictly limited to those who have the necessary financial resources, and is suggestive of a situation where Bourdieu's assertion of social capital as a social marker has some validity. Indeed Derek's observation of the club being 'posh' is indicative of the limited potential there is for access to the club, which from a Bourdieun point of view ensures that club membership becomes a matter of 'taste' (Bourdieu, 1984). In this Bourdieun interpretation it is the

extent of one's economic and cultural capital resources embodied in one's habitus that facilitates one's ability to mobilise appropriate resources to have access to social capital which is a highly group specific, context-dependent, and socially stratifying resource (Lewandowski, 2006).

> ...in my 12 yrs we have had a handful of ethnic minorities and I think its still perceived as a bit snobby...There is no subsidy for anyone on a lower income to come and train...to come and swim you would have had to be able to have afforded lessons somewhere to be at a reasonable level to join the club (Derek).

In terms of the policy hierarchy it is notable that in LA1 the chair of the CSN sits on the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) with a view to ensuring the existence of a mechanism for effective partnership working in relation to national cross cutting priorities. However there is little mention in LA1's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, other than identifying that sport and physical activity can contribute to the 'big picture', of how community can have greater access to sport resources and in particular access to VSCs. Indeed in the glare of the modernising drive to ensure that local authority services are target driven it is notable that none have been set within the strategy that involve wider community participation and VSCs. Again this may reflect on the earlier assertion from the CPA concerning the Council's lack of 'underpinning community focused outcome s and targets' (LA1 CPA, 2004: 4).

The lack of a physical manifestation of a home perhaps hinders the swimming club enormously in terms of the club's ability to absorb the dominant hegemony regarding the importance of VSC-community relationships. The comments from members of Club B however, also suggest that because: a) the national profile of the sport is low there is little interest from non-members in the wider community; b) the sport has such a low profile that attracting funding is a hard task; and c) the nature of the sport as individual, time consuming and relatively non-social, means that finding and establishing partnerships outside of the established swimming networks is a job too far in the club's current position. The upshot for Angus was that 'The club is not very proactive in liaising with external organisations, and the issue is time', which when contrasted with the proactivity

of Club A, either supports the issue concerning the lack of a 'home' or gives the lie to it. Indeed the potential for increased sociability to impact on community network development maybe further related to the nature of particular sports. In this regard Derek reflecting on attempts to increase the 'club' feel as a means to reduce the 'fractionalised' nature of Club B remarked that 'We've tried a club night, but it turned out to be non-productive training when trying to achieve things at a higher level'. In this respect, for this club, there is an obvious tension between performance orientated norms and club sociability norms. Indeed the ethos of sociability that may be attractive to external groups and individuals, and which may impact on the ability of the club to forge long term meaningful partnerships with external bodies, tends to be the subordinate norm. It is in this respect that the comparison with rugby drawn up by Angus has resonance

> Rugby is a different sport, swimming is mainly done by kids...in rugby yes you've got the guys who are going to play up at national level, but you've got a lovely club infrastructure where you've got the seconds, thirds, fourths and fifths. And you know that the fifths will be lumbering around the pitch, but they're great fun in the bar and they want to turn up for their one nights training and they're still enjoying themselves and their team ethos.

Club A was also prey to an apparent tension which, on the one hand, sought to embed the club within its community, ensuring that its profile facilitated forms of interpenetration with a variety of external agencies concerned with community development issues. On the other hand however, the club seemingly wished to remain a rather more bounded entity within the 'rugby world' or imagined community of rugby, where mutual aid, as a club good, is the dominant factor. For Harry this situation was considered as positive for both the club and the individual

> There is a large element of honesty and integrity and care within the rugby world where a fellow member or a fellow member's partner will be protected by players and friends of those people. I mean it is a friendship thing but you know it is a very healthy environment, very healthy environment

In regard to social capital creation this dominant aspect tended to provide the normative framework within which most networks involving individual club members were formed.

To be sure when considering the normative value ascribed to a particular community in establishing the necessary bonds of trust and reciprocity necessary for social capital creation, the nature of mutual aid present not only has meaning but often provides the overriding context as well. This type of explanation encompasses an inherent tautology discussed in some depth in chapter one, which is at the heart of the problematised notion of social capital. Thus to say that members of a particular VSC trust one another more than individuals outside of the club is a tautology because the premise of collective action based on trust is a consequence of trusting individuals coming together in the first place (Portes, 1998 – see chapter 1).

In the case of Club B no equivalent tension was apparent, rather the impression was of a club some distance removed from the immediate community, which given the lack of a physical embodiment of the club in the form of a permanent clubhouse is not surprising. Given the apparent drive at local authority level to ensure cross cutting priorities are met, particularly in relation to the issue of health promotion as an obvious driver for encouraging greater participation in sport and physical activity, the swimming club does not have any perceptible external focus. For Angus in this respect the benefits of the club were privatised and subsequently advantaged club members who were able to profit from this inward focus, a situation Angus summarised as 'We're promoting through the sport a healthy lifestyle, but that's primarily within the environs of the club'.

Moreover whilst Club A necessarily must attempt to balance the club-community relationship so that the production of public and private goods remains equally visible to two different constituencies, the swimming club does not at present face such a dilemma. This perhaps suggests that the swimming club is not an 'enlightened' or 'forward' thinking club, however the evidence would suggest that given the policy context of LA1 that potential for community impact and development is being missed resulting in a situation where an overemphasis on the club as agent rather than on the structure results in limited networking and partnerships. This mixture of mutual aid and resignation can be detected in the following comments of Ryan.

> I think the club's main responsibility is to the swimmers. I think more could be done to bring the community into it maybe, but there's only so much you can do once you've got beyond the stage of taking young people in and teaching them to swim

VSC output and mutual aid

Despite the obviously different perceptions held by the VSC members concerning their particular clubs relationship with their community in LA1, there exists a similarity in the emphasis on mutual aid which tends to mean that much of the social capital potential of the VSCs is bounded by the clubs own social worlds. Indeed even though the evidence in suggesting that the two club cultures are dissimilar and that interpretations of the particular form of mutual aid present in each club also suggests that members and volunteers have different motivations, the overriding impression from the VSCs in LA1 is that the club members and the club come first with external benefits a latter priority.

In respect of the broader community relations decisions taken by the VSCs were largely viewed as for and on behalf of the club and perhaps reflects on the sense of place that club members perceive. Despite Club A's apparent community status there was little communication with its immediate physical community, summarised by Harry as 'We don't go to residents and say "what do you want us to put on for you"? We put it on and they come to us if they want it'. The putative club community relationship here is not only dictated by the desires of those within the club, but is also indicative of a relationship based more on consumption than participation (Enjolras, 2002). In similar fashion the identification of Club B with the local community is perceived more in consumerist terms in that community tends to be perceived of as the source of the swimmers rather than any outward pouring of benefits to that local community. Indeed the involvement of Club B in the provision of learn to swim programmes within the district is as a commercial venture where they compete with other swim schools to attract youngsters from mainly affluent households wanting to learn a 'life skill' (Angus) and who have the resources to afford swimming lessons. For Derek the picture was of a 'saturated' and 'intense market' that was not only a key area for the club to recruit swimmers, but also an aspect that helps in subsidising the club itself. Again the picture is

of a community relationship based on consumerism and service provision rather than participation and involvement. For Ryan this amounted to a 'kind of relationship', whilst for Chris the club's learn to swim programme 'definitely makes the club a lot more accessible'. The notion of increased accessibility however, has limited scope given the perceived one way nature of the relationship, the reliance on economic and social capital for access in the first place and a consensus among the club members that the club was little known within its local population. A situation ably summarised by the Max in that 'If they're not involved in the club they probably haven't got a bloody clue about it'.

This 'kind of relationship' can also be detected in the decision by Club B to involve itself in a local swimming gala for schools, which may indicate a move towards a more socially inclusive and outward focused approach to foster and develop relationships with outside organisations. However as Dererk pointed out, the club's involvement is rather more prosaic

> The only thing where we really get into the community is this schools gala and that is something we do that is a string to our bow, and the aim of the club is to pick up [swimmers]...but there have been very few – and its main aim is as a community project that links us in at the base level.

Whether this level of instrumentality is indicative of an altogether more strategic and ominous functional approach more akin to the utilitarian rational strain of social capital a la Coleman or is rather part and parcel of the give and take in partnership working is a moot point. Nichols et al (2005: 40) have indicated that partnerships are a 'compromise of objectives and are influenced by the power relations between partners'. In the context of the current discussion the power relations that VSCs are party to are arguably dominated by the extent and depth of an adherence to the principles of mutual aid and in particular the impact that specific forms of mutual aid have on the lifeworld of a particular club (Van Manen, 1990). It is in this regard that many of the relationships that relate to the operational context of the club, which were alluded to by various respondents must be seen. For example Euan pointed out that

> Various social activities at the club allow fundraising from members or as I say "the big number sponsorship items are often from ex-players who are prepared to put their hands in their pocket or often businessman who have got a little bit of money and have had an involvement in the club either through their children or elsewhere"...one year we got £100 sponsorship from the airport...but we didn't have to do an awful lot of work for that money – they wanted a banner with their name on it, the manager of the airport had to shake hands and give the prizes out and get his picture taken so that it could go into the press the following day...it was hard work you know.

Indeed given the acknowledged affluence of the local area and the members of both clubs surveyed, it is not surprising that the power of intra-club networks fosters not only mutual aid among individuals who share a common sporting purpose, but forms of social capital that can be seen to bond as well as bridge within this environment. In this respect Euan went on to comment further

> Whereas I was on the side of the pitch the other day and one of our members tapped me on the shoulder and said "you need a new scoreboard over there" and I said "yeah we've not got one". "Well", he said, "I think I can provide you with a scoreboard". So he goes away and the next minute we have this flyer come through, and he says "do you fancy something like this?" – One of these electronic ones where you can sit in the stand and dial it up.

Similarly for Club B this form of mutual aid driven social capital was apparent where bonds of association allow bridging in the broadest sense and once again remind the reader of the inequitable distributive capacity of social capital (Foley & Edwards, 1999). To be sure Angus, in discussing the club's search for funding, commented that

> Coincidentally the area manager [of a large car dealership] just happened to swim for the club some thirty something years ago...it didn't do any harm! But he said it turned up just as he was looking for something to sponsor, linked with the city. Obviously they want to raise their profile so we've done some press stuff and a radio interview...and we've also managed to get the MP coming along.

Whilst there may have been an element of providence in the 'coincidence', what is apparent is the correlation between these somewhat weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) and the

possibility of vertical capital as epitomised by getting the local MP along to a swimming gala. In the democratic strain of social capital this kind of weak tie forms an essential 'sociological WD40' (Putnam, 2000), and one is able to identify how for Club B this particular weak tie together with the social capital resources within the club were important for 'getting on'. To this extent the power or potential of networks resides in the ability to mobilise those resources, which in the case of Club B is indicative of individuals who can verticalise or link upwards within existing social networks. In this respect Max, who had only been with the club for some eight months at the time of interview, observed that 'Even in my short time there I've met a heart surgeon...another parent runs his own physiotherapy practice another is in private dentistry'.

The evidence tends to suggest that the social capital exhibited here tends to be rather exclusive and beneficial to the individuals who already have access to or are part of a particular network. To be sure the forms of social capital illustrated above have more to do with reinforcing in-group trust and reciprocity than with developing or promoting these traits to the wider society. In this context and in taking the heuristic approach, social capital can be identified as creating possibilities for establishing social distinction and reproducing social inequality or at best as self-serving within a specific context.

Moreover given the issue of trust, treated within this study as an outcome of social capital, so as to avoid problems of tautology and circularity (see chapter 4), there was no evidence that VSC members were any more trusting as an attribute of their involvement with their particular club. In this respect the comment from Chris, a senior swimmer, that 'I don't think it's down to my involvement in the club, no I don't think its changed how I trust people' was a common viewed shared across respondents and VSCs. If anything the evidence suggested that VSCs were places where trusting individuals tended to congregate on the basis of their mutual identity rather than being social or community progenitors of trust, which at club A meant that:

> It's an aspect of the club without a doubt, its the trust in each other, you know, you can trust that you can come in and you are not going to walk through as if you have got two heads sometimes as you do when you walk

> in some places, or the trust that you can come in to ask a question... is there anybody you know can help me with a solicitor? (Harry)

Again the allusion here is to the relationship between the notion of trust and the 'rugby network' as a form of extended social capital. In particular it is likely that only a member of the 'network' would have the confidence and insider knowledge necessary to ask a question, and hence the importance here is attached to social capital as a form of exchange (Field, 2003). However with the increasing need for modernisation within VSCs and the importance of NGB structures in facilitating the desired change, propensities to trust may become rather lost in the bureaucracy of accreditation that surrounds the club accreditation process. In harking back to Horch's notion of the 'self destroying processes' the following comments of Harry are indicative of the potential for tension to arise between a VSC and it's NGB and impact on 'its basic social resource: member solidarity' (Horch, 1994).

> Trust? We have a whole raft of policies to ensure that procedures are followed and no one lets themselves or the club down...and sometime I wish the RFU would think before they issue dogma about what we should do, I mean all they are doing is protecting their own arses.

Conclusion

This case study has presented a range of evidence from VSC members in LA1 that has highlighted a number of important issues that relate to individual perceptions of the value and meaning attached to volunteering, the social role of VSCs and the changing structure/governance of VSCs under the gaze of modernisation. The evidence indicates that modernisation tends to be viewed as multidimensional process that is impacting in at least two distinct ways. First, practically in terms of club accreditation setting clear parameters for providing the structure to provide a quality club and then subsequently providing the evidence so that VSCs can 'prove' that that is what they are doing. Second, club accreditation much like the wider modernisation process is contributing to the changing dominant core policy paradigm which relates to a deep seated potential to exert power within or on the structure within which VSCs operate. Consequently the evidence suggests that the VSCs themselves are more open to the issues that underpin and are of

such importance to modernisation and club accreditation. Given this context it is not surprising that respondents tended to acknowledge that their particular club was expected to act in an entrepreneurial manner to establish a wide variety of partnerships outside of the club itself and that that expectation was as much inside as it was outside of a particular club.

The evidence in suggesting that club accreditation whilst accepted as a modernising construct also questioned the perceived value of going through the accreditation itself, reminiscent of some of the literature concerning pressures facing sports volunteers, the actual practical approach to accreditation suggested that many saw it as a burden, which was more of paper shuffling exercise. Indeed that one club could mobilise its social capital resources to enable them to capitalise on the professional knowledge and skills of one of their members speaks volumes for, the often, inequitable distribution of social capital. Moreover the bottom-up notion of club development, as envisaged by the RFU for example (2006), is evidently misplaced given that club A in not having the capacity to fulfil specific RFU criteria consequently miss out on specific funding streams. The data in this respect point towards a more top down framework, which also tends to correspond with broader notions of a comprehensive delivery system (SE, 2007).

Importantly the case study has shown that the POS can be different for each club in a single local area, in other words the VSC surveyed here may face different contexts and different relationships with the very same upper tier organisations operating in the same area. The evidence suggests that this is likely to be as much due to the club itself, and in particular the ethos or culture of that club together with the nature of the sport as it is the strategic aims, values and working practices of particular upper tier authorities. In this respect the profile of a particular sport is important because in the first instance it can facilitate partnership and network building within and outside of VSCs in a particular area. Furthermore a sport's profile is evidently related to the culture or ideology of that sport which consequently tends to impact on VSC member interpretations of trust and reciprocity which the data suggests should be a key factor when considering the outputs of any one particular VSC. That the SDO for LA1 expressed greater expectation of the

rugby club than the swimming club in terms of strategic impact across the district suggests that a differentiated POS does indeed exist for the polity of LA1.

Much of the evidence in alluding to the importance of networks and partnerships signals the importance of social capital to VSC members and in this respect it is possible to surmise that there are different forms of social capital evident. Indeed the clubs in this locality express different forms of social capital which tend to be connected to a range of contributing factors not least of which are club ethos, mutual aid and the extent to which consumerist and participative forces are balanced within the overall perception of the club to its members. Evidently trustworthiness is not only internalised between club members, but is further valorised as an inter-subjective connective tissue with few expressions of what might approach generalised trust in evidence.

The evidence also highlighted how VSCs can invest in forms of mutual aid to create a range of networks that are beneficial to the club and the individual. This notion of 'investing' chimes with entrepreneurial liberalism which imbues and directs much government policy towards achieving particular outcomes. However, although VSC members can be perceived of as active citizens, acting reciprocally within the context of a community, the key point from the evidence presented is that they tend to be acting within a more circumscribed notion of community – the community of the club. In this respect mutual aid appeared to act on club culture and ethos in such a fashion that for club A (rugby) the enthusiasm of volunteers to produce what the club need to consume in order to run its activities was viewed as the professionalising construct considered appropriate. Indeed the evidence highlighted the extent to which forms of mutual aid could impact on the particular ethos of a VSC which subsequently could impact on the type of social capital that that club was able to create. In this respect the evidence suggests that local sport policy in LA1 tends towards the generic, talking for example of the 'big picture' and given that different VSCs may produce different social capital should perhaps be more tailored to the specific circumstances of the district.

Chapter 8.
Local authority two case study (LA2)

Introduction

LA2 has a very different history to that of LA1. Far from having ancient origins, LA2 has grown and developed as a result of its position as a base for regional industrial development from the late nineteenth century onwards. The growth of LA2 was initially based on heavy engineering and manufacturing, and was boosted by further development that reinforced this industrial strength in the post First World War era. The industrial growth of the town helped to generate the building of the first council houses, a town hall and in the late 1930s recognition of LA2 as a borough. The growth, wealth and strategic position of the area also facilitated the opening of a Municipal Airport prior to the Second World War, which further enhanced the economic attractiveness and the strategic value of the borough. The heavy industry that was the main driver of the Borough's prosperity began to go into decline from the early 1960s (Lambert, 2007) necessitating the Borough Council, which has historically been proactive, to assist in the development of the area. In this respect the Borough Council by the late 1960s was using the excellent communication links together with a building programme of new industrial estates to try and attract new industries to the area. Notwithstanding the closure of most of the heavy industry works by the early years of the new century, the Borough maintains a strong engineering base and is a popular location for commercial and industrial enterprises.

LA2 is 31 square miles in area, has a coastline that is recognised as having national or regional significance for nature conservation and outside of the main town there is a mix of suburban development and villages. It has a high population density when compared to the regional figure with the population projected to grow by 14.1 per cent by 2010, which is substantially higher than both the national (5.6%) and regional (8.2%) figures. The population is relatively young with approximately one third of the population aged 24 or under. The area is relatively prosperous, indicated by high levels of owner occupation and high rates of car ownership, when compared on a regional or national basis.

Table 12. LA2 District key facts and figures

Population	116,159*
Size	31 square miles
Unemployment rate	1.0% (2004) **
Proportion of population economically inactive	21.5% **
Working from home	8.55% (County average 9.1%) *
Education	26.8% of working age qualified to degree level or above (national norm of some 19%) *

Sources: *ONS, 2001, **LA2 Economic Profile,

Ethnically the Borough is not particularly diverse with only 4.55 per cent of the population identifying themselves as other than 'white British', this is below both national and regional averages, but more than double the figure for LA1 (2001, Census). Across the Borough unemployment, at one per cent, as well as being lower than the rate for LA1 is also low when compared to the national and regional averages of 2.6 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively. Given LA2's industrial heritage it is not surprising that manufacturing, construction, retail and catering and transport and communications all have above average representation in the Borough. This is partly to the detriment of knowledge based sector employment which accounts for 18.6% of jobs in LA2, which is lower than Cultershire (22.3%), regional (23.2%) and national (19.8%) rates (LA2, 2005). This indicates that LA2 is perhaps lacking a key driver of growth although the relatively high employment levels across the Borough tends to ensure that deprivation levels are low, with all wards placed outside of the most deprived 25 per cent areas in England (ODP, 2000). Overall the council is the in the top fifty of the least deprived local authorities in England.

Educationally within the Borough, the number with no qualifications or educated to at least degree level has declined whilst the proportion with middle range qualifications (Level 2 = 5 GCSE A*-C, Level 3 = 2 A Levels) has increased (Census, 2001). Indeed the number educated (16-74 yr olds) to at least level 4 in LA2 at 18.6% is some 12% below those similarly educated in LA1, although when restricted to those of working age the figure for LA2 rises to almost 27%. Whilst this may reflect on the respective employment structures of LA1 and LA2 as much as it does the relative affluence of each

local authority, it also indicates significant demographic fluctuations within one single local authority (LA1, Economic Profile).

House prices are over nine times the average annual income in the borough with home ownership the dominant mode of residency (see table below) however across the borough there are pockets of deprivation and a significant council house rental sector. LA2 is perceived to be an affluent and expanding area for accommodating executive and family households as well as middle-aged and mature homeowners. Despite this the steady population growth also reflects lower prices than in LA1 (and surrounding areas) and is driving-up demand and costs in LA2. The local authority is currently proactively seeking to increase and influence the building of new homes to fit with its current housing strategy.

Table 13. LA2 Housing stock and market

Housing stock	79% built after 1944 62% built after 1964
Housing status	85% owner occupied 12% housing g association rented 3% private rented
Average house prices	For all dwellings £167, 385 For terraced houses £127,145 Flats £ 104,362
Financial support	18% of households
Household income	15% have incomes below £10,000 (28% nationally) 38% have incomes below £20,000 (57% nationally)

Sources: LA2, 2006, *Cultershire* County Council, 2001

The Borough council is made up of a total of 44 councillors and is dominated by the Liberal Democrats who, in 2008, increased their representation to 38 seats, with the conservatives on four and Labour on two seat each respectively. Administratively the Borough has adopted a leader and executive model with eight executive councillors covering six portfolios. This structure of accountability and responsibility is ostensibly linked to achieving the council's stated purpose of improving the quality of life for all local people. The Borough in this respect has orientated its services around three priority areas of environment, health and prosperity. Additionally there are three scrutiny panels and five local area committees, the latter of which are part of the council's commitment

to making decisions locally. These structures ensure that the three priorities identified above, become translated as operational key priorities which are grouped under six portfolio areas: Business and Licensing, Housing, Clean and Green, Planning and Building, Transport and Streets, Leisure and Community (LA2, Corporate Strategy). The council itself is a major employer with some 500 staff and perhaps again reflecting on the relative affluence of the area, is debt-free with financial reserves of approximately £2 million that are above the statutory minimum level.

Responsibility for sport lies within the broader sport and recreation service which itself forms part of the Countryside and Recreation Unit. The LA2 sports and recreation section is responsible for a range of sports functions including strategy development, planning, sports development, community school sport provision and the management of LA2's major leisure centre. A CSN has been established which leads a coordinated approach to sport across the district, with the chair of the CSN sitting on the steering group of the local authority strategic partnership. The local authority strategy was produced before the CSN came into existence and the current consultation for the next sport and recreation strategy is apparently being undertaken by the local authority itself, rather than the CSN. The local authority hosts two School sport partnerships. One tends to work predominantly with LA1 with neither of them being represented on the Borough CSN. In this respect a policy context for the development of sport participation, facility development was established some time ago. Whilst the LA2 *Sport and Recreation Strategy* (2002) follows the policy hierarchy, particularly in terms of the focus on participation targets and encouraging volunteers, the mere fact that the strategy has more history to it (than that produced in LA1) suggests a longer policy lifecycle where issues are likely to have had a longer problematisation resulting in more and varied potential policy responses. Moreover as part of the preparation for that strategy there was evidence of significant local research.

The Borough council has established a commitment to partnership working, in the management of its flagship facility, with DC Leisure since 1991. Indeed the Borough's commitment to this mode of working has arguably facilitated greater partnership

investment resulting in increases in participation at the facility, cost per head subsidy reduced, and the implementation of a broad programme which embraces both the environmental and healthy living agendas (LA2 Strategic Partnership, 2004). This enthusiasm for partnership working has been commended by the 2004 Comprehensive Performance Assessment as a particular strength and for the facility in question, as an example of good development of an alternative method of service delivery (Audit Commission, 2004b)

Strategic issues

The case study for LA2 follows the same analytical framework as that set out in the previous case study and in doing so offers some points of comparison without being a comparative study. Given the reflective and iterative nature of the critical realist approach to this research, and the embedded case study research design comparisons necessarily help to assemble what was referred to in the chapter 4 as 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973, see p.142). The chapter consequently first examines modernisation and accreditation in relation to perceived strategic orientations to social capital outcomes. Second the organisational structure for delivery is considered in the context of partnership and network development with various sports agencies, VSC autonomy and the nature of club processes. Finally, club members' views of the role and value of their club in and to the community are considered within the context of stakeholder expectations concerning the broader notion of "quality of life".

In the proceeding discussion all interviewees are referred to by a pseudonym. A list of pseudonyms and role in a particular VSC can be found in appendix IV on page 435.

Modernisation processes

In taking forward the analytical framework of the LA1 case study it is important to reiterate the importance of the modernisation–social capital framework which underpins the delivery system (Sport England, 2007) for sport in England. This structure not only reinforces the wider policy driven context for partnership working and network development but also provides and enables the capacity and the mechanism for

establishing the opportunity structure within which actors operate. To this extent the consensus among virtually all of the VSC members from LA2 was of both an awareness of the apparent dominance of the perceived need to modernise as well as with the importance and extent of the contribution that volunteers make to the running of individual clubs.

To be sure among respondents at all levels (executive, engineer and operator) in all VSCs in LA2 the impetus to be an 'enlightened club' or to 'move forwards' in the context of a clearly structured framework was commonplace. In this respect Ross (senior coach) from Club C in commenting on the general air of expectation that a VSC will offer a certain level of quality stated that

> ...they know that they're going to be trained and looked after by a professional body. Not just some old dinosaur...Life isn't like that anymore in football; it has to be more structured.

Whilst for Graham (Club D player) the climate of VSC governance was perceived of as facilitating a greater potential for professionalism

> ...you can see the advantage if we were more professional and we've had this debate at the corporate management team, "should we be more professional?" Be "business-like" is the expression we've used.

These comments once again reflect the point evidenced in the previous case study concerning the different levels at which modernisation processes can be seen to operate. In this case the acceptance of the need to develop social capital has become submerged or contained within the drive to establish those deep seated policy networks which have been crucial for the modernisation of VSCs. Once again the evidence from respondents suggested that the shifts in the 'dominant core policy paradigm' (Houlihan and White, 2002) have indeed become embedded as the structuring structure within which all VSCs operate. In this respect the LA2 *Sport and Recreation Strategy* whilst identifying many of the commonly associated values of sport and recreation to the quality of people's lives, such as – potential health benefits, social inclusion, community safety, economic benefits and sustainable communities – also reinforces the policy hierarchy concerning the

importance of partnership working. Importantly LA2 identifies that the role of the strategy is to provide a steer for Borough-wide organisations such as

> ...Local Area Committees, Parish/Town Council's, schools, Primary Care Group/Trust, the Police and Youth Services with guidance on priorities for the Borough and how issues can be addressed through partnership working (LA2, 2002: 4).

In setting forth a climate of steerage, given that steerage (as detailed in chapter 3) suggests a more persistent policy cascade from national through county to local level, LA2 is both reinforcing its own institutional position as legitimate representative for, and of, the local polity (Pierre and Peters, 2000) as well as acknowledging shifts to interpretations of an arms length approach to sport and recreation in the Borough. In this respect the strategy states that VSCs are vital in order to 'supply services' and goes on to argue that '...there is not a shortfall of effort in the borough to try and develop sport' (LA2, 2002:15). This notion of a service mandate can almost be detected in the comments of Kenny (Club C Chairman) who in welcoming partnerships and relationships stated that 'We tend to get sucked up and if [the LA] asks us to do something with the school, we tend to say "yes" and think about how we're going to do it after'.

Interestingly Club C was the youngest club in the survey having been founded in 2005 and was able to get FA club accredited status before any fixture had actually been fulfilled. In this respect club C adopted the FA Charter Standard as the template for the setting up and running of the Club, which has enabled the club to use its chartered development status as badge of quality. For the players of Club C interviewed accredited status means being a 'fair club' (Toby) or a 'decent club' (Rhys) that shows 'we are a proper run club [which] must be doing something well' (Toby). So whilst it is unsurprising to note that despite widespread awareness of accreditation within Club C, understanding was more limited with the players interviewed suggesting that their fellow team members 'wont know what it means'. What is important to note is that first and foremost senior club officials are fully conversant with the processes and practices that drive the club's alignment to the relevant policy concerns of the respective NGB. Second that those club officials also employ that alignment in ensuring that the club's ethos is

also in tune with NGB expectations of how an accredited club will function. For the FA these expectations include a commitment to attend in-service training, an acceptance and promotion of codes of conduct and a commitment to promote schools liaison and equal opportunities for all (FA, 2008). In this respect accreditation is as much a part of the club ethos as is its operational thrust and it is in this respect that the following comments of Kenny are best viewed

> Because we started from nothing, we wanted to get involved in the charter because it gave us a backbone, something to work from; we took it a slightly different way. It was not something that was a necessary evil to achieve something; it was something we wanted to do. When you start from there there's nothing else in the past, it wasn't a case of never having to do CRB before – well we do and think it's important.

It is the issue of VSC ethos that is the key here because the continual emphasis on formalisation and professionalism has tended to realign the perception of the volunteer and volunteering within a much more structured and functional framework (see Chapter 3). Indeed Dai (Club D Secretary) identified his role in the club in very business-like terms '...in essence I am managing a function and I have to address it professionally and go through it professionally in order to make it the most effective way I can do it'. Despite the formality of the language used here, which might suggest that this individual was actually in a paid position, this club secretary was part of the common consensus in LA2 that volunteering was the desired modus operandi for all of the VSCs concerned. This dominance is clear in the comments of a variety of individuals: for example Phil (Club D junior section Chairman) stated that 'The junior club is totally voluntary...Volunteers bring variety...and they're here because they want to be here, they're here for the love of it'; whilst for Alexander (Club E Head Coach) volunteers

> ...bring a desire; an aspiration to a club... money is not the issue. The issue is that you want to be involved with the greater organisation and offer services for people, and again those people are your productivity, it's not the money

and for Alfie (Club C Secretary) it was simply the case that 'With the volunteers it's because they want to be there, they want to put something back into it'. These comments tend to highlight how, for the clubs in LA2 as well as Club A in LA1, professionalism

was largely centred on the mutual aid ethos or enthusiasm of the volunteers. This position is also indicative of a social or club centred culture where a more collective approach to the interpretation and operationalisation of modernisation (social capital) is the norm.

It was also interesting to note the difference of approach between each of the swimming clubs in terms of ethos and club culture even though individualism was a shared and dominant aspect. So whilst Alexander viewed swimming as '...a very individual sport and consequently it is governed by individual rules in that respect', he also expressed (like others in the club) more community minded and almost welfaristic aims in relation to aspects of the purpose and structure of the club. Thus on at least two occasions Alexander explained how the club works with the local authority in relation to overcoming aspects of social exclusion. First:

> We initiated a couple of years ago a club-school link and it was done with the backing of [LA]...we as a club offered the background and support for deprived children. Those that didn't achieve the National Curriculum required for the education, needed extra time, but probably were never going to get it. We targeted those people and it was very successful.

Second;

> ...we have a fund specifically for people that, if they are members of the Club and they go through financial hardship, we have a hardship fund and we are actually looking to try to get a sponsor to support us in welfare fund.

Furthermore whilst both swimming clubs shared similar problems in finding or being provided with 'home' pools as well as both receiving only limited external funding, the respondents from Club E were constantly reflecting on the community value they offer. Certainly in this respect Malcolm (Club E Chairman) was keen to point out that 'Obviously by funding ourselves we are still providing that service for the community so really all of the funding is going towards the community in that respect'. These aspects of community, service and funding may reflect on the level of interventionism apparent in LA 2, particularly as its 2004 CPA judged that 'Partnership working is a key to its success' and that 'The Council provides strong leadership in the community' (CPA 2004: 4-9). Indeed Cedric (LA2 Cabinet Member for Leisure) in commenting on volunteering in the area argued that

> ...its good and I think it's good because the Council do have a policy of trying to encourage people to volunteer and get involved in sport. We see our role as being a facilitator for that and if we can be the channel which can help them find funding then that's what we will do.

In addition, many of the distinctions between the two swimming clubs tended to become polarised in relation to various club members' perceptions of the best way to operationalise modernising pressures to professionalise. Whilst in Club B payment was central to establishing accountability, measurement and transparency, particularly for the Head Coach, in Club E payment as a professionalising concept was largely viewed as something of an irrelevance. A number of club members spoke of their commitment to the club and to the sport with a talented swimmer who also coached at the club being '...more passionate about the swimming than I am [about] the money' (Oliver, swimmer Club E). Perhaps indicating a situation where Club E tended to be seen as the social medium for professional delivery rather than payment itself which stands in contrast to Club B. This was encapsulated by the honest and candid remarks of Martin (Club E Assistant Head Coach)

> I do it purely for the kids that are in the pool. I have no interest in the money side of it. They pay me, and I'm not an idiot, if they want to pay me to do something I do and I enjoy it, if they took it away tomorrow I would do exactly the same hours and the same things.

On a final note regarding this issue, Alexander tended to view the issue of payment for the club coaches in terms of trust and loyalty as the following comments demonstrate, '...what I have got is a group of loyal and trustworthy people that offer a service and the majority of work that we do is voluntary'.

Although this brief discussion of the two swimming clubs serves to demonstrate how the role of clubs within the same sport can be interpreted differently by their respective members, it also serves to highlight the methodological restriction inherent in the small case study approach. In this case it is the extent to which generalisations can be made from the findings. Importantly, and in line with critical realist approaches, whilst it is possible to be reflective within and through analysis of data it is also important to

acknowledge the snapshot that the case study can provide. Logically, given these limitations, it is necessarily the inferences and implications arising from applying the transitive to the intransitive (Bhaskar, 1978) that may have greatest resonance for wider populations.

In considering social capital theory it is important to reflect on the wider policy cascade that underpins much of the impetus to modernise VSC structures. In particular for LA2 the evidence of a clear emphasis on volunteering as both modus operandi and modus vivendi is indicative of policy continuity in relation to the expression of (Putnamian) social capital outcomes. In particular the recognition in LA2's Sport and Recreation Strategy that sport and recreation facilities and services can contribute 'to an individuals quality of life' (LA2, 2002: 4) tends to mirror the countywide rhetoric in relation to quality of life as well as reaffirming the underpinning social capital elements at the policy level. In this regard the allusion to quality of life at the local (micro) level tends to conflate notions of modernisation and normative connectivity thus allowing Putnamian interpretations of social capital to facilitate the necessary 'soft wiring' that occurs at the local level (Stoker, 2006, see chapter 5).

The policy hierarchy – from the Cultershire Council's cultural strategy with its emphasis on culture as a strategic variable (see chap 5) to LA2's Community Plan where quality of life is delivered through eight themes – as evidenced here tends to demonstrate the extent to which the symbiosis and instrumentalism evident in *Game Plan* has become common-place in the language of policy documents (Green, 2004). Furthermore, the symbiotic and instrumental aspect of particular policy networks may tend to impact on the extent to which social capital can be generated. In this respect it is first a consideration of the extent to which resources are made available at the local level, second is the nature of those resources and whether they are resources appropriate to, or needed by, members of VSCs and third is the more complicated issue of whether those individuals who represent VSCs have the necessary social capital to be able to access those resources. It is in this context that the following comments from Kenny are indicative of the practical outcome of various theoretical and policy discourses

> This year we were asked by [the Borough Council] to take some girls...to [Cultershire Youth Games] which we did. We coached them and took them for the day. We've also been asked by Cultershire FA to do a FA school-club links programme which is where you coach in local primary schools for a six week period...We go in totally for free – if they want a sports days run in the middle of term my coaches will take a days leave...We also do some stuff with [Local] community school. The school-club links thing was so successful that one of the primary schools has asked us to now coach their school team. So me and two of my coaches will do that...all on a voluntary basis.

To be sure the comments above imply an acceptance that local government now properly acts as both enabler and outsourcer (see Chapter 3). However, a key point is surely that in necessitating corporate practices that bench mark or 'kite' mark services as part of the mixed economy of welfare (Finlayson, 2003), this repositioning of local authorities has also tended to ensure an implicit acceptance of social capital outcomes within the process. In particular, these arrangements tend to be important in terms of developing and reinforcing both the importance of 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973) and 'bridging capital' (Putnam, 2000) as necessary and desirable outcomes.

Accreditation and Partnership Working

As the previous two case studies have shown VSC accreditation is seen as vital, for differing reasons, in ensuring that a modernised delivery framework that represents a variety of partnership interests can operate to provide greater participation opportunities within a broadly positive opportunity structure. Indeed the broad acceptance of accreditation by those running the VSCs suggests that the power relationship implicit in the policy making process associated with modernisation tends to coalesce around the issues of 'decision making, agenda setting and preference shaping' (Hay, 2002: 180). This issue will be returned to later, save to observe that implicit in social capital theory is the assumption that the process of establishing preferences `may encourage a third party to believe the options they are offered are 'a good deal' (Hay, 2002).

The evidence from LA2 offers a number of similarities with that from LA1, in particular the notion of accreditation as a valuable tool for objectively measuring and evaluating the

activities of a club was once again in evidence. The acceptance of evidence based policy is once again indicative of modernisation orientated 'preference shaping' which is apparently increasingly the norm for the VSCs surveyed. Moreover for Geoff (Club D Chairman) accreditation as a tool of modernisation was evidently not just a benchmark, but also a marketing tool that can establish a club as having value.

> Oh yes it will show to them and whoever wants to know that we can run a rugby club properly. Because if you get accreditation you can prove all that and you have got all these bits and pieces that the RFU want you to have. You can get it but if you don't keep it up you can have it taken away next year or the year afterwards.

Indeed for the most part the players and swimmers, whilst tending to acknowledge that accreditation was important, particularly in terms of status for the club, had little specific knowledge of either the process or the outcome. This was summed up by Neil (Club C Coach) as 'I think they [players] know we have it but like my youngest son they're just happy to play football...I'm not sure they're interested in the chartered side to be honest'. However, where views were expressed by those at the 'operator' level they indicated a critical appreciation of accreditation as doing more than just kite marking a club. For Ethan (Club D first team player) the issue concerned the club's relative power and influence in relation to three other nearby rugby clubs and again reflected the potential marketing value of club accreditation. 'Certainly for getting ourselves...a higher profile with Cultershire RFU... we're hoping that the accreditation will certainly raise our profile'. On a different tack, Curtis (Club E senior swimmer) proffered a view of accreditation as serving a functional role in his club's development indicating a somewhat utilitarian and instrumental approach to the development of swimming itself.

> Its possibly helped [Swim21] getting a clear pathway for development, but the governing body is more about just getting people through.....I don't think they're as interested in keeping people in the sport as long as others (NGBs). It's not really swimming for life...

These last comments are reminiscent of some of the evidence from LA1 and indicate that whilst VSC members are comfortable with the benchmarking role attributed to accreditation, they are not so comfortable with the potential impact on the mutual aid

tradition that tends to underpin the ethos of particular clubs. These remarks also signal some apparent discomfort with the impact of accreditation on club development and the potential sustainability of participation beyond certain limited strictures set down by the NGB. In this regard Curtis went on to comment that

> The club obviously trains people to their own potential, but then if that potential isn't to be an international swimmer...to still keep them involved and to enjoy taking part in the swimming.

It was on this complex mix of issues concerning perceived volunteer loads, the club ethos and the subjective impact for the volunteers themselves that many of the interviewees expressed some disquiet with the accreditation process as it impacted on their particular club. The biggest exception to this critical consensus was Club C, which given their adoption of the FA's charter standard as 'a benchmark to work from' (Kenny) is to be expected. However, despite this position Kenny still felt able to comment on two of the more critical issues relating to the take up of club accreditation.

> I can understand why [existing] clubs don't want to do it because it's a lot of work. Some clubs just think it's just interfering, its not because the FA don't interfere at all, but I can see why some clubs don't want to get involved because there is a fear factor there as well.

The workload issue was a concern for the more established VSCs with those in swimming Club E expressing similar sentiments as those in Club B about the Swim21 process and the role of the governing body. In particular, the top down nature of the policy process where 'they (ASA) give you certain plans that you have got to do' (Martin) was perceived of as indicative of the NGB approach. This then had at least two consequences, first in relation to the sheer volume of administration necessary to complete Swim 21 and second concerning the control needed over potential volunteers. Thus for Ronald (Club E Learn to Swim Coordinator) the process was

> ...a nightmare, the paperwork's a nightmare and they [ASA] keep moving the goal posts. The Club sent its first audit in and the regional development officers and people keep changing...So you've got so far in your audit or your plan and you got a new 'bod' come in and it throws everything out and you have got to see them, and explain what you are

> doing, how far you have got...it's a lot of toing and froing and changing of faces. We have found it, as a club, very difficult.

On the second point Alexander, a former Olympian, voiced his concerns over the relationship between the top down driven professionalisation inherent to Swim21, the subjective perceptions of the volunteers and the issue of sustainability.

> Quite often things like this people put their time and effort into it and somebody comes along and although you are offering a service, - oh you must do 'x' 'y' 'z' and they put restrictions on it. Immediately the people who are putting in their time voluntarily will back off and say - no. You know, I will do it in accordance with my desires and wishes because I am doing it ...I'll not do it to a set of rules and back down so. You know, we can end up losing people that way...

Indeed as much of the literature on volunteering (see chapters 2 & 3) has indicated, sustaining volunteers is no easy task and is increasingly made more difficult by the pressures facing volunteers (Nichols et al, 2005). In LA2 the density of policy networks to support this task would appear to be absent and there is little evidence of the CSP targets concerned with supporting and sustaining volunteers, being translated from the county to the local level. Both LA2's *Sport and Recreation Strategy* and the *Borough Community Plan* refer to sustainability in physical capital terms only even though the *Sport and Recreation Strategy* states that 'The time volunteers will be willing to give to voluntary sport will reduce as expectations and quality standards will continue to grow' (LA2, 2002: 13). These predictions together with an apparent policy vacuum at the local level appear to be reflected in a situation where volunteers may question their own commitment and involvement in VSCs. A senior committee member from Club D, in this regard, pointed out that

> ...people regard this as a hobby and a lot of people come down on a Sunday to escape all that rubbish they're into in their everyday lives and some of them when they are confronted with it down here; its like "do I really want to be doing this". (Phil)

Thus whilst LA2 seeks to improve its stock of physical capital to facilitate greater participation, at a policy level it apparently tends to ignore some of the 'soft wiring' issues that have become more significant as governance arrangements have evolved. The

evidence also suggests that clubs in LA2 tend to have little contact with the relevant sport specific development officers, but were all complimentary about the work of the local SDO. Indeed this apparent policy (or practical) anomaly again suggests a clear break in policy hierarchies and is indicative of a lacuna in the LA2 sport and recreation strategy in terms of reinforcing the key social capital generating device of greater and more plentiful volunteering in VSCs.

A cornerstone of the club accreditation process relates to the overtly social capitalistic desire to form partnerships with groups and organisations external to particular VSCs. This apparent policy thrust can be detected in the many comments of VSC members relating to the search for funding in particular, but also in relation to the relationships they have developed away from their central focus of the club itself. Club C as a charter development club were especially keen to link with other organisations in order to work on a community orientated footing. For example a number of club members mentioned the importance of the relationship that the club has with the local school (a specialist sports college), however whilst the relationship is beneficial it is also rather formal and utilitarian. In this case the partnership was driven by the conditionality attached to achieving development club status, which according to Alfie meant that

> ...the links with the school started when we wanted to become a development club...that was the FA saying "this is the criteria you need to become a development club". Prior to that we were running our own soccer school...but to get the development status we had to go through their criteria...it was a natural extension of what we were doing with a more formal agreement to it.

The acceptance of a level of formality was the norm for VSCs in LA2, particularly in terms of partnerships and agreements and perhaps none more so than Club D who moved into a new facility provided by the local authority in 2005. This partnership was remarked upon by all of the Club members interviewed. The formal arrangement of this partnership, according to Geoff, operating so that 'We manage it with the connivance of [Borough Council] and just get on with it like that'. The tone of ambivalence in the words of the Chairman is indicative of perceived club member concerns regarding the functioning of this key partnership. The strength and proficient operation of this

relationship is important for both club and local authority, particularly as it underpins the structure upon which greater community participation in the club as well as club participation in the community is based, and is an issue that will be returned to in due course.

Nonetheless part of the thrust of accreditation, as identified previously (see chapter 7, p.248) is to encourage more than partnerships of utility, in particular policy orientation in this context is towards having more external foci to individual VSCs. Once again the clash between the mutual aid driven ethos of VSCs and the more utilitarian appreciation of broader policy themes emerged. The pertinence of this tension is that given the mutual aid ethos of the VSCs in LA2, most partnerships may only ever reflect a utilitarianism whereby each party continues the partnership because of particular benefits accruing. In this sense partnership development is once again reminiscent of the Rational Strain approach to social capital creation rather than the Putnamian vision of networks and partnerships based on expressing civic virtue. In respect of the partnership between Club D and the Borough Council the following comments from Dai and Geoff tend to reinforce this interpretation and suggest that the potential for increased participation coupled with the opportunity to evidence that outcome is the perceived main outcome for the Borough Council in respect of this partnership. For Dai, the club

> Enables other individuals to participate in rugby in the round, there is community development, but it is difficult to quantify. There is a value to the council who can say "we can demonstrate that within our parameters we have a range of sports".

Whilst Geoff indicated that although participation is a mutual goal, the long term outcome lies in the local authority being able to prove their community development credentials to the people of the Borough.

> Well they want it to succeed because they have put a lot of money into it and it's no good if nobody uses it. And it's no good for us if we don't attract players. They [Borough Council] have to prove that it's the right place to put the money. And shows that...they are giving a commitment to the community.

Furthermore, this tension tends to impact on the potential capacity for VSCs to undertake participatory activity as a form of community development, particularly as for many volunteers the drive to participate in a particular VSC is determined by their interest in a specific sport. So, as argued in LA1, whilst partnerships tend to be entered into by VSCs in order to achieve particular outcomes or fulfil organisational necessities, networks are largely individually based and as such are likely to be the key determinant of a VSCs capacity for social capital creation. In this respect it is quite possible that an individual's attempt to establish private social capital, where the outcomes of his actions provide the resources for personal use or gain, is the most pertinent factor. In practice in a VSC, such as Club D for example, the outcome may be rather more straightforward

> ...primarily you get rugby people coming in or coming back to rugby, it's primarily rugby that drives them its not "I want to contribute to the community, I know a rugby club's a good idea lets do it that way"...it's because people want to play rugby (Graham, Club D player)

Indeed the incorporation of VSCs within a policy framework and hierarchy based on notions of providing for the public good not only signals the institutionalisation of Putnamian social capital (Szreter, 2002), but also contextualises the apparent desire for capacity building within VSCs. The resultant policy context which has underlined the emphasis laid at the door of many VSCs to reconnect citizens to each other as well as to their communities was implicated by much of the evidence from LA2. Interestingly in this regard it was noticeable that all of the VSCs in LA2 appeared much more inclusive in terms of the language used to when discussing the nature of their particular club's ethos, the relationship they have with their particular local community and the notion of community value itself. For instance it was remarked of one Chairman that he 'does presentations, about being part of the community', and that by volunteering one can give 'the youth a quality of life by just doing one thing' (Alfie). Alexander observed that 'as an Olympic medallist, I have offered to do an assembly attendance', whilst all Club D interviewees considered their club to be 'friendly', 'incredibly welcoming' and having a 'family aspect'. An inference of these final comments is perhaps that in welcoming outsiders club members do not necessarily distinguish between the club as a venue and the club as a social construct. The necessary proviso in this respect is the recurring theme

of VSCs being in the first instance for individuals who are interested in particular sports and as such VSCs are prone to the limiting aspect of self-selectivity, endemic to much Bourdieun analysis of social capital. However, the impression of relative inclusivity of Club D was nicely summed up by the following comments from Josh (Club D junior section Head Coach), who is incidentally not local to the area himself.

> Its friendly and you feel you belong to it. No matter who you are, what background you're from, you're not an outsider...I feel part of the club, as do parents as do coaches...

In considering networks as distinct from partnerships as the key element to social capital creation it is worth noting that the internal and external networks individuals were part of were often cited as important in relation to funding although this was not a consistent finding. More importantly these networks were apparently valued more highly when it came to individuals being able to capitalise on these resources to benefit themselves and once again draws the readers attention towards the potential for the 'inequitable distribution' (Foley and Edwards, 1999) of social capital resources. In this respect for members of Club C it was a case of 'Someone's dad will approach their company where they work "will you sponsor us for the year?"' (Coach) or as the Chairman put it 'we ask'. Similarly for Club D '...the boss [of the main sponsor] is on the committee, the other boss unfortunately died, he was our president' (Geoff). Club E appeared to lack the necessary networks that were evidently used by other clubs to realise funding through forms of sponsorship. Despite this, Malcolm (Club E Chairman), who is new to the role and self-consciously quite 'business-minded', articulated his concerns thus

> It takes time to build the relationships and get to the right contacts, but that's something that I fully intend to do and I have already identified a couple of opportunities.

Moreover, the same respondent also indicated that he would be willing to mobilise his social capital resources as conceptualised by the Rational Strain in order to access sponsorship funding.

> We don't currently have sponsorship and that is something we would benefit from as a club. I am quite lucky that I have got some contacts,

> some fairly large businesses that I can approach and hopefully get in front of the right people to start putting some sponsorship cases to them so that we can hopefully win some sponsorship.

As might be expected many of the networks identified related to friendship groupings and these were apparently key to the recruitment of players, coaches, committee members and parents to clubs. The two most repeated key phrases from the data in this respect were 'word of mouth' and 'recommended by' which tends to indicate the importance of both the density of a network but also who the network involves. Certainly for Alexander this scenario implied a normative function and hence greater potential for community involvement in swimming

> If people are people, people then they will bring people with them...their services will bring their next door neighbour's family and kids and whatever through the word of mouth thing.

Although this view may imply an element of Putnamian theory it tends to overlook the Bourdieun rider concerning the non-voluntary predispositions that 'ineluctably' shape individuals' participation in particular sporting activities (Lewandowski, 2006). The evidence from VSC members in LA2 suggests that discourse and policies that promote modernisation and accreditation are not only dominating the agenda for VSC but indeed are setting the agenda. The drive towards partnership and network development as modes of governance for voluntary organisations may also indicate a level of instrumentalism that predisposes the underlying social capital framework towards more individual social capital outcomes.

Structural Issues

In much the same way as in LA1, the POS is used here in a comprehensive manner to identify and explain the structural embeddedness of each VSC in relation to the constellation of meso and micro-policy networks that operate to underpin the concept of social capital at the macro level. It is clear (from the Cultershire case study) that stakeholders external to, but reliant on the outputs and outcomes of VSCs, each contribute and are part of at the same time, a particular POS that helps to structure their expectations of VSCs. Furthermore these expectations often relate to the fulfilment of

their own strategic aims and objectives that have been set forth in local policy documents. Indeed social capital is implicitly embraced in the local *Borough Community Plan* which entreats the local population to 'work together in partnership to make efficient, effective and sustainable use of resources that meets the need of our communities' (LA2, 2004:1). It is interesting to note that unlike LA1, where at the micro level the policy cascade suggested a quite utilitarian outcome in terms of sport contributing to the 'Big picture'. In LA2 the *Sport and Recreation Strategy* is more cautious stating that 'the positive benefits...far outweigh the negative' (LA2, 2002: 4), moreover the benefits are cast as 'spin offs' which itself is suggestive of a particular POS faced by the Council in drawing up its strategy.

As highlighted previously, within one local authority the POS for VSCs may be very different, with the role of NGBs and the relationship that a particular VSC has with its governing body, being quite significant in terms of determining the POS itself. Kenny for example, given the charter standard status of the club appeared irritated with what he saw as quite parsimonious support and benefit that was forthcoming from the respective NGB (FA).

> I think there are times when the governing body says a lot of good things and there's nothing there for clubs like us and that's frustrating because you set your stall out to achieve certain things and they've recommended that we do this and we're doing it, not because they're making us do it but because we want to do it...we had a meeting with three other charter standard clubs...and they were talking about what benefits it was to be a charter standard club, well there isn't any. There's no benefit at all other than the fact that you've got to put more hours in to achieve it and to do it properly. I think governing bodies need to recognise what charter standard clubs do, and they need to be supporting them a lot better than they currently are.

In this respect the act of accreditation itself conditions both the formal institutional structure and the prevailing approaches of upper tier authorities as well as informing on the configuration of power. That the NGB has apparently not been more proactive with its chartered status clubs, such as Club C is perhaps indicative of some confusion concerning policies aimed at providing structured supportive mechanisms. This sense of

policy confusion may also mean that accredited clubs in one sense may feel slighted by the lack of perceived support, but also that sport volunteer expectations are that support will and should be forthcoming. In this regard one can sense an evolution to the subjective perceptions held by some VSC volunteers of their own volunteering activity (Adams and Deane, 2009), which may further reflect on issues of mutual aid, sustainability and the types of social capital that can be created within a VSC. Kenny suggested that in respect of structural processes there should be a normative emphasis on developing the ethos and structure of accredited clubs in much the same way that modernisation provides an overarching normative context for club accreditation. This in itself could be seen as amounting to a form of social capital that is both exclusive and privileging, although for the Chairman was viewed as a case of rewarding the normatively compliant clubs insofar that the FA are saying "'these guys are actually trying to do it right, so we *need* to support them", rather than just say "oh it's just a football club"'.

The emphasis on this aspect of structure is reminiscent of Lukes (1974, 2005) third dimension of power and serves to remind the reader of different interpretations of the structure to deliver on the strategic orientation to social capital outcomes that was so evident from chapter 6. In the context of power relations alluded to above the structure is shaped by the ability of actors' to influence or shape the preferences or choices made by other actors. Whereas in considering organisational structure the focus is on those observable and more tangible arrangements that enact or represent policy themes. In considering these two aspects in tandem the discourse surrounding modernisation invokes its dualistic function of diagnostic and solver of problems (Finlayson, 2003). The issue of power and locus of decision making is important for the structure of any broader social capital outcomes given that the NGBs implicit and somewhat traditional top down approach may also tend to privilege certain clubs at the expense of others in terms of the perceived power they are able to exert. This can lead to resentment and disenfranchisement as easily as it can to the acceptance of any normative structure established by any one particular NGB. So whilst Josh passed comment that

> The RFU haven't listened to us because we are not perceived of as a powerful club...also the RFU are as guilty of it as anyone else, the "what are you doing telling us, we're in charge" sort of attitude...

On the whole Club D's relationship with its NGB was perceived of as 'excellent' with what were described as 'outreach officers' (Dai) perceived as not only indicative of the proactive approach of the NGB, but also indicative of the NGB's willingness to help set the structure for the continued club development In many respects the perceptions held by these club members of their governing body broadly suggests a NGB that although liking to get its own way does so with the development 'of sport' intentions firmly in mind (Houlihan and White, 2002). The RFU like other NGBs has developed its own strategic plan (RFU, 2008) within the context of the broader policy rich environment that has encompassed sport in the last ten years. In doing so it is clear that the policy cascade has become centred on issues of modernisation and social capital which also indicates that policy making has the power to structure as well as being an outcome of decisions made by actors within the structure itself. In this respect the 2007 Sport England policy documents provide just part of the policy rich environment that in building on central government concerns aired in *A sporting future for All* and *Game Plan*, tends to reinforce the notion of an emergent and coordinated delivery system for sport.

This relatively seamless policy hierarchy surrounding the notion of a community sport delivery system has implications for the POS of VSCs in terms of their ability to develop the necessary capacity to meet stakeholder expectations that they will provide a socially inclusive quality service. What this policy rich environment doesn't necessarily address is the profile of the sports concerned, and the importance attached to that profile in terms of potential outputs, outcomes that can have a bearing on the potential for social capital creation. From LA 1 it was noticeable how swimming had a distinctly lower profile than rugby which in turn tended to be related to club and sport ethos. In LA2 the evidence would appear to be similar, with the Martin arguing that '...swimming is a very low profile sport compared to rugby and football and a lot of people don't really take a lot of notice of us.' The Chairman Malcolm was also keen to get the club on a proactive footing particularly in terms of 'improving the awareness of swimming in the community as a sport'. In part, one of the problems faced by Club E was very similar to that of Club

B (from LA1) and concerned the organisational issue of pool time and pool allocation. This was deemed to be an issue by members of each swimming club respectively, largely because each of the clubs' main pool was run by a private company on behalf of the local authority. In this context the sport's low profile when married to the local authority's responsibility to develop a modernised service profile, as an 'enabler' with multiple partners, tended to conflict with the modernising drive that was apparent within each club's internal structure. It is in this sense that the following comments from Ronald have some purchase

> I would like to improve the relationship between the Club and the Leisure Centre...I think it's very strained at the moment. One is reluctant to give way to the other.

In this respect each swimming club was apparently restricted in terms of the extent and value and meaning it could offer to third parties as a potential venue for creating social capital.

A keenly related issue was that of Club E's learn to swim school, which in similar fashion to Club B, is run in competition with that run by the leisure centre operator. Notwithstanding the apparent 'strained relationship' between operator and Club E, there does appear to be some consultation with the private company (lacking for Club B) concerning this service aspect of the club's output. According to Malcolm this meant that 'we handle the specific level onwards and they handle a particular lower level', however this lack of control over what is the key resource for a swimming club appeared to lead to feelings of uncertainty concerning the expense of running a pool making them an 'easy target' (Curtis) for any local authority cost cutting. In contrast to Club B, for Club E the lack of power they are able to exert has apparently contributed to the desire to develop and strengthen their networks and partnerships with external stakeholders. This may appear to foster the appropriate criteria for creating types of social capital, although in so doing may tend to impact on the development of the sport itself. Thus for Malcolm

> ...historically clubs have been affiliated with pools or leisure centres so they haven't needed to have all these external relationships, and I think for those clubs that are lucky enough to operate from the main pool in the area

> that's still the case. They tend not to maintain external relationships particularly. Yeah they need to know who the contacts are at the Council that are funding them, but beyond that it is kind of insular and they can get on and mind their own business. However, for other clubs that are not so lucky, there is a need for them to build these relationships and develop these strategies and policies to protect their interests and their talent and that's the challenge we've got.

This issue of the playing resource and home was also a key issue for both Clubs C and D, although within LA2 only Club D had managed to have had a new facility built and funded by the local authority. In part this was because '... the [previous] building was owned by them [and the] pitches are owned by [the council] and maintained by them' (Geoff). However as indicated by the Chief Leisure Officer (CLO) for the Borough VSCs have potential for local community cohesion and active citizenship 'Because they already have organisational structure, they could effectively become magnets for bigger community enterprises, bigger community efforts'. To be sure the CLO also argued that this was in tune with the policy cascade coming down from Sport England which hoped for 'total sports clubs' that 'wouldn't just focus on one sport, they would actually offer several different sports'. In this regard the building of a new rugby clubhouse was as much a local authority determined policy decision as it was necessity because of the apparent dilapidated state of the previous clubhouse. The Geoff was forthright on this point

> The real reason why the rugby club went along with this new building was because we were approached by the council and our old building was falling down. They approached us and put it to us that they wanted the Kings Boys' Club [not real name], the tennis club, because there was a tennis club there before, and us to join forces, and they will build a place and we will manage it and get on with it and we went along with it.

This notion that there are social capitalistic undercurrents to the logic and reasoning for the building of the new clubhouse was repeatedly mentioned by the club members, with one senior member remarking that 'Yes they've built this building, it's marvellous but unfortunately they would sooner forget why we're actually here, it is to play rugby' (Phil). Indeed the sport specific aspect often seemed to be missing when stakeholders considered the new facility that had been built in part to house the rugby club. Nick (LA2

SDO) for example had referred to the transformative impact that the facility had and was having mainly because 'There wasn't really a lot to do around there so it's become a focus for the community and it gets people involved...' In part, two implicit assumptions to this debate tend to foreshadow the potential that Club D has, as a voluntary association, to create social capital. First that in building a facility that houses a VSC that that club/building automatically becomes of central interest to, and within, the local community. Second that VSC engagement with aspects of community development is as important as the primary activity which is playing rugby through the mutual agreement of many individuals. Once again the impression is of the Democratic Strain of social capital being at the heart of policy making and intended policy outcomes, although as the following rather unremarkable comments from Dai indicate, the club only really gets those involved who have an appetite for rugby and consequently opportunities for creating social capital are limited.

> We don't [seek opinions of local residents] except that a lot of people that play for the club are local residents so they are engaged, but they are not representative of residents

For Club C the situation is similar to Club E in that they are not supported by the local authority facility-wise, however they face a dissimilar POS largely because football is the most popular sport 'with dozens and dozens of football clubs across the Borough' (LA2, CLO). To be sure the proactive and community-focused nature of this charter standard club is also an important factor in shaping the POS within which the club finds itself. This is clearly demonstrated by Kenny's apparent willingness to address agendas that may have been formed outside of the club itself, so that when working with the local SSP development officer there is a realisation that this person

> ...has got a lot on his plate that he needs to achieve and has boxes he has to tick and he's happy to tell you "I need this doing, and can you be involved in it" and that's fine because at the end of the day I'm doing something I love and so are the people that are involved in it. If we can't do it we'd say no.

However the POS for Club C also tended to be circumscribed by the number of clubs across the borough who had sought to take up club accreditation. The issue in this regard

was considered threefold by members of Club C: first the desire for network development was apparently limited which meant that in respect of meetings 'with all the charter clubs in Cultershire...about fifty clubs, but only about six people turned up' (Alfie); second the non-charter clubs tended to suffer from a fear factor insofar that 'A lot of people find chartered status quite intimidating because a lot of teams aren't chartered status' (Neil); and third there was some envy and '...resentment that we are a charter standard club' (Kenny) among non-accredited clubs. This perception held by the members of this club is likely to stem from the apparent enthusiasm to develop, expand and network with many other agencies to build the resources at their disposal. Thus the club can be seen to be accruing economic, human and social forms of capital, which are dependent on a high level of proactivity which is in turn related to their status as an accredited club. Whilst not suggesting an overtly causal relationship and succumbing to determinism and accepting that human agency is a key driving force Kenny himself acknowledged the structural impact of accreditation on the particular POS for Club C

> [What] drives the club? It's not just me pushing other people. I've got people outside of the club pushing me...pushing is maybe the wrong word, guiding is probably a better word because they don't make you do anything – they'll ask you if you want to be involved in this or that the same as [SDOs] do.

The relationship of the sport and the VSC profile is also potentially significant when one considers the ethos of particular VSCs and sports. It is apparent from the issues discussed above that individuals from the VSCs in LA2 tended to perceive and use the particular POS to their or their clubs best advantage when dealing with agencies external to their particular club. The levels of interpenetration (Maloney et al, 2000) that appear to be expected by upper tier authorities are, according to the evidence, seemingly becoming implanted at a normative level within VSCs. The consequence of which tends to be felt in the particular ethos of a VSC, which in reflecting the expectations and desires that individuals bring with them into the club, has become more business and professionally 'minded'. In this sense the architecture of modernisation tends to underpin the formation of the organisational structures that impact on the way that particular VSCs will adapt and develop accordingly. In this regard the informal procedures and dominant strategies

inherent in a particular POS become embedded so that for Richard (LA2 CLO) it was a case that volunteers who are beginning to go into VSCs are 'actually a product of the times' who 'are prepared to take a much more enlightened, modern approach...'

The acceptance and operationalisation of the organisational structures necessary to deliver on any strategic orientation to social capital outcomes are thus as reliant on VSC volunteers' themselves as well as their willingness for their mutual aid activity to be co-opted within the broader policy driven aims associated with the sport delivery structure in England (Sport England, 2007b). In this regard the following comments from Josh indicate the fine line that VSCs have to take in balancing club outcomes and volunteer expectations with the need to work in partnership with external agencies.

> ...it's narrow-mindedness that holds people back...its fear of the unknown perhaps, fear of change...its change or die isn't it? We will change...its not going to happen overnight and people have got to accept it...on the negative side some may think its getting too formal now, its not for me, however the majority want to improve things...making it more formal, improving the structures there – I think most of the volunteers are happy with that. It's about balance "I come to volunteer, these are the targets, if you don't meet them what are they going to do. Sack you! You've got to have aims...but any volunteering has got to be enjoyable...

Moreover, the influence of the particular governing body is important in this respect not least because they have been tasked in identifying the integrating vision necessary to raising nationwide levels of physical activity (DCMS, 2000). The reinforcing of the policy continuum with the publication of the 2008 DCMS plan *Playing to Win* once again places evidence-based policy and targeted achievement to the fore (Solesbury, 2001). In identifying that NGBs will be 'more accountable for what they are delivering' (SE, 2008: 13), *Playing to Win* implies that the acceptance of organisational structuring by VSCs is likely to become a necessity rather than an option. The evidence from the three clubs surveyed tended to suggest that on the whole they accepted steering from their relevant NGB, which once again informs on the implicit power relationship between club and NGB. In part this was reflected in VSC compliance in the NGB drive to link up clubs in a particular sport, such as the RFU desire to have 'clusters' of clubs within particular counties, but also in establishing the criteria by which clubs are able to judge themselves.

This last point also conveys an impression that club autonomy may be being impinged upon, although again most club members indicated that the convergence of VSC and NGB agendas was a good thing. For Dai it was the case that

> 'We are moving to their agenda because it's a good benchmark, for a club to go too far off that type of track there would be censure in some way, but we view it as something we want to achieve.

The above comments whilst similar to those coming from members of Club C were also reflected by Martin

> ...our governing body says we have got certain criteria and you have got to follow certain things because that is what the governing body says and if you don't they are going to be stepping down on you.

However, the organisational structure apparent in empowering NGBs and following both established and emergent policy agendas/hierarchies at national, meso and local levels needs to be cautioned by the ever-present potential for the 'self-destroying' processes inherent in placing mutual aid organisations in a more service orientated framework. A framework that whilst apparently bottom-up may actually reduce the democratic potentiality of a VSC by ensuring that accountability is upwards rather than downwards to its members (Held, 1996, Lijphart, 1999). This has potentially serious implications for the Putnamian approach to both the creation and meaning of social capital as well as the manner in which VSCs may be able to exert 'cultural power' (Dyreson, 2001, see chap 3, p.108) and contribute towards both civil society and the broader notion of the civic culture. Put simply it may mean that far from driving up participation and improving retention levels (Sport England, 2008) and providing a springboard for individual participation in civil society. The impact may well be detrimental, particularly if volunteers perceive decision making to be moving away from its mutual aid base. In this respect the following comments from two respondents from Club D serve as a reminder of the underpinning voluntary ethos and how that can be disrupted by the 'unintentional' outcomes of policy (Dorey, 2005)

> Volunteers bring a different type of commitment; it is not a contractual commitment it's one which meets various aspirations that they hold

> personally and fills various needs...the longevity of some of our volunteers underpins that... (Dai)

and:

> ...if I don't like the atmosphere and if I feel like I'm being manipulated or taken somewhere where I don't want to go, then I will walk. I'm very much here on my terms. I've just gone through the CRB process...and it is a fag and a disincentive (Graham).

The above comments in alluding to the formalisation inherent to many of the structures and processes signal the existence of a tension concerning the balance between professionalisation and formalisation, and the ability of individuals to exert individual control over their own voluntary activity.

The evidence from the two local authorities is that this tension is something of a common denominator and a constant and that the problematic issue with much policy that impacts on VSCs, both sports specific and social, is in negotiating between these competing aspects. In particular the dominance of partnership working as a tool of governance in the establishment of network development has not only externalised some of the decision making, but led to a rather unquestioning acceptance of all manner of partnerships as being healthy for VSCs and their members. Indeed there were few voices of dissent concerning the worth of partnerships, perhaps because of the already stated fear of 'censure' or of a NGB 'stepping down' (Dai). One respondent however did opine on this issue

> We seem to be responding more to other peoples' decisions than driving those decisions in the first place...some of the things we're involved in that are described as partnerships are questionable (Graham).

Moreover in similar fashion to LA1, the partnerships and networks that particular clubs were involved with were given much greater value when those connections were intra sport and with governing body support. However the consistency of this finding across the two local authorities is diluted somewhat by the evidence from Club C. In this particular football club whilst individuals were keen to identify their preparedness to link with a range of external organisations, they were also clear that that did not extend to other football clubs. In this respect as Alfie pointed out

> 'I don't think it's [working with other clubs] a football thing, clubs are fiercely loyal you know "I'm part of this club, your part of that club", they generally don't mix.'

It is possible that in this regard the accredited status of the club, together with a more traditional antipathy for perceived competitors has tended to reinforce a culture of separateness within the particular sport. Simon Cultershire FA Development Manager commenting on this issue argued that

> 'The challenge is trying to get clubs to think outside of their own structure. They are very much our club, our club and we would like to get them to think "can you be of support to one of the clubs who ain't (sic) your club?" Again it's a culture thing where they are worried about their club and there's always going to be a wider competitive element but its trying to get clubs to think wider than their own patch which is difficult.

In a similar fashion to LA1 the evidence from LA2 suggests that each of the VSCs examined faces a different POS, which has implications for the how each club negotiates the policy context within which it finds itself. There are of course policy driven structures such as Community Sport Networks (CSNs) which appear to be of little relevance to VSCs themselves, judging from the lack of awareness and interest exhibited towards them by all respondents in LA2. Importantly top down structures, such as CSNs, are not merely 'exogenous factors' as generally thought of by Putnam (Tarrow, 1996), but are important to the governance of VSCs under the gaze of modernisation. Indeed they make up part of the POS that each club faces and the ability of each VSC to 'reach out' towards CSNs may once again be indicative of both the social capital within each club and the potential for social capital creation. It is on this point that the influence of top-down mechanisms in relation to social capital can be felt as the Sport England *2008-2011 Strategy* has identified that CSNs will only be supported in future where they meet Sport England's stated strategic aims. The onus to be given to NGBs within the emerging policy framework tends to be substantiated by the evidence from this case study and suggests that VSCs themselves, via their particular governing body, are to become the agents for delivering the underpinning social capitalistic objectives. In this regard the emphasis within VSCs is likely to be on developing partnerships within a particular sport

backed by their respective NGB, largely because as argued by Dai there is little merit in going outside of one's own sport

> ...there is an issue with talking to other sports club. I can't see much mileage; most members are working and have limited time...there's not much point to divert and go and talk to a swimming club as an example, I couldn't see the benefit to either them or us in so doing.

The assumption made by many stakeholders that those in VSCs would want to link vertically in order to have a voice and be heard outside of a particular club's main mutually driven focus towards its own particular sport, may have been misplaced. The evidence suggests that sport-specific supportive networks and partnerships are more likely to be seen as relevant and purposeful and hence useful from the point of view of developing stocks of social capital. Furthermore whilst there is greater awareness of the potential community value of their clubs, than there is in LA1, the within-sport focus of many respondents perhaps reflects individual strategies to ameliorate the apparent tension between external modernising structures, internal governance arrangements and the individual volunteer's desires for relative autonomy within the POS they face.

Community issues

This part of the exploration of the VSCs in LA2 focuses on the perceptions and interpretations of VSC members themselves as they relate to the perceived role, value and relationship that a particular club has to its locality or community. The following discussion necessarily develops the themes outlined thus far in the previous two sections of this chapter and serves to provide some comparative notes with the previous local authority case study. In similar fashion to the previous chapter, the following section highlights specific instances (Denscombe, 2003) where policy continuities have transcended locally determined interpretation as well as where elements of distinctiveness within the local policy context have impacted on the perceptions of various actors.

As explained in the previous chapter social capital is fundamentally linked to a perceived community, whether in the guise of a potential collective resource that ultimately

produces a public good, an individual resource pursued for personal gain or a strategic stratified resource that can reinforce one's social status. Once again, in the context of critical realist research, use of the transitive objects of knowledge helps inform and explore on the intransitive (Bhaskar, 1978) and to this extent social capital theory is heuristically applied to VSCs. It is in this regard that it is important to be reminded of the abstract nature of social capital and that the main focus of VSCs tends to be on getting on with the business of playing and enjoying sport.

Identifying the club-community relationship

In many ways when examining the club-community relationship in the context of social capital the critical issue tends to concern the extent to which the underlying policy context has effectively come to dominate the social perception of the VSC. In essence the evidence relates to the issue of the exercising of power in both setting agendas and in establishing a coherent discourse which facilitates the setting of those agendas. Indeed the macro level promotion of the two overarching policy agendas of modernisation and community as a means of enriching the lives of individuals (Driver and Martell, 1998) has tended to promote the VSC as a key tool in achieving this outcome. Given the policy-rich environment surrounding sport, community and modernisation (see chapters 2 and 3) the requirement for VSCs to become community focused is both a logical and necessary outcome.

A central element to the community focus or relationship that a particular VSC can have with its locality concerns the issue of embeddedness which, as identified in the previous chapter, raises questions about such matters as local identity, social function as well as an appreciation that a VSC may be perceived of as having a civic duty. This was expressed at the county level by the Council Leader as a 'sense of place' and was aptly captured by Neil (Club C coach) as a key context for the club's ethos in that

> [The club] contributes a sense of being part of something, being part of the community as it is a community-based club. We are for the community and if we can help any kids or if somebody approaches us and wants us to go and help coach or even make a fun day for some kids...some parents can't afford to send their kids to a football club...and just to know that

> every couple of months they can bring their child down to the astroturf and have a fun day – I think that's really good. For people to realise in this community that they can do that, I mean not a lot of people have got a lot of money and we know that...and if we give up a day of our work or a days holiday to go and give these kids, sometimes underprivileged kids, give them a sense of being part of something. It just creates a really good sense of being part of (sic)...

Moreover Kenny was keen to point to the importance of terminology used in reference to the club, and particularly when the term 'local' was applied to the club by those external to it. So that when people were referred to Club C by Cultershire FA and had been informed that the club was 'the local club' the perception was of the term having positive connotations and positive outcomes for this accredited club. '*It's* only a word, but it means that people do recognise you as being the main one around, one that is prepared to give your kids a decent go' [original emphasis]. There tended to be a consensus on this point across all levels of interviewee throughout the club and is perhaps indicative of the dominance of horizontal social capital within the relationships that individual club members are bound into. Indeed the social capital prominent in Club C appeared to be more of the solidaristic bonding sort, particularly where word of mouth and school group membership were often the dominant aspects associated with friendship groups and the particular team played in within the club. The player Toby commented thus that

> It helps that I know most through school already...[I'd] rather stay in a team with my mates...its like a family atmosphere...we all know each other and we all have a laugh, its football [we] just enjoy football...

It is once again a moot point as to whether practice follows intentions; however for all of the VSCs in LA2 the notion of a sense of place inexorably focussed attention onto the physical capital at the disposal of each particular club. Thus whilst individuals within Club C were able to identify the importance of being 'local' to their identity, there was also some consternation that because the club did not have a clubhouse that they could not be the community club they desired to be.

> ...we want a clubhouse that can be used as a community venue...from what I see of [local ward] there isn't really a focal point for a community club...if particularly we get the clubhouse, then we could attract for arguments sake the Scouts and Guides and that helps the club (Dai)

This point was echoed by the two other case study clubs in LA2. Club D in particular with its new council built facility was considered by some of its members to now have something extra to offer the community and from which the community could benefit. For Geoff however, the community impact was viewed as inevitably slow as 'word of mouth' was the primary means of communication amongst the local population indicating the power of certain networks to enable communication between a voluntary organisation and its local community. Furthermore, a word of mouth network may also tend to enshrine normative and restrictive elements within it so that only those with the appropriate resources to exploit this form of social capital become cognisant of the situation. In this regard Geoff's remarks are noteworthy

> Well I think the local people they like the club because they saw the other one...and this is something different all together, and they come back and they pass on their comments to their peers and their friends and we get people like that coming in... It started off rather slowly, you got the inquisitors, then they went away and now we are getting the regulars. The thing is, what the public don't realise at the moment, is that it's open to the public. They think it's a rugby club and a boys' club. They are now beginning to realise because they are coming now and poking their noses in the door and asking questions and it's more than that, it is open to the public.

These comments suggest a difference of emphasis concerning the distinction between the clubhouse as a public facility and the club as a bounded social construct, as was apparent with Club A in LA1. There still remained, however, a tension or contradiction between members' apparently wanting to increase the number of players and membership of the club, encouraging members of the public to come along to the club and the club being a private members club. Thus one senior member argued that

> The new clubhouse has created inquisitiveness...and we've come into this new facility, which is absolutely marvellous, but we've got to decide how we move forward. With the facility we've got an ideal opportunity to move forward and it's the numbers we need (Dai).

In contrast, for Graham, the wider public perception of what a rugby club is and the fact that it is a 'club' may reinforce the socially constructed barriers that many accept as reality 'I don't know if any rugby clubs are attractive to non-rugby folks...it is a

members club after all so people don't think they can come in off the street...'. This is, in part, indicative of an incongruity and paradox between the capacity for social capital creation within the club and the club's dominant mutual aid function. Indeed the notion of mutual aid tends to define what a members club is, and this often contradicts contemporary policy contexts which increasingly task the VSC with meeting broader sport development objectives. In similar fashion to Club A, the result often becomes manifest in a rather functional interpretation and approach to community involvement. This was clear in Dai's comments

> 'I think we are fairly community orientated already. Certainly my impression from those I talk to in the RFU is that certainly we meet their standards for community involvement'.

This functionalism was also evident in Geoff's remarks concerning the value of the facility rather than the 'club' to the wider community '...we've got a decent place now, that the community can use, before we didn't have anything to offer the community'.

Once again the possibilities for social capital creation would seem to suggest an interpretation based on the Rational Strain, where self interest and horizontally thin trust orchestrate individual actions. However, it would seem that, partly because the local authority owns the building and partly because the club has a community focus, that Club D is perceived, by Graham, as a 'community resource'. Moreover, the dominant mutual aid ethos of the club tends to imply that thicker and more normative levels of trust exist between club members. This may be reminiscent of Putnamian arguments concerning social capital, however the apparent lack of generalisability of trust and norms, and lack of direction of causality evident on this occasion is once again suggestive of an implicit tautology to the moral inflationism inherent to the Democratic Strain of social capital. Indeed the Graham's comments are chastening in this respect

> Fundamentally this is a rugby club. People want to play rugby and they are not bothered necessarily about the rest of the stuff that goes on with it, it's a by-product. The club exists for the members, not in any closed capacity, anyone can come along, but it's run by the members for the members

Club E was in a similar position to the Club B from LA1, and Club C, in having no fixed clubhouse or facility. Unlike Club B however, Club E at least had a presence, in the form of 'a shop...and front desk', in the leisure centre that provides the mainstay of the club's swimming. Furthermore, far more of the mutual aid ethos was evident than for Club B, particularly as members of Club E tended to have a more clearly defined perception of the club's community relationship. Thus for Alexander the apparently nagging issue of the club being used as a 'child-minding service' tended to negate the perceived importance of the club's mutual aid ethos, although paradoxically this aspect of the 'service that the club provides' is also a key mechanism for the community to benefit.

> We are attractive from the point of view that we are financially very competitive, in fact, so much so that believe it or not it is cheaper to enrol your children into our swimming club and get, if you want, hours of respite for a week by dropping the children off...we go across the range of employment, across the range of jobs, across the range of attitudes and I would say the swimming club does serve a distinct purpose to the community.

Despite the apparent commitment to the community expressed by various members of Club E, the cost of swimming at the club tended to be similar to the costs at Club B once an individual has progressed from 'learn to swim' to the club proper. Thus whilst market principles may help to ensure that a club maintains its swim school prices at a competitive level, once beyond 'learn to swim' the potential that the club has for serving the community may diminish. In particular the issue, similar to that in LA1, centres on the limiting potential of economic capital, which meant for one top swimmer that '...a lot of people are of a similar socio-economic group, partly because of the cost involved' (Curtis). The existence of a more homogeneous club composition once again points to the significance of the critical strain of social capital. Not least because according to Bourdieu other forms of capital, such as the economic and cultural in particular, influence the propensity for an individual to participate in a VSC as a matter of taste (Bourdieu, 1984). In this sense any social capital that is created tends to be self-serving to the group and consequently operates to maintain aspects of social segregation and distinction. It is interesting to note that some of these processes appear to be happening despite the appreciation by most members of Club E that the club has a social function and a civic

duty, and despite the Chairman's appeal that 'We don't want to appear as though we are taking, taking, taking, we want to provide our services and expertise in swimming back to the community'.

When considering the policy context for the VSCs of LA2 it is noteworthy that the local authority *Sport and Recreation Strategy* predates that of LA1 by some four years is far more substantial, and is based on research carried out by the local authority in 2001. Consequently, the policy framework for engagement in sport in LA2 is built on a long term strategy that has been endorsed by their CSN, which is chaired by the local SDO. Whereas, *Developing Active Communities,* the sport and physical activity strategy for LA1, although drawn up by the sports development unit was ratified under the auspices of the district's CSN. In this sense one can interpret the two local authority strategies differently: the LA1 strategy being drawn up to service the aims and objectives of its particular CSN, whilst the LA2 strategy has been influential in the forming of the aims and objectives of their particular CSN.

Of interest here is the tone, scope and outlook of these two strategies particularly as, in relation to the countywide orientation to achieve a range of social capital outcomes the strategies, each tends to provide the local context for the strategic filtering of the policy landscape. In this respect the overwhelming focus of the LA2 strategy is on facility development or redevelopment, which in the seemingly innocuous statement 'a combination of effort and resources are required' (LA2, 2002: 4), implies that the local authorities part of the bargain is to help provide the necessary resources for participation. Given that the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for LA2 rates the council as good and states that 'The council provides strong leadership in the community' and that 'Underpinning this is the strong link forged between councillors and the local community' (Audit Commission, 2004:9), it is not surprising that the *Sport and Recreation Strategy* was clear and direct, necessitating council pro-activity to ensure its long-term success. Richard in discussing the thrust of the local authority confirmed that almost seventeen million pounds had been spent on facility development since 2001, and that the major emphasis was now 'on promoting and increasing participation in sport and

recreation which is our number one target'. Furthermore, this CLO emphasised that participation was not the only driver

> ...we genuinely believe that increased participation is good for the well-being of our community both in terms of mental health and physical health and in terms of what our council mission is in improving the quality of life for all our residents.

The local policy context as discussed above is important for a number of reasons not least of which is that the proactive and somewhat paternalistic approach apparent in LA2 may indeed underpin the overt community focus that each of the clubs surveyed claims to have. This may relate as much to the industrial and manufacturing history of LA2 as it does to the role of the local authority and voluntary associations that make up the civil society of LA2 in helping to dispel an image of a depressed area. In this context the following comments from Phil (Club D Junior section Chairman) tend to inform on implicit notions of the civic duty of the club in helping to foster positive images of the area.

> ***has an image of being a former railway town in decline...but its probably an image that is going away...*** as a town is probably on the up...if its to be believed the lists that Channel Four produce it was something like the eighth best place to live in the country.

Moreover the apparent welcoming atmosphere of Club D could be viewed as an externalising of networks of trust which helps to stimulate and reinforce local identity through the club. Thus the oft cited remark by members of Club D that their club is 'friendly' whilst perhaps signifying an openness and a lack of barriers to participation, also suggests a defensive approach to social capital where bonding has tended to dominate social relations (Atkinson, 2003, see also chapter 2). For Ethan this meant that 'There's a good sense of camaraderie and people identify with the club and I think they identify with other people in the club. Part of a team, part of a clan'. In this respect the indication is perhaps that a bounded but public form of horizontal of social capital is being created in this club. The evidence also suggests that social capital in this respect tends to be conditioned by the mutual aid ethos of the club, which in turn, reflects upon

the defensively minded interpretation of club members that their biggest challenge as a club is 'survival'.

VSC output and mutual aid

In similar fashion to the previous chapter the mutual aid ethos held by varying members of VSCs in LA2 appeared to be the dominant factor in generating the normative frameworks which individuals were both expectant of and contributed towards. This apparent consensus of approach inherent to the social worlds of the VSCs, whilst bounding potentialities for social capital, also tended to be rather differentiated for each of the clubs in LA2 when considering issues such as trust, reciprocity and the meaning of VSC activity, given the particular POS of each club.

In terms of a club's mutuality providing the key context for individual involvement and hence a potential for social capital creation, one respondent summed up a common theme among Club C members concerning the apparent solidarity within the club in that they 'are a family so to speak' (Neil). In this respect the lifeworld of the club, reminiscent of Durkheimian traditions, can act to provide a normative framework within an implied organic structure (Durkheim, 1970). From this perspective the club is charged with a moral purpose that both sponsors and confirms the status of members. Simultaneously this framework imposes internal sanctions that ensure adherence to group norms (see chapter 2). It is in this context that Putnamian visions of social capital may indeed be realised, and particularly when considered under the auspices of club accreditation which ensures adherence to the principles of modernisation. In this regard the lifeworld of Club C normatively tended to create a strong 'local' identity, where a horizontal form of social capital was evidently operating to ensure that 'Most volunteers are from friends and family' (Toby). The key normative aspect of the social capital created consequently acted to bond rather than bridge across social divides, ensuring the football club some perceived purchase within its own community, which for Neil meant having

> ...a strong link with the community to run any sort of football team, that's the whole reason for having a football team or whatever, could be a netball

> team. You've got to have community backing and support for it to go ahead.

Moreover, for Ross (Club C senior coach) the ethos facilitated a perceived reciprocity in the sense of 'I felt that I wanted to give something back to the community and this was a way of doing it', whilst for Alfie inclusivity was to be at the heart of the club 'We want to get all age groups playing, have a girls team, disabled if we can, be a complete community'. Whereas for Kenny the club ethos was inextricably linked to the club's normative and moral purpose amongst its own community

> I tell my sixteen year old "its not *just about* playing football"...it's about making them decent citizens, it's about learning things like behaviour and teamwork and how to get on with people...and being able to talk to different people...people think its weird...but that what a club should be. It may be a football club, but it doesn't stop there.

In interpreting Club C as a social construct, in that it exists beyond the perceptions of its members, it is possible to view it as existing in a range of formally constituted relationships that have a tangibility that reinforces the club status. A key point here is the club's accredited status which, in ensuring an overt community focus to the club, has tended to assert particular networks and relationships which have apparently attracted similarly minded people to the club giving it a 'family' atmosphere.

The importance of networks and relationships also serves as a reminder that vertical as well as horizontal social capital is a necessary corollary for leveraging action (Lewandowski, 2006). It is of course possible that in having accredited status, Club C is implicitly implicated as a 'manufactured group' which tends to have '...a highly moralistic agenda concerned with imparting certain skills to produce 'rounded' individuals' (Hodgson, 2004: 145). Consequently Club C may be interpreted as being involved in creating forms of manufactured social capital which, being Putnamian in tone, may operate to offset some of the potential for social capital resources to become unequally distributed (Foley and Edwards, 1999).

The ethos surrounding rugby Club D tended to centre on friendliness, camaraderie and openness, factors which were quite similar to Club A and which were summed up by Graham as 'socially most clubs are similar, but each club will have its own peculiarities and idiosyncrasies'. This last point helps to distinguish Clubs C and D insofar that the notion of 'manufacturing' implicit to the standardisation or 'kite-marking' orientated culture of club accreditation, was less in evidence in Club D. Furthermore, Club D, like all the case study VSCs except Club C, was gradually coming to terms with the various modernising pressures and this aspect of gradual realignment was the apparent cause of some tension which Graham summarised thus.

> There is a concern about the culture, losing the essence of what the club is actually about and we've rehearsed those debates a few times...are we about making money or are we about playing rugby and its getting the balance right.

Certainly in considering the culture of the rugby club, the majority of club members argued that it was important and necessary to reinforce the traditions of rugby in general and of the club in particular. This certainly tended to facilitate member involvement as well as reaffirming mutual aid as a core driving aspect of the club. Furthermore this reinforcing also indicated a willingness to improve standards so that the club was more than just for those who have been steeped in the tradition of the sport. Dai argued in this vein that Club D provides '...a sporting and social environment for people who want to belong to it, its members [as well as]... seeking to achieve very high standards of quality'. The inference of this argument is that with a greater desire for participation comes the potential for individuals, who would hitherto have not necessarily been interested in the sport or the club, to now join the club and play rugby. This, of course, follows particular policy trajectories relating to national increases in participation numbers (DCMS, 2000, 2002), and has been taken onboard by NGBs such as the RFU, as a positive aspect in relation to the opening up of the game (RFU, 2007).

For members of Club D in contrast to members of Club A, the club ethos wasn't just something that facilitated in-group trust and inter-personal norms, but tended to offer a more inclusive aspect to the club. This distinctiveness was apparently intrinsic to the

ethos of Club D in terms of the willingness of club members to be proactive in actively seeking to open up the game beyond rugby's traditional middle class preserve in England. For Josh, the ability of the club to be proactive and reach out beyond the confines of its own bounded membership was the key in that '...the ethos of the club is rugby for all...for some [who are struggling]...we can help them out with boots, kit and paying some of the subs if necessary'. Again this signals the importance attached to moving beyond the club's traditional constituency, and although suggestive of a greater scope or potential for creating public forms of social capital may not address any of the inbuilt inequalities in relation to that capital itself.

At the club level the macro-level policy-driven invocation of the necessity of increasing participation has apparently helped to shape the ethos of each particular VSC. As evidenced above and as might be expected, the ethos of Club D tends to focus on rugby for all, where the apparent drive is to increase participation via recruiting young people. In this respect for Club D, the development of youth rugby has provided a major impetus for new club members and for some has come to represent the key vehicle for community liaison. Dai, in this context, was therefore able to claim that 'Our whole junior section is a form of community development'. In other words policies aimed at increasing participation both impact on and are impacted upon by the potential for meeting social capital outcomes. In this respect, any perceptible movement away from the mutual aid orientation of the club may be shored up by the identification of the club's particular culture or ideology in the form of a particularised sporting capital. A sporting capital that operates to ensure that appropriate norms and values, commensurate with the club's particular ethos, are developed and implemented club-wide. It is in this normative context that the Phil's comments can best be understood

> When we have parents who have no experience of rugby and they come along and they're on the sidelines. That's where the job of impressing on people the traditions of rugby and the history of the club and all that goes part and parcel, because there is an ethos in rugby that doesn't exist in other sports and a code of behaviour.

In the case of Club E, although a strong mutual aid ethos embodying the networks, norms and trust needed to facilitate action was evident, the strong emphasis among club members on service, together with the sport's apparent individualism, tended to indicate a tension within the club between these concerns and the club's mutual aid focus. Alexander, in this regard was axiomatic in identifying a strong emphasis on mutual aid among his swimmers as

> ...like minded people collectively coming together in one place...so you are finding that I have got people coming together with the same collective ideals, same collective aspirations, goals, objectives and consequently they become very friendly...So it's not just become your base of friends, it becomes your social group.

Moreover, this position was reinforced by Ronald (Club E Learn to Swim Coordinator) who argued that '...within the Club they [volunteers] are very supportive of each other. That is something I think is wonderful. They do work as a team, as a club'. It is in this context that the individualised club ethos, facilitating the selling of services for individual consumption, can be detected in Malcolm's concern with having a product to sell. In relation to the modernising pressure to become accredited, within the NGB's Swim21 programme, the club has had to reposition itself within a much more outwardly structured framework in order to meet or fulfil the strategic agendas of other organisations.

> ...whilst we don't have SLAs [strategic level agreements] or anything like that, really formal agreements, I think there is a...certainly for us because of the way we are funded or rather not funded. We need to, as a club, actively promote what we do and encourage people to use us and the only way you are going to do that is to sell what you do and you provide a service.

Indeed much of what the Chairman alluded to as a service to be sold, not only relates to acquiring funding, but also impinges on the relationship that a VSC can have with a community in terms of consumerist rather than participative principles. This once again paints a similar picture to that identified in LA1 for Club A. A picture that shows the commercially competitive position adopted by the club for it's learn to swim school, as foregrounding a consumerist rather than participative approach to club membership. For Malcolm the consumerist approach, in necessitating a product to sell, tended to facilitate

a broader search for sponsorship, which enabled attention to be refocused towards encouraging participation in the community, as well as utilising that community relationship as a marketing tool to attract further funding.

> ...if we can show largish businesses that we have got a very good community relationship and that that community relationship also serves under privileged areas of the community then I think we have got a very strong case for getting sponsorship and then we can serve more of the underprivileged community and further the development of their swimming.

Whether the more manufactured social capital of Club C can engender the underlying policy aims associated with the democratic strain is a moot point. In particular, when one considers the potential generalisability of trust beyond the VSC, the evidence from LA2 was similar to that of LA1, which even for Alfie with it's accredited and somewhat manufactured position amounted to a situation where 'I don't know that I trust other coaches, other teams – I wouldn't say its changed my opinion of other people'.

The importance of modernisation within VSCs and the role attributed to NGBs in facilitating the desired change may have tended to overshadow the importance of the mutual aid ethos to VSCs. In this respect the evident tensions between modernisation, mutual aid and forms of policy instrumentality can be detected in those VSC members' comments which, in signalling openness, connectedness and outward facing networking also reflect on the bounded and relatively insular world of a particular sport's culture or ideology. The subsequent outcome can often be something of a paradox or even quixotic in terms of interpreting the potential for social capital creation as the following anecdote from Josh suggests.

> Somebody popped along to seniors training...he had been out of rugby for a while, but wanted to get back into it...told to look me up on a Sunday morning...he was already CRB checked...he's obviously an ex player so we got him on a coaching course fairly soon...so if people want to get involved in the club they can...but there's no barriers...if your not from a rugby background you're not going to go to a rugby club are you.

Conclusion

This examination of the views of VSC members in this chapter has served to illuminate a number of issues concerning the interpretation of social capital as it is operationalised within particular sports clubs. Indeed, in light of the overarching concerns of modernisation and club accreditation, it becomes clear that social capital both affects and effects the organisation and structure of VSCs in LA2. The evidence tends to suggest that the local authority, through the implementation of their *Sport and Recreation Strategy* (2002), are preparing the hard wiring, that is the necessary facilities and resources, for the VSCs to properly be incorporated into the strategic furniture essential for soft wiring (Stoker, 2004) to be initiated. It is the anticipated adaptations to soft wiring, which tend to give rise to expectations, and may lead to the actual creation of social capital. LA2's apparent proactivity in establishing 'quality of life' (LA2, 2004) amongst its population, whilst commended in the 2004 CPA (Audit Commission), also indicates a willingness to intervene to ensure that specific policy outcomes are met. In this respect the configuration of power in LA2 is subtly different to that in LA1, and provides for a context which has a range of structural properties that have helped to shape the context within which the VSCs find themselves.

Club accreditation is identified as not only a vehicle for translating the evident macro level modernisation pressures into a more tangible policy specific application at the micro level, but also as a means of 'structuring the structure'. Club accreditation, as a modernising structure, is therefore important to the process involved in establishing professionalisation, formalisation and instrumentality as more than just rhetorical instruments. The evidence presented above suggests that these processes tend to challenge the traditional expectations of VSC volunteers, eliciting a constant tension between issues of autonomy and ownership and the meaning and value a club has for its members.

There was also a consensus among the interviewees that individual VSCs were dominated by the mutual aid ethos, which subsequently tended to dominate how

individuals interpreted their own clubs particular ethos, culture or ideology. In light of modernisation and the tangible structural conditions associated with accreditation, it is notable that many, if not a majority, of those very same volunteers who indicated a tension surrounding a particular clubs ethos, also expected to deliver and be party to those very modernising values that were perceived as the cause of this somewhat implicit tension. In short, accreditation is particularly significant because not only does it offer some discomfort to individuals wanting to volunteer in VSCs, but it also impacts upon the very ethos of those VSCs in the first place. The evidence from VSC members is that this form of social change, whilst very slow, is definitely perceptible and consequently has a number of implications for the creation, distribution and value of social capital.

The importance of communicating the existence of a club beyond its established horizons, particularly as all of the clubs in LA2 were evident in their desire to get new members, was also significant in that the dominant mechanism was 'word of mouth' or 'recommendation'. In terms of social capital creation the importance of this issue lies in the reliance on rather normative, self-generating networks to attract new members. Indeed, VSC reliance on this method of communication may unwittingly create in-group preferences, and the development of cliques. In Club E for example, this type of recruitment strategy, together with a somewhat fractionalised organisational structure, meant that some swimmers never got to meet all of their fellow club members. This represents a significant issue if all VSCs are approached in a homogeneous fashion in terms of their potential and ability to create specific types of social capital.

The evidence also suggests that the profile of particular sports was an issue, particularly in terms of each clubs capacity to create social capital. Evidently swimming was perceived to have a low profile whilst football and rugby were seen as having quite high profiles. This in part, tended to reflect on each particular club's ability to gain support and backing from the local authority, as well as also impacting on potentialities to raise funding through sponsorship or specific NGB grants. Furthermore the profile of a particular sport is implicitly implicated in establishing the POS for each club. The POS importantly, in contributing to the parameters that facilitate the action of a particular club,

can determine the extent to which upper tier authorities strategically value the output of a particular club. The POS in this respect is crucial to interpreting the embeddedness of VSCs, as they negotiate the translation by local authorities of macro level policies to the local level. In particular, the notion of a community sport delivery system presents a number of challenges and implications for VSCs and sports volunteers, particularly as these are once again aspects of modernisation, and subsequently impact on the potential of key voluntary associations to create social capital.

Finally the lack of evidence concerning CSNs informs on their apparent lack of resonance with VSC members, which perhaps raises questions concerning where VSC members want or see their particular clubs' voices being heard, if a voice is to be heard at all. This issue of voice is also indicative of an apparent questioning of the value of partnerships within each of the VSCs surveyed. Even though partnerships have become a mainstay of modernisation and social capital generation, and perhaps because they have become such a tool of governance, many of the partnerships that VSCs were involved with tended to be treated in either a utilitarian fashion, or with some caution. Indeed those partnerships that were treated as mutually beneficial cooperative ventures were overwhelmingly those intra-sport partnerships either with the particular NGB or with other local clubs.

Chapter 9.
Analysis and conclusion

Introduction

According to Coalter (2007), the role of sport has been keenly emphasised by New Labour as it has embarked upon on its 'project' (Fielding, 2003) to modernise Britain, and that recent policy developments have tended to coalesce around the central notion of social capital. Indeed the literature surrounding sport and social policy indicates that establishing 'active citizenship' and 'strengthened communities' (Blunkett, 2003a) are vital to the reinvigoration of the 'national community' (Finlayson, 2003), which is itself a manifestation of New Labour's broader modernisation agenda. Moreover, Coalter goes on to argue that the use of social capital in many policy documents is 'consistently vague' (2007: 539) and, in calling for more appropriate investigations into the relationship between sport volunteers and social capital, suggests that 'the analysis of club-level processes and relationships...might serve to illustrate better the precise nature of sport clubs and processes of social capital formation...' (Coalter, 2007:553-554).

This call for further investigation is mirrored by Collins who maintains that the social benefits of a more active voluntary sector 'can scarcely be demonstrated by research' (Collins, 2003: 237). Furthermore, the Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy report also cited a lack of *'high quality research'*, and subsequent *'evidence base'* from which to make policy (original emphasis), indicating that '...if policy for voluntary sports club development is to be evidence based, then primary research needs to be conducted to provide such evidence' (Weed et al, 2005:41). Johnston and Percy-Smith also argue that in terms of researching social capital what is needed '...is a series of intensive community based studies which start with a very limited number of hypotheses about the nature, characteristics and consequences of social capital which can then be tested through in-depth, predominately qualitative, community based research' (2003:331).

The present study attempts to add to the knowledge base supporting the analysis of voluntary sports clubs (VSCs) and the creation of social capital by investigating the perceptions held of VSCs by both external stakeholders as well as the VSC members

themselves. Moreover, this study seeks to identify the political context or political opportunity structure (POS) that is apparent and relevant for each of the VSCs, local authorities and Cultershire council as a key factor for interpreting particular processes of social capital formation.

Although social capital is widely explored in the literature, and possibly because it is explored so widely, a certain lack of clarity has tended to surround the concept which, together with an inherent abstractness, has meant that measuring social capital has proved difficult (Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003). This study eschews those quantitative approaches to social capital made famous by Putnam's *Bowling Alone* in favour of a micro level, qualitatively based study aimed at interpreting and unravelling those processes at work within VSCs that inform on the potential for the creation of social capital. The methodology in this study, which has been detailed extensively in chapter 5, allowed a number of in-depth insights into the perceptions held by VSC members and the stakeholders of those VSCs as they interpreted the organisation, functioning and outcome of VSCs in one English county council. Three main research questions have guided this study (each having subsidiary questions that have been addressed in chapters 6, 7 and 8). Once again, the main research questions were:

1. How do individuals, who constitute the key external stakeholders, view the role of the VSC within changing policy contexts?
2. How have factors surrounding the policy context of VSCs, in relation to social capital, impacted upon the principles and practices of their members?
3. How do VSC members perceive the relationship between the POS, social capital and the local and sporting context of VSCs?

Discussion of findings

The three empirical chapters of this study have highlighted a range of issues that have impacted upon possible interpretations of social capital. Not least among these issues is the notion of modernisation which, as an all encompassing politically orientated and

policy minded ideology (Finlayson, 2002), has had a huge impact on the trajectory and topography of social capital and public policymaking. As discussed in chapter 2, and drawn on more fully in the empirical chapters, modernisation provides the key grounding context for an appreciation of the usage and meaning of social capital within New Labour's unitary model of government (Rustin, 2004). To develop appropriate conclusions to this study this chapter examines some of the core issues of modernisation in tandem with the key empirical findings against each of the three major strands of social capital theory. Of particular interest are those modernisation issues which have been informed by the empirical evidence and which further inform interpretations of social capital for policy usage. Specifically, core issues such as compliance, the target culture, the extent of (de)centralisation, autonomy and freedom, professionalism and altruism, the nature of particular sports and the type of POS are considered in relation to social capital theory.

To this end the analysis evaluates the case study evidence successively in relation to, first the democratic, then the rational and finally the critical strains of social capital. On the basis of the conclusions emanating from this analysis the chapter goes on to comment on the modernisation context within which policy has been enacted. Finally, the chapter offers some conclusions on the theoretical implications of this study for the concept of social capital itself. Tentative suggestions are also made in relation to the application of the findings for the wider body of research that utilises social capital theory.

1. The democratic strain

In considering the democratic or Putnamian strain of social capital as a frame of analysis it is first worth being reminded of some of the key assumptions of this particular theoretical strand of social capital theory, which are set out in tabular form below. In particular the main assertion of the democratic strain is that normative social networks are fundamentally intertwined with and within the abundance of associational life that exists outside of both the state and private sectors. Furthermore, a predisposition to engage in voluntary associationalism is assumed to be an indicator of the strength of the civic core of any given society. Both implicitly and explicitly voluntary associational

activity is implicated as the prime means of community development and connectedness necessary to provide the trust, reciprocity, norms and values that enable the enduring maintenance of western democratic values and systems.

Box 3. Key assumptions of democratic social capital

- Networks and connections are of primary importance.
- Individuals create community via their normative capacity as social facts.
- Individualism can be reconciled into collective action.
- Normatively, trust and reciprocity are created or arise from social networks.
- Civil society is idealised and voluntary associationalism is identified as both indicator and creator of social capital.
- Voluntary associations (VSCs) and the volunteering occurring within them are privileged as the place and means to establish an active citizenry and a civic culture.
- Expansion of voluntary associations 'encouraged' to increase capacity to fulfil functions ascribed to civil society by government, in particular promoting a vision of a normalised and centralised community.
- Standardisation, linked to modernisation is necessary to manage this aspect of civil society

It is of no surprise that the VSCs of this study were recognised by their members and stakeholders alike as a key site and mechanism through which individuals are explicitly encouraged to act communally. For the VSC members the issue was largely about encouraging more people to play a particular sport in a particular environment, with club 'survival' very often at the forefront of members' concerns. For stakeholders, participation was vital, but for most it was the outputs from the club in relation to strategic objectives, in other words utility that reflected their specific interest. This overt functional orientation towards achieving almost Parsonian functional prerequisites (Parsons, 1951) is clearly observable within Cultershire County Council with its emphasis on quality of life as an indicator of the extent of the success of the council's social management. This rather vague metaphor whilst implicitly alluding to individual issues of identity, reciprocity and trust as durable community derived qualities, also informs two other important composite issues that are tightly bound into the dominant Putnamian-infused policy and governance structure. The first issue involves allied features implicit in the quality of life metaphor and involves notions of the target culture, compliance and the exercise of power. The second issue focuses on aspects of

individualism, consumerism and collective action in response to the allusion to quality of life.

The first issue, concerns the dominant centralised spread of the target culture that has necessitated stakeholders reporting a 'statutory duty' to ensure that quality of life outcomes are met. The issue of compliance subsequently becomes important because the policy-led drive to ensure that sufficient and appropriate quality of life indicators are met impels, persuades and organises those instruments of policy to act in accordance with the needs of policymakers to meet those indicators. In other words, voluntary associations are increasingly under pressure to ensure that they follow the lead and direction of higher level agencies and organisations, and in this respect they exhibit a form of willing compliance. To be sure the evidence from the VSC members in LA1 and LA2 suggests that the seemingly wholesale acceptance of club accreditation as a modernising structure by VSC members legitimises not only the process, but more importantly the prevailing rationale concerning the need for club accreditation in the first place.

The issue of VSC members' apparent willingness to comply with broader shift towards the modernisation of sporting structures vis-à-vis the 'delivery system' (Sport England, 2007), also alludes to the final aspect of this compound issue in terms of the exercising of power. In particular, this concerns the extent to which the setting of agendas, preference shaping and decision making power have become centralised within this structure. The legitimising power accorded to NGBs by VSC members evidently varied from willing to unwilling with the team sport VSCs being willingly compliant even though there was an acknowledgement that not undergoing accreditation could incur 'censure' from a NGB. The individual sport VSCs however, exhibited some unwilling and willing compliance given that the literature has indicated that the two are not mutually exclusive (Lukes 2005). To this extent unwilling compliance was manifest in the resentment exhibited by the clubs towards their NGB whilst at that same time club members were willing to comply with the overall direction of the NGB. Two brief excerpts from the evidence derived from each swimming club highlight this point: first, apparent resentment at the way power is exercised by the ASA 'I think the aims of the governing bodies are being

forced into the clubs from various directions' (Derek Club B Head Coach); and second a perceptible willingness to comply with the ASA's strategic direction '...the programme that's been set up by the governing body, all the clubs are working toward' (Ronald Club E Learn to Swim Coordinator).

The second issue tends to concern a broader and more fundamental aspect of New Labour's managed capitalism that is overwhelmingly geared towards individualism (Rustin, 2004) in the form of individual consumer choice. Indeed the promotion of the democratic strain of social capital within social policy can be seen as an expedient response to this individualisation. The Tocquevillean desire, inherent to the democratic strain, to promote and encourage the power of collective values and action can be seen a) as a veneer of collective action shrouding a deep seated and core emphasis on individualism and b) as forming a dam against that individualism by ensuring that individual consumerism whilst given its full rein is also reconciled within the collective idiom of voluntary associationalism.

Importantly, because VSCs are identified and privileged within the democratic strain as the mechanism for increasing the stocks of social capital for any one community, they have also become the target for social and sports policy as both the means and indicator of enacting such policy strands. Indeed the normative aspect of the democratic strain impels the standardisation of civil society, given that it is voluntary associations that are encouraged to expand their capacity to meet central government policy targets. Thus the issues attended to above about the target culture, compliance and collective action, impact directly on voluntary associations' ability to continue to produce what they are supposed to produce as a by-product. It is this notion of social capital as a normative and public good and as an unintended by-product that is perhaps key to the validity of the democratic strain in the first place and perhaps more so for VSCs when one considers the extent to which the notion of mutual aid is evidently grounded in the culture, ideology or ethos of each of the VSCs surveyed for this study.

Furthermore, the democratic strain with the necessary identification of volunteering and voluntary associations operating within broader civil society and necessarily establishing a policy context aimed at nurturing and supporting that activity has formed an overwhelmingly positive opportunity structure for VSCs to operate in. In part the issue of the POS comes back to notions of compliance, meeting targets and consumerism. However it is clear from the case study evidence that there has been some thickening of the institutional arena within which VSCs operate. The Cultershire RFU for example, have not only created an environment within which VSC members have signalled their willingness to comply, but in making that environment more multifarious Cultershire RFU have developed inter-club networks, 'clusters', expanded the number of development officers across the county and worked to ensure that funding opportunities are available to constituent members. It is in this regard that modernisation can be seen to be particularly influential for the POS faced by specific VSCs, because as the evidence has attested the POS for two VSCs in one locality may be very different for each of them.

When setting the democratic strain against New Labour's modernisation project it is evident that there is an enormous amount of overlap between the two, and in this regard the empirical evidence paints a clear picture of social capital as an essential and explicit part of the architecture of the government's social policy (Strategy Unit, 2002). The evidence from those stakeholders who can be considered regional policymakers, that civil society organisations were a key part of their strategy to invigorate and include the wider polity, also serves to illustrate how the democratic strain of social capital, in privileging voluntary associations, also acts to buttress New Labour's totemic view of community (Levitas, 1998). This is an interesting point given the two sides of the evidential fence that are reported on in chapters 6, 7 and 8. For example on one side there is Cultershire County Council and LA1 District Council that have a history of Conservative political dominance that is apparently content and supportive of the community dominated approach to civil society. On the other is a general agreement among VSC members, apparently stronger in LA2 than in LA1, that community facing issues are vitally important to the organisation and running of particular VSCs.

The dominant democratic strain's normative and social emphasis on bottom up associational activity, that is to say individuals forming networks and partnerships centring on VSCs indicating individual desires collectively expressed, can be seen to be reinforcing the entrepreneurial spirit that the enabling thrust of government is seeking to foster. Indeed, as Hefferman has pointed out (chapter 3 p.62) the political journey of New Labour's transformation and resultant policy shifts was not only dependant on the establishment of the Third Way as a response to the Thatcherite legacy, but was also intended to ensure that the Third Way itself fundamentally encapsulated modernisation. This entrepreneurial thrust and continuity, which itself is evident of the continued importance of the modernisation project to social policy and hence interpretations of social capital, is palpable in Brown's strengthening concern for the proper role of government in 'enabling individuals' (see chap 3, p.60). As Prime Minister, Brown has reinforced the importance of the normative aspect of social networks by invoking the power of partnerships as a transformative phenomenon. Partnerships, for the government, are therefore more fully appreciable because of their qualitative value in allowing individualism to be expressed within a collective and mutual approach to problem solving. In this respect the enabling role of government not only facilitates the empowerment of actors within those partnerships, but also indicates that those partnerships have a potential key role to play to help those working for 'social change' (see chap 6, p.209).

Given this framework, the Conservative adoption or realignment to the individualised solution to collective issues is entirely consistent. Moreover, that a senior Cultershire County Council (chapter 6, p.198) official can make a clear-cut case for supporting communities to 'organise things and do things for themselves' is perhaps evidence of the rhetorical and ideological functions of modernisation alluded to above and discussed more fully in chapter 3 (Finlayson, 2003). In particular the democratic strain of social capital, in making the assumptions that it does (see above), acts as a bulwark against dissident voices and serves to reinforce New Labour's unitary philosophy (Rustin, 2004). The example given here from the county council illustrates this point and also reminds

the reader of the case made in chapters 2 and 3 that modernisation and democratic social capital seek to act as hand in glove coordinates of a position that is beyond left and right.

Increasingly, it is apparent that the appeal of the democratic strain of social capital is its fit with New Labour's managed capitalism. This not only reinforces the rhetorical impact of modernisation but, in embodying Giddens' maxim of 'no rights without responsibilities' (Giddens, 1998), community is established as a key site of action, and the proper role of local or regional government is defined in terms of good governance arrangements. Given this scenario it is of no surprise that the council leader was quick to point to central government measurement of the number of partnerships with which the council is involved, as an indicator of its good governance arrangements.

This last issue reflects a recurring methodological problem with the incorporation of the democratic strain into social policy which centres on the way that social capital, or at least a proxy of social capital, is measured. In chapter 5 this approach was referred to as an 'external realist' ontology which epistemologically sought to establish knowledge through the creation of hard data from which generalisations about social facts such as social capital could be made. The production of hard data in the form of statistics has chimed with the target driven culture of the whole modernisation project and is complicit with a desire for evidence-based policy, itself indicative of managerialist impositions of the enterprise culture (Rustin, 2004).

The critical realist approach adopted by this study, in taking a different ontological and epistemological position, has struck a very different pose, which although explained fully in chapter 5 is important to be reminded of here in order to explain how the democratic strain of social capital can be viewed in relation to the case study evidence. Importantly VSCs are considered to be the product of a whole host of internal and external social, economic, political, cultural and power relationships, rather than an approximation of social facts or regularities between statistical relationships. Whilst this is not necessarily problematic for the theoretical coherence of the democratic strain of social capital it, once

again, is illustrative of a latent tension in the relationship of this theoretical strain to policy making.

An example is surely that of the assumption made in the democratic strain that individualism when reconciled with collective action produces social capital in the form of normative outcomes such as trust and reciprocity. This assumption tends to be based on the evidence of broad statistical relationships, such as those made by Putnam (2000), from mass survey data of voluntary associational activity which, has tended to reduce agency to structure. The evidence from the VSCs analysed for this study suggests that the individuals come to the voluntary episode as collectively orientated, reciprocally minded individuals who are predisposed to act collectively. Moreover, much of the evidence, because it comes from individuals in VSCs, clearly indicates that it is the nature of the activity that drives them towards the collectivity, which is itself a recursive relationship between social structure and individual agency. Thus for the two rugby clubs studied, club members came to the club because of the potential to play or be involved in rugby and as such were predisposed to the collectivity which they have in turn helped to reproduce and even transform.

In many ways these methodological concerns in conjunction with the case study evidence begin to lay bare many of the overly positive associations that the democratic strain has tended to make in relation to the social benefits emanating from any social capital formed though voluntary associationalism. Indeed, the moral over-inflation of the benefits of the democratic strain of social capital and the tendency to ignore the 'dark side' has been commented on numerous times in the literature (Lewandowski, 2006, Field, 2003, Portes, 1996). To be sure the moral inflation that normatively presupposes beneficial outcomes accruing to society from the encouragement of voluntary activity is part of the attraction of the democratic strain for policymakers. This was clearly evident in this study through the doubly virtuous value ascribed to VSCs, virtuous activity in a virtuous place, by a whole range of policy actors from elected politicians, through CSP and Regional Sports Board members to regional connexions and Youth Offending Team managers.

Interestingly, this circle of virtuous earnestness did not tend to be shared by the VSC members who were far more prosaic in terms of how they saw the outcomes of their particular voluntary efforts within their particular VSC. Indeed the evidence from the VSC members is persuasively indicative of clear differences between sports in terms of what sort, type and value of social capital could be created, and that assumptions concerning voluntary associationalism and social capital creation are not fully borne out by the evidence. Furthermore, the privileging of voluntary associationalism as the key generator of social capital within the democratic strain is limited because, as the case study evidence has shown, VSCs are not structural facts that are merely reactive and structurally determined entities. Rather VSCs are conditioned, influenced and organised by individuals such that the reification of VSCs, which the democratic strain tends to encourage, is dangerous insofar that it leads to overly simplistic assumptions about community involvement and development. Moreover, as the evidence from the VSCs has indicated the notion of mutual aid, which is often fundamentally entwined with perceptions of the club ethos, impacts fully on notions of individual autonomy and freedom and is not necessarily compliant with broader issues concerning 'soft wiring' which tend to be perceived of as hindering rather than helping individual engagement in this aspect of civil society.

2. The rational strain

Although the rational strain of social capital, as propounded in the work of Coleman, was influential in Putnam's development of the democratic strain, it has an economic distinctiveness that clearly sets it apart from both the democratic and critical strains of social capital. Central to the rational strain is the assumption that human action is essentially economic, involving actors as self-interested individuals whose actions are guided by instrumental reasoning and are subsequently strategic in intent. Other key assumptions of the rational strain are presented in the box below.

Accepting that the rational strain does not imbue voluntary associationalism with the same normative and socially democratic pre-eminence as the democratic strain, it does

still regard voluntary associations such as VSCs as constructed organisations that can be seen as context-specific incidences of social capital.

Box 4. Key assumptions of the Rational strain of social capital

- Employment of methodological individualism.
- Seeks to account for human action rather than explain it.
- Social capital is a functional resource elicited from group memberships where individual choice is governed by the utility principle.
- Collective action is possible where norms act to reduce expenditure costs, value is therefore utilitarian.
- Individual strategies of participation determines voluntary associational involvement
- Any social capacity of VSCs is dependant on individual strategic value of participation hence norms determine the extent of collective action.
- Closure in any area of life is important to enable collective action
- Collective action may be exclusive and potentially divisive.
- Social capital is a benefit accruing to individuals from being part of an organisation.
- It is difficult to see how norms might be maintained or sustained over long periods of time

Similar to the democratic strain the rational strain also views social capital as characteristically a public good that can benefit all who are part of a structure, although here cooperation is necessary in order to pursue one's own self interest rather than in producing forms of generalised trust that encourage civic engagement and reignite civic culture attitudes that weigh heavily in the success or failure of democracy (Foley and Edwards, 1999). It is in this respect that the concern among Cultershire level policymakers for 'quality of life' and the role a VSC can play was identified in relation to the visibility that VSCs have and the public good that that signals. Furthermore, in making utilitarian presumptions about VSCs many sport and non-sport policymakers, tacitly endorse the sort of claims made by the rational strain concerning, in particular, the dominance of individualism in terms of participation, club ethos and more pertinently the strategic direction of particular clubs.

With such a strong emphasis on the economic principle of maximising utility guiding individual choice the essential question facing the rational strain concerns the collective activity that is obviously at the heart of VSCs. It is overly simplistic to argue that individuals coming together in a VSC do so first and foremost because of a desire to express their self interest. Indeed the rational strain imposes a strong social structural

understanding to the context of any social capital so that theoretically any social capital is embedded in relations and therefore the social structural context of those relations is important. In this respect Coleman has argued that social capital has limited fungibility, so that whilst social capital might facilitate actions in one particular context it may be useless or harmful in another (Coleman, 1990).

Although Coleman, in his own literature, is not fully convinced of the potential for voluntary associations to offer the same potential for social capital as 'primordial' institutions such as the family (1994), he does acknowledge that associations may be social capital for those who can invest in them. In other words for those who have access to VSCs, such as those in this study, they are social capital. The issue for VSCs here then is their self-selecting nature, which was apparent in the case study evidence where many of the VSC members interviewed indicated that it was both the attraction and development of a particular sport that brought them to the club in the first place. A comment from one VSC member that, 'Fundamentally this is a rugby club. People want to play rugby' (Graham Club D player) was strongly indicative of a streak of utility maximisation that ran across all bar one of the case study clubs. The exception, Club C, (as identified in chapter 7) had full accredited development status, which presented a unique social structural condition among the VSCs surveyed. This condition was a key factor that challenged and conditioned the self-interest expressed by club members. The point here is that self-selection raises some interesting issues in relation to policies geared at utilising VSCs as sites and as mechanisms for social inclusion.

This dominant position concerning VSC membership was reinforced by a similar comment from a senior education officer (chapter, 6) who didn't expect clubs to look beyond their own membership and consequently wasn't expecting any sort of 'Damascene conversion' to community participation and inclusion on their part. Indeed this senior education officer was ostensibly alluding to the production of something not achievable if social capital was absent, in this case an activity for the VSC members themselves to participate in and enjoy. Certainly the production and consumption of mutual aid, as in the example above, is critical to interpreting the VSC as a form of social

capital. A key aspect to interpreting this social capital is the nature and context of the social and structural relations within which the VSC is embedded: the VSC itself, the locality within which the VSC exists, and the broader policy context that recursively conditions the first two aspects.

Clearly in order for the rational strain to maintain theoretical coherence the theory needs to apply the principle of universality of the utility function to human action as a constant. This means, in relation to the evidence from the case studies, that the many examples of apparent altruistic behaviour need to be considered as self serving individualistic actions that are entered into because of the knowledge that an individual has that the structure within which they are undertaking their actions is trustworthy. Thus, the comment from one coach that 'I do it because I want to, not because I want to be paid for it. Actually, I'd find that quite insulting' (Neil Club C coach) is explained as part of the broader meeting of individual needs that that volunteering can provide.

The above example from Club C when evaluated against three of Coleman's six types of social Capital (taken from his broader typology see chapter 2, p. 47) – obligations, expectations and trustworthiness, information channels and norms and effective sanctions – elicits a closer examination of the structural and social relations and the value of VSC membership as a form of social capital. The coach's volunteering is conceived of as creating obligations among other club members, particularly the team coached, which become manifest in the notion of 'credit slips'. In turn these credit slips only have value if the structure within which they are produced can be classified as trustworthy, because trustworthiness ensures repayment at a later date. Given structural stability, trustworthiness in the VSC results in the production of a norm of reciprocity from which generalised trust can be reached, although it is usable only within the structural relations of production. What is important here are the conditions of stability which give rise to an expectation of repayment. Thus for this particular club the heavy emphasis placed, by members themselves, on its accredited status and the importance to its locality in terms of community value and identity suggests that the club is perceived as reasonably stable.

The evidence presented in this study however, highlights that the issue of survival was raised frequently by VSC members as an area of concern, with seemingly relatively large clubs which are supported within and by their local authority also indicating that they felt under pressure in this respect. This echoes much of the literature where low and short term survival rates for VSCs (Collins 2002) are contested, with Nichols reporting that 46 per cent of VSCs have existed for more than thirty years (2003), and Warde et al (2003) questioning the stability of clubs given relatively low rates of total club membership. The key point here is that if the context of social relations where credit slips can be 'cashed in' is unlikely to be enduring then the possibilities for trust and reciprocity are lowered and hence the potential for the formation of social capital is eroded.

The implication for policy is that it clearly needs to overcome the institutional weakness from which VSCs have suffered and which was identified in *A Sporting Future For All* (2000) and is discussed in chapter 4. a more recent attempt to develop this institutional 'thickness' has been Sport England's 2007 policy statements, which, in setting out a vision of a delivery system and the role of community sport networks, have indeed begun to address the institutional framework of VSCs more directly. Indeed *The Delivery System* (2007a) has begun to develop a more sport focused orientation to the institutional support that a VSC can expect, putting a greater emphasis on NGBs and CSPs to provide that 'thickness'. As the case study evidence has shown, the apparent success of 'rugby cluster groups' set up by the Regional Development Manager, exhibit outcomes more in tune with rational strain, as opposed to the democratic strain of social capital. Undoubtedly these clusters provide a stable structure for self-interested individuals representing particular club interests to come together to further the self-interestedness of rugby union across the county.

The second form of social relation refers to the ability to trust again, this time in relation to the expectation that accurate information will be provided, which is important because it informs action and obviously has implications for the trustworthiness of the structure. In this regard all of the VSCs in the survey indicated that they had strong and robust internal systems of communication that involved member questionnaires, players

meetings, coaches' forums, corporate committees and so on. Moreover, a number of the sport specific SDOs, regional development officers/managers (RDOs/RDMs) were keen to maintain and develop the lines of communication between county NGBs and the VSCs. Ostensibly these links were about ensuring that a trusting relationship was developed and consequently can be seen as a correlate of Coleman's first dimension of social capital. In particular, this structural thickening of support agencies that was very much in evidence from NGBs, CSPs and the RSB, has impacted on the political opportunity structure (POS), particularly in terms of the formal institutional structure and the nature of access to that structure afforded to the VSCs of the study.

Coleman's third form of social capital is norms and sanctions which, whilst approving certain modes of behaviour, also imposes sanctions, on what the literature has referred to as, free-riders (see chapter 2). Indeed it is quite easy to transpose the notion of VSC ethos or ideology to the expectations a club might have of its members to act in accordance with the dominant behavioural norm of the club. Certainly, in going back to issues of exclusion/inclusion the expectation of a particular etiquette within a club may entrench individual expectations of a VSC which then impacts on an individual's choice to participate in a VSC in the first place (self-selection). The outcome is that participation in a club is more likely where individuals already share norms of behaviour, have knowledge of that sport and how the club operates, and readily consent to the exchange of credit slips within a stable social structure. In this respect Coleman's device of closure, in facilitating these three types of relation or capital, easily translates into what has been referred to in this study as mutual aid, although Coleman spoke of mutually reinforcing relations between different actors and institutions.

The issue of mutual aid for VSCs is less problematic in the rational strain than it is in the democratic. The unambiguous evidence from the case studies was that VSC members identified benefits to the club and other members before benefits to third parties or support for broader policy objectives. VSC members were also clear that exclusion 'it is after all a member's club' (Ethan Club D player) tends to be accepted matter of factly. Theoretically, this is mainly attributable to the utility maximisation principle upon which

the rational strain rests, and also because any form of emergent trust is seen to inhere in social relations. In contrast for the democratic strain VSC activity that creates social capital does so *for* the public good (original emphasis, Putzel, 1997), and presumes that individuals possess generalised trust which becomes a generative factor for establishing and maintaining democratic values.

In light of the development and implementation of policy which, as this study has argued, has adopted the democratic strain as a guiding rationale stemming from broader modernisation processes (see chapters 2 and 3), the rational strain offers some interesting insights and points of departure. It was interesting to note from the various stakeholders how much issues such as skill enhancement, employment potential and personal development skills were attributed to sport in general, but also to VSCs as the prime sites for sports participation. This was not limited to sport organisation stakeholders. For example Jenny (Cultershire Connexions Manager) viewed club membership to be of value because 'it builds that person', suggesting that aspects such as 'self-esteem, developing skills [and] understanding each other' were important individual attributes attainable through VSC membership.

The evidence from the VSC members largely suggests that this issue of skill development was not something they engaged with directly, rather there was a general belief that individuals would use the skills and knowledge they had within the confines of the club to further the activities of the club. Whilst this is once again the issue of mutual aid coming to the fore it does signal an interpretation of policy as being in some way geared towards achieving individual outcomes despite the seemingly democratic strain's influence on its genesis. In this respect other social policy initiatives such as Sure Start, which as explained above (chapter 4) is part of a modernised mixed economy of welfare, and is part of New Labour's modernisation of welfare services aimed at reducing social exclusion, takes a similar individualised approach to the provision of support and services. The key point here is the extent to which individualism is perceived as a policy outcome in relation to VSCs, in most cases the evidence suggests that VSCs were concerned with their ability to leverage support from 'partners' in relation solely to their

main purpose for existence. In this respect the willing compliance and acceptance of broader structural changes can be interpreted as deliberate and strategic responses aimed at maximising the utility of club members and the VSCs themselves in the face of broader institutional change.

On this note it is possible to argue that the insistence of the rational strain in reducing collective action to a summative outcome of rational individuals whose choices are governed only by a utility function tends not to do justice to the richness of the case study evidence. Trust or what can be taken to be trust from the comments of individuals is palpable as more than just a thin network bonding phenomena that conditions the actions of club members. The many acts of altruism attested to by the volunteers interviewed are not necessarily explainable as actions of utility maximisation and in this sense these actions as aspects of the 'normative density' of trust relations are ignored resulting in what Lewandowski (2006) has referred to as 'rational reductionism'

3. The critical strain

The critical strain of social capital is almost solely connected to the work of Bourdieu (1997 in particular) and is located within his broader concern with the reproduction of class and entrenched inequality in society. As outlined in chapter 2, Bourdieu's approach to social capital is quite distinct and is located within a broader theoretical understanding of society. The distinctiveness of the critical strain can be appreciated in Bourdieu's clear disdain for the reductivism inherent in the rational strain's use of methodological individualism. Moreover, although the critical strain shares some similarities with the democratic strain in approaching collectivities as social facts, its distinctiveness in this direction is secured by locating those associations not as groups of individuals voluntarily coming together, but as groups whose membership is determined by non-voluntary learned tendencies (see chapter 2).

Of particular theoretical importance is Bourdieu's presupposition that 'social groups' can be viewed as classes in the neo-Marxist sense, positing the VSCs of this study as probable classes in the sense that 'their existence, identity, and memberships are

determined by non-voluntary predispositions' (Lewandowski, 2006:8). In essence these non-voluntary predispositions are shaped by and reflect competitive dispositions among individuals concerning the consumption and distribution of social, economic and cultural resources. In other words VSCs emerge, compete to establish themselves and inevitably clash with other VSCs as well as other social groups for positions of dominance. From this perspective the relative POS of each VSC becomes vitally important to that particular club. Securing access to vital resources for the club, for example in the form of new members or funding. Furthermore, each POS for each club is thus a product of the specific context of the location of a VSC and the club ethos or subculture in reacting or interacting with that structure. In this respect social capital is viewed as a socially shared 'credit' that individuals within a group employ, as an aspect of power, in order to secure their relative position. In addressing primarily issues of social inequality the critical strain makes a number of assumptions concerning social capital which are set out in the box below.

Box 5. Key assumption of critical strain of social capital

- Social capital is context dependent.
- Social capital is a socially stratifying resource.
- All human action is related to background 'habitus'.
- Social groups approximate neo-Marxist classes.
- Group membership is determined by non-voluntary predispositions located outside of an individual's framework of choice.
- Social capital is group specific where it acts as a shared credit.
- Among a group social capital can reinforce distinction and exclusion.
- Increasing capacity in sport organisations is likely to cause dissonance.
- Any potential public goods are likely to be subsumed by increases in 'club' goods.

In considering the apparent dominance of a Putnam infused or Putnamian facing social policy framework, the empirical evidence coming from both local authority case studies is that VSC members: do not tend to feel any more trusting generally to others (indeed a number of respondents indicated that they feel less trusting towards others because of their VSC involvement); report little or no participation in other civic activities such as contacting ones MP or being a member of another voluntary organisation outside the VSC; indicate that issues of mutual aid and club ethos dominate how individuals perceive their particular voluntary experience in a VSC. This suggests overwhelmingly that the

easy acceptance of voluntarily associated individuals contributing to democratic stability and civic regeneration is either not clear cut or is very difficult to sustain.

The tendency to accept such civic minded assumptions, which are at the heart of the democratic strain, are problematised under the critical strain. The significance of this problematisation becomes clear when social capital creation becomes translated into a strategic policy orientation that determines the achievement of specific policy outcomes. For example, the emphasis placed upon the metaphorical policy aim of ensuring 'quality of life' and the indication by senior countywide stakeholders that VSCs have a key strategic role in achieving that particular aim, is reminiscent of the supposed 'power of sport' to transcend different areas of social life. In particular the key issue concerns the apparent unproblematic acceptance that actions, relations and values attained in one area of social life can be transferred to another separate area of social life.

This discourse, enveloping the deep rooted institutionalisation of social capital and policy development (see chapter 3), has been unequivocal in framing the debate within the taken for granted modernised structure within which social inclusion and community have become key reference points for VSCs and activated citizens. That is to say that sports volunteers operating in VSCs were identified at various policy levels to be the key policy mechanism for individuals to 'contribute to public life' (Sport England and the Local Government Association, 1999).

This expectation that voluntary activity in a VSC would be able to be carried over to other aspects of social life is indicative of not only the Putnamian approach to interpreting the value of networked individuals, but also of much of the policy that has surrounded the development of sport over the last ten years in particular. Indeed, whilst there was a consensus among the VSC members from LA1 and LA2 that some of the commonly accepted indicators of social capital, such as trust and a civic regarding individualism, were unlikely to come from their voluntary activity, countywide stakeholders were, if anything, over-confident that these characteristics would not only be developed, but would then spread to other sections of society. This over-confidence was

clear, for example in the comments of the CSP director that VSC participation 'does have a service beyond that actual player', and clear for the RSB member who alluded to the value of 'social entrepreneurs' in addressing VSC outcomes to broader policy objectives. The comment from David (RSB board member) reiterates the dominant notion of liberal entrepreneurialism that is at the heart of New Labour and central to the discourse of modernisation. Furthermore in extending his example to explain how VSCs could work to match the five themes of *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004), David epitomised the logic of the civic minded policy maker (see chapter 3).

From the point of view of the critical strain the stakeholders are guilty of making the mistake of assuming that the cross field exchange of capital is not only possible but probable and thereby assuming that capital built up in one field of human endeavour can be exchanged or 'spent' in another. Furthermore, one can argue that the stakeholders concerned, in attaining the positions they have, have had their preferences shaped by their willing acceptance of the dominant policy agenda and hence there is a certain inevitability that those in decision making positions will reflect the dominant orthodoxy of policy orientation.

What is evident here is that the critical strain reveals the clear tilt towards the functionalistic, particularly in relation to the latent functions attributed to the potential outcomes of VSCs. This is clearly evident in the comments of the many senior politicians and executives interviewed who, in using the quality of life metaphor, invoked a doubly virtuous circle, volunteering and sport, from which VSCs could make their 'contribution'. More tellingly the assumption is clearly made that what goes on in one field of human social life can easily be translated towards a positive outcome in another sphere.

This position contradicts Bourdieu's concept of field, which is identified as a site of action having a set of structural properties that act to constrain and contain the actions of actors within that field. One of the reasons that field is considered so important is that Bourdieu has identified that a field is where individuals accumulate and spend particular forms of capital. In respect of social capital it means that this form of capital is

fundamentally bounded to those groups and the context of those groups in the first place, which is significant in puncturing many policy assumptions, such as those coming from some stakeholders concerning the value of VSCs under the gaze of the democratic strain of social capital.

From the case studies of LA1 and LA2 it was evident in this respect that VSC members attributed greater value to within-sport networks where they existed, and more tellingly that these networks existed in rugby much more than in football or swimming. In essence the extent of VSC preparedness in networking beyond the value ascribed to the perception of the club is indicative of the extent of field in this respect. It was interesting to note that club A members (LA1) identified a separateness to the physical and psychological interpretation of the club, the members of the club and what it took to be a member of the club. From the perspective of the critical strain, the notion of 'field' for Club A, was restricted to members and what was referred to as the 'rugby network', a phrase also used repeatedly by county level senior rugby stakeholders. It is in this regard that part of the underlying rationalisation of VSC identification and solidarity, as well as the importance of field, rests with the Bourdieun notion of habitus. Habitus which in embodying a pre-intentional 'feel for the game' enables social agents to develop strategies which are adapted to the needs of the social worlds that they inhabit, that is group practices within a particular field.

For the VSCs of the two local authorities the emphasis of the critical strain is upon their identity as 'probable classes' where a 'feel for a game', essentially an encounter between habitus and field, gives the game an objective sense where an individual has an awareness of 'sensible' practices within conditions of enactment that are filled with intuition and rationality. In short for VSCs it is the interaction between individuals' habitus and the establishment of club ethos, culture and/or ideology that reflectively enables like minded individuals to collectively pursue their own collective interest because of a consensual validation and a collective belief in the game and its fetishes (Bourdieu, 1977).

Evidence from LA1 and LA2 suggest that in the first instance economic capital facilitates participation so for example the relative affluence of LA1 was identified as a pre-facilitating factor that allowed '...those people to send their kids to tennis club, to squash club, rugby club, football club...' (Harry Club A Chief Executive). Interestingly the phrase 'those people' implies a knowingness to participation, and a value and worth to VSC membership that is beyond mere participation. It suggests that it is people cognisant of the norms and values of voluntary associationalism who send their children to participate in sporting activities in VSCs and reflects a definite 'feel for the game' (Lewandowski, 2006).

Similarly the comment from a swimmer that 'learn to swim is quite expensive anyway...it's something more middle class people would do' (Chris Club B senior swimmer) is more explicit in identifying a relationship between class and non-voluntary predispositions to participate. In this respect the critical strain may appear to do no more than indicate the existing market relations within which VSCs find themselves. This would be misleading because what it does do is to help to highlight some of the factors that, in pre-disposing some individuals and limiting and restricting others in terms of participation in a social group, helps to destroy the fallacy of the VSC as a social panacea. In particular, the non-transferability of cultural and social capital focuses attention onto field and the reflection on policies that suggest that the outcomes or outputs of VSCs can be shared only by others in that field. This tendency is just the approach taken by New Labour and those further down the policy cascade such as the county council with its emphasis on quality of life and the perceived role and value of VSCs in achieving that. Moreover, it immediately raises the question of whether VSCs can ever really be tools of social inclusion if by their very existence they form part of a self-reinforcing structure, where social capital acts as the key mechanism in that reinforcement, which serves to effectively exclude the majority of individuals.

Each of the chairmen of each rugby club spoke of the 'pleasure' they had got from the game and their subsequent interest in contributing back to the game. Whilst these sentiments appear common in much of the research (chapter 3) concerning sport

volunteers in VSCs (see Sport England, 2003), they also indicate a desire to work for and on behalf of that club in order to shore up the benefits of membership for other club members. Thus social capital, a socially shared credit for those within the group, reinforces recognition and solidarity and whilst this serves to bond members it also serves to exclude, particularly as the issue of self-selection reflects on the Bourdieun notion that one's choice to join a group is not merely an amalgamation of the cooperative actions of individuals based on fulfilling their own best interest.

The point here is that social policies aimed at alleviating social exclusion, which include club-accreditation policies, do so within a broad modernisation framework that in centring a range of sub-issues tend to instrumentalise VSCs to such an extent that much of the exclusivity of the VSC has been overlooked in the fetishising of individualism, individual choice and 'self-orientated consumption as the model for everything' (Rustin, 2004:113). Within this scenario self-selection is treated as a given, as an aspect of individual choice, although the critical strain begins to throw some light on the misguided acceptance of public choice in the face of more surreptitious and covert forces that operate at a subconscious level to pre-influence those choices that individuals make. In essence those with stocks of social and cultural capital would have at their disposal sufficient resources to not only produce but reproduce the capital they have invested. Moreover, by virtue of one's habitus one would be able to utilise those capital resources in the appropriate field thereby reinforcing and reproducing the existence of inequalities within any one field. In relation to self-selection in sport this not only refers to one's embodiment of social practices that become ineffable, but also clearly facilitates emotions and feelings enabling individuals to feel at ease with themselves and others of a similar community (Jarvie and Maguire, 1994).

Based on this approach VSCs are clearly the outcome, as well as sites, of socially reproductive behaviour. To set policies aimed at social inclusion and 'civic renewal' based upon volunteers as active citizens (see chapter 3) within VSC development indicates that policymakers may not have fully considered the social make-up and impact of VSC activity. The inequitable distribution of social capital is also revealed by the

treatment of social capital as a dependent variable which is a facet of the context dependent approach of this study. In this manner not all associations can be attributed with producing the same social capital and within one VSC not all relations are of the same value. In this respect the comment from a VSC member that 'Most parents here work full time whereas if you're from the officer class you're more likely to get involved in things' (Josh Club D, Head Coach junior section), recognises the possibility that different levels of social status will confer different attributes that relate to the ability to effectively mobilise social capital. Again the key point here is towards the use of social capital in policy development and a reminder that individuals need to know that a particular resource exists and secondly that they have the necessary connections to mobilise that resource. In other words that something is potentially accessible and that they have the potential means to access it, clearly within the critical strain of social capital ones stratified position is crucial in this respect.

General conclusions

The previous chapters and the analysis above have demonstrated that social capital is a fundamental underpinning concept utilised by New Labour in their approach to implementing social and public policy. Furthermore it is evident that this approach to policy formation has largely been based upon the democratic strain of social capital with its distinguishing emphasis on civic engagement rather that the individual benefits apparent from both the rational strain (Coleman) and the critical strain (Bourdieu) of social capital. The adoption of the democratic strain into policy (see chapters 3 and 4) in light of this civic engagement focus also highlights the over-emphasis on the importance attributed to civil society organisations (CSOs) whilst ignoring or disregarding other structural factors. In this regard critics of Putnam (see chapter 2) such as Fine (2001) and Grix (2001) have highlighted the lack of attention given by Putnam to a range of issues including economic equality, political factors and the exercise of power.

In many respects it has been this orientation to civic society that has necessitated an examination of voluntary sports clubs (VSCs), which not only provide the majority of

opportunities for active participation in sport in the UK, but are also clearly an example of a civil society organisation (see chapter 3). Moreover, the close alignment of VSCs to social capital creation, in the context of civic society and active citizenship has located VSCs within a policy rich environment. It is in this context that the role of the VSC and the value ascribed to its ability to create social capital has focused the minds of policymakers.

Many of the senior policy makers at the Cultershire County level, such as the Council Leader, the Director of the CSP and the Director of Recreation and Heritage tended to reify and imbue sport with particular virtuous characteristics redolent of those traditional Dionysian and Epicurean characteristics discussed in chapter 3. These sorts of views which were also common amongst many of the stakeholders tend also to be common currency within the sporting world and indeed are shared by some in senior national and international positions. Lord Coe, Chairman of London's organising committee for the 2012 Olympics who, in stating that 'sport is the hidden social worker in society...And, of course, it is inclusive and open to all' (Observer, 24.8.08: S1), reaffirms the dominant perception of sports institutions being virtuous, inclusive and open. Certainly these sentiments not only evoke Tocquevillean notions of the power of collectivities to generate democratic sponsoring forms of behaviour, but also resound with allusions of the civic power of CSOs to promote normative activity, within a network, that facilitates reciprocally minded trusting behaviour. The evidence from the preceding analysis of the three strains of social capital suggests that this civic-minded approach may be both over-simplistic and rather naïve in stretching the value of the concept beyond both its conceptual roots and methodological foundations in search of policy orientated applicability.

It is for this reason that this study has adopted a micro level approach (see chapter 5 for more clarification), which in utilising a critical realist position, was able to analyse and evaluate aspects of structure and agency within specific theoretical and policy contexts. Indeed the methodological stance taken and the subsequent empirical chapters have also demonstrated the existence of a clear and relatively coherent policy cascade concerning

the implementation of social capital theory within social policy formation and implementation. The methodology adopted by this study has also ensured that the analysis of the policy cascade at meso and micro levels of policy implementation also reveals some of the unintended consequences of policy built on the democratic strain of social capital. Furthermore the empirical case study data together with the subsequent analysis has established that a single perspective of social capital is too rigid to capture the richness, nuances and interpretations of the actions of actors in specific contexts.

One of the key objectives of this study has been to establish the context within which VSCs are perceived to be agents of social capital creation. Throughout, a number of concomitant themes have been seen to act, influence and shape interpretations and understandings of social capital and this section examines and summarises these themes under the two broad issues of modernisation and mutual aid.

Modernisation

Within this study it is hoped that a clear path has been shown tracing the political changes to New Labour that have resulted in the development and implementation of modernisation as a key underpinning structure for the architecture of policy making to be established. As both an analytical and explanatory tool the use of the POS has served to illustrate the extent to which the social and political context within which VSCs operate is vital to interpreting the potential value and meaning of any social capital created and or used by individuals within those organisations.

In particular modernisation has framed the POS for each club and each local authority of the study from the creation of the Social Exclusion Unit in 1997 and the establishment of the *Compact* in 1998 (see chapter 3), to Cultershire's *Voluntary Sector Compact,* and the Sport England policy statement *The Delivery System.* The study has in this respect also asserted that the POS for each VSC in any one local authority will be different for a whole range of factors not least concerning the type of sport participated in, but also concerning the nature of the club ethos, the extent to which the club has valued and

meaningful relations with its NGB and the extent that local and regional sport agencies develop relationships with particular VSCs. Additionally, in considering social capital, the value attributed to volunteers and the emphasis placed upon their roles in VSCs is significant in that they provide that crucial uncoerced element of civil society and have been, and still are, the target of much of the policy aimed at reinforcing and extending the modernisation project. Indeed, it was evident from chapter 3 that modernisation is promoting more utilitarian approaches to the incorporation of VSCs into broader civic agendas, promoting aspects of what Green (2004) has described as a 'symbiotic relationship' whilst also ensuring that individual volunteering in VSCs is overlain with a gossamer of efficiency and effectiveness through club accreditation.

Within such a structure this study has identified social capital as a malleable tool and one that has been prone to conceptual stretching. Indeed, as shown in chapters 2 and 3 the democratic strain of social capital adopted and employed by policymakers has been that promoted by Robert Putnam and, by putting an emphasis on voluntary associationalism, implicitly draws in civil society towards the mechanism of government and governance. The empirical evidence is clear in identifying that particular aspects of modernisation are not only influencing local policy development but crucial to shaping the preferences of individuals in regard of operational and practical issues.

For example, the prevailing target culture that is a fundamental part of New Labour's furniture of governance, not only demands evidence based policy but, as has been shown, acts as a powerful determinant of policy itself. In this respect the emphasis placed upon quality of life at a strategic level by VSC stakeholders, with an acknowledgement that there is a responsibility to meet performance criteria in respect of measures of quality of life, is fundamentally driven by the need to ensure that local government meets specific assessment criteria and are able to boost or maintain their CPA score. VSCs treated as social facts in this regard provide an obvious means for a local authority to assert that they are impacting upon the quality of life for a particular vicinity. Thus, when the Cultershire Council Leader speaks of a sports club being a point around which communities can 'coalesce' there is quite a functionalistic assumption being made about

the club itself, the sport being participated in and the relationship that a club might have with its community. Moreover, the overall interview data from stakeholders whilst revealing an apparent genuine interest in boosting local quality of life is also suggestive of a manner of implementation that is likely to ensure that existing levels of social capital are, at best, maintained. Indeed this functionalistic accession to the criteria set down by central government has been shown by the rational and critical strains of social capital to be both misplaced and ill-conceived, if the aim is to actually, create, establish and increase social capital amongst citizens.

There is then an obvious tension arising between aspects of localism in meeting the subjective demands of citizens and the objective demands of targets imposed by central government. In the context of club accreditation this tension lay in the acceptance of consumerism as part and parcel of the entrepreneurial expectations not only levied on NGBs, but also taken up by NGBs as part of their modus operandi. This was evidenced by the range of NGB RDOs, RDMs and CSP core staff interviewed who accepted and promoted NGBs as the legitimate conduits through which clubs can undergo, and be supported through, the accreditation process. As a precursor to this process the evidence also highlighted the greater power of modernisation in relation to two key aspects. The first aspect relates to the potential to influence and shape sports specific policy and processes such as club accreditation, whilst the second aspect relates to a much deeper perception of modernisation changing the structure within which VSCs are situated subsequently influencing the very perceptions held by VSC members. This second aspect, concerning the acceptance and compliance exhibited towards the dominant mode of governance and operationalisation surrounding and impacting upon particular VSCs, relates to issues of power and the exercise of power. Moreover, in privileging individual agency, modernisation and club-accreditation both normatively locate individual VSC members as generating an objectified individual agency pull factor to the broader structural push.

It is in this context that the notion of the POS becomes useful as an organising device in identifying NGBs as forms of intermediary organisations intent on exhibiting the value of

their 'product' to the government as investor. Particularly as an issue emerging from the countywide stakeholder case study concerned the perception of modernisation at the strategic level as a process and outcome. In other words stakeholders expected VSCs to undertake modernising processes and become modernised so that strategic targets can be achieved through a comprehensive delivery system. The apparent complicity exhibited by NGB representatives is perhaps reflective of the prevailing modernised context where the tendency is to see VSCs as a financial '...cost...not fully appreciating the return secured on its investment' (Welch and Long, 2006:1) – a return that promotes efficiency, effectiveness and economy within the notion of service delivery and the establishment and maintenance of an NGB's member clubs as agents for that delivery – a return that, because of the need to be accountable, has maintained a tension between the notion of NGB and VSC autonomy and the desire on the part of government to make all voluntary sector organisations accountable in light of particular government aims and objectives.

To be sure the policy stream concerning governmental encouragement for NGBs to modernise, and hence encourage member clubs to do likewise, can be traced to the inception of national lottery funding and the potential for greater say over public funding as advocated in *A Sporting Future For All* (2000). The subsequent expectation of NGBs was of '...a more professional approach to management and a clear commitment to the government's social policy objectives' (Houlihan & White, 2002: 165). Furthermore *Game Plan* (2002), the *Carter Report* (2005), *The Delivery System* (2007b) and more recently Sport England's *Strategy 2008-2011* have each attributed greater control over the public funding NGBs receive in return for the development of whole sport plans, the acceptance of government steerage and in meeting government objectives. In particular, this close alignment of the public funding stream with a corporate and managerialist ethos ensures that NGBs must advocate club accreditation as the key mechanism for establishing performance indicators, supporting local area agreements, having quality assurance mechanisms, recognising the power of networks and partnerships, but above all connecting grass roots through to government effectively – allowing implementation of government policy at a local level (Sport England, 2006: 10).

This subjective-objective tension also reflects two other key tensions inherent to modernisation. These are decentralisation versus centralisation and autonomy versus control. The importance of these tensions can be seen in the theoretical concern with the ability of the VSCs of LA1 and LA2 to create and/or expand social capital amongst and between citizens. On the face of it New Labour has devolved power to the regions, which can be seen in the revitalisation of Sport England's regional offices and the empowering of Regional Sports Boards to distribute lottery funding on a localised basis. The managerialist and unitary philosophical base of modernisation however, together with the emphasis on individualisation, has ensured that 'all institutions are to serve the same value system' (Rustin, 2004: 113)'.

In this respect the RSB, according to David, the RSB member interviewed (also a member of the National Investment Panel), is largely concerned with ensuring that suitably 'modernised' projects are those that receive funding. Indeed the RSB member argued that this panel was representative of 'the business community and local authorities' which apparently legitimised the recommendation of £315m worth of funding in 2005 on the basis of each sport meeting participation, success and modernisation targets (Sport England, 2008a). It is noteworthy that the subjects of modernisation were not consulted and the implicit allusion to the potential for social capital creation is not expanded upon. Moreover, it is informative that the close network surrounding the establishment of this RSB allows individuals to mobilise the resources at their disposal and assert their social capital such that the claim made by Rustin (2004) of a unitary philosophy not only has some validity in this particular instance, but reinforces the absence of dissenting or critical voices.

The acceptance of at least the premise of club accreditation by the VSCs of LA1 and LA2 is therefore to accept a unitary and modernised approach that 'brooks no opposition' (Lister, 2000:8) and ostensibly reduces their autonomy because decisions and VSC direction are pre-determined by the necessary centralised managerialism. In short, the freedom of the VSCs of LA1 and LA2 to act has become circumscribed by the changing structure itself as well as conditions of compliance which have emanated from that

structure such as audit and inspection frameworks that impact on Sport England and NGBs as well as locally through regimes such as the CPA.

Given these tensions it is unsurprising that local policymakers claim positive creative potential for VSCs in terms of social inclusion and increasing participation and certainly respondents from all of the VSCs surveyed clearly indicated the value of getting more members on-board. However, there was little evidence of any great enthusiasm for civic development expressed by VSC members, which tends to contradict the views of stakeholders and, at the micro level of analysis, contradicts the emphasis placed upon civil society organisations as the engine of social capital creation and civic change. Indeed the evidence from the study's two main policy actors (VSC members and county stakeholders) suggests a situation and context of willing compliance (Lukes, 2005) in order to fulfil the outcomes of particular policy decisions.

For the county level stakeholders willing compliance was often set against published targets (PSAs, LAAs etc) and prescribed work programmes of particular individuals. Cultershire's Rugby RDM for example explained that his targets were set nationally 'we in Cultershire, specifically have identified that we want X amount of clubs done [accredited] this year...meeting the strategic aims of the RFU'. For the VSCs the willing compliance with strategic aims set by intermediate and upper tier authorities was often set against the potential for increased or decreased funding. In this respect as one chairman recognised, whilst there are funding streams available in order 'to apply for one of those funding streams you've got to do something for it' (Geoff Club D). In other words the issue of attaining public funding was consistently viewed, by members of the VSCs of both local authorities, as a means of ensuring that they willingly complied with perceived levels of conditionality in meeting government policy objectives.

This aspect of domination, enabling willing compliance, was also seen by VSC members as evidence of NGB incorporation of mutual aid support within macro-level policies without due consideration of the impact of those policies on VSC club tradition or sub-culture. It is not possible to say from the empirical evidence that modernisation is *the*

causal factor, but clearly the perceptual picture painted by VSC members indicated that as VSCs become prone to greater central 'steerage' so their traditional way of organising, recruiting and participating (the club ethos) may change and hence the presumed ability to form aspects of social capital. Importantly the common perception among VSC members was of club accreditation as a means to access indirect funding rather than as a means to improve service delivery. This is perhaps indicative of Foucauldian approaches to power where power can be seen to reside in the decision making process itself rather than any one individual actor (see chapter 2, p.25). Indeed the drive for achieving targets set outside of clubs' particular remit has arguably been reinforced by the *Sport England Strategy 2008-2011*. This strategy ostensibly pushes many NGBs towards a stronger, clearer, more focused and target driven role in order to get public funding. In this respect the structural climate is such that NGBs now know what the government agenda is and to ensure that they do not lose out are beholden to follow the policy. Thus much of the steerage that ensures willing compliance relates to the often implicit and occasionally explicit allusions to increasing social capital and consequently capitalising on the mutuality of VSCs as a means of making a civic impact.

The findings suggest that although partnership working as a modernised tactic of governance is identified in the literature (see chapter 3) as fundamental to social capital (creation and use), in Cultershire the overriding emphasis was on benefit accruing at the organisational level. The benefit accruing at the organisational level did tend to differ, depending on the organisation concerned and once again reflects the potentialities for social capital. In particular, partnerships between VSCs and each of the local authorities were frequently commented upon, and in the most part the comments from the VSC members were negative. Stakeholders were rather more complimentary about the VSCs particularly due, as already highlighted, to their perceived civic bolsterist role. Moreover stakeholders were often quite clear that partnerships were often quite functional and utilitarian in relation to meeting strategic objectives. Indeed given the importance attributed to partnerships (particularly those with the LA) it was edifying to note the level of acceptance of third parties within what were ostensibly internal decisions.

In accepting that partnership development as a form of modernised governance is fundamentally concerned with establishing mechanisms for social capital creation, it is also apparent that as a mode of governance partnerships concern the exercise of power. In particular, the critical and rational strains suggest that partnerships concern the accruing of benefits for individuals or groups that arise from being part of a partnership. Although these two theoretical strains differ considerably they both contain an acknowledgement of a self-serving instrumentalism that fundamentally inhibits the development of broader civic capital.

Accepting also the importance of context to social capital surrounding partnerships and taking a Foucaultian approach to power (see chapter 2) the relevance for social capital concerns the manner in which decisions are approached by particular individuals in specific situations. This obviously produces other reactions and resistances and is not tied to specific groups or identities. Thus the perception of LA2 held by members of Club D as a 'landlord' that apparently gives the 'impression sometimes that they'd like us out of here' is obviously linked to the impression that LA2 are not concerned with maintaining the upkeep and general quality of the pitches. Indeed, in approaching the decision making situation it is possible to argue, in this instance, that whilst members of Club D want a particular outcome that is more focused on the product of their involvement, the local authority are making decisions based on inclusive and civic orientated ideals. In this scenario, given the engendering of social capital within the partnership working as governance approach (see chapter 3), the emphasis on a relational model of negotiation and compromise indicates that power is exercised through the decision making process rather than owned per se.

Mutual aid

The last point concerning power serves as a reminder that many of the concepts relating to social capital and VSCs are not as clear cut as they might seem, but are rather a jumble of inter-related abstract concepts that coalesce around modernisation and mutual aid. Mutual aid, which essentially involves the self-organisation, active production and

consumption of that product by a group (Bishop and Hogget, 1986, see chapter 3), has been shown to permeate every level of the VSCs in LA1 and LA2. This automatically placed these VSCs, as CSOs, into a very different category to other charitable organisations, where this emphasis is most apparent in the ethos of the VSC, and which in turn reflects the ideology and culture of each club as well as each sport itself.

The sort of self-help mutual aid exhibited by the VSCs of LA1 and LA2 did vary from club to club, sport to sport and from LA1 to LA2. Indeed as chapter 2 has highlighted, the importance of specificities of context cannot be overplayed and reinforces the conceptual strength of the POS in facilitating an analysis of contextual structures that act to condition those actions of actors. Given the evidence from the empirical chapters of clear differences in policy implementation and formation at the local level, particularly in relation to local authority documentation, it is possible to assert that LA1 and LA2 each offer a different POS to the VSCs within each local authority.

Generally speaking LA1 is less interventionist and does not have a developed community role in facilitating VSCs to work at the community level. The accepted high level of affluence of LA1 may be a key factor in this respect, particularly when considering types and forms of inclusivity, although any emphasis on the issue of affluence is beyond the parameters of this study. LA2 on the other hand appears more interventionist, has a clear sense of purpose within its local sport and recreation strategy and clearly seeks to link VSCs with potential community outcomes. Given these levels of distinctiveness between LA1 and LA2 in Cultershire, the need to make sense of the POS before making judgements about the type, level and value of any social capital that a VSC can contribute towards is vital if one is to evaluate its distributive capacity.

The mutual aid and hence club ethos expressed by members of Club B for example tended to be individualistic and self-serving and indicated that the rational strain of social capital was best placed to account for this. Club E was similar in the sense of the individualism expressed by members, but the club ethos was more akin to Clubs A, C and D each of which was a team sports club. Thus in this instance the individuality of the

swimming clubs appeared to be related to the individuality of the sport which in turn meant that each of the swimming clubs tended to be overly-concerned with the product. This in turn tended to impact on the relationship they had or felt they were able to generate with potential partners and meant that the POS they faced was very different to that faced by the team sports VSCs. The upshot was a more constrained and restrained potential for social capital creation and in the sense of the rational strain is best explained as individuals coming together to maximise their utility.

This is not to say that team sport VSCs displayed better social capitalistic aspects, rather it indicates once again the limitations of the concept of social capital once it has become stretched beyond its conceptual roots (Portes, 2000 – see chapter 1). In the case of rugby, many VSC members perceived themselves as members of an imagined community that was voiced as the 'rugby network', a perceived connectivity of mutual aid that could facilitate the mobilisation of resources into action of some sort. This is clearly a case of social capital in action based on, and circumscribed by, the perception of the limits of mutual aid within a network. In essence the perceived network is therefore based on a sort of normatised collective identity where the value of membership accrues to any member of a rugby club and which sponsors some form of action or outcome. This was invariably identified as being able to walk into any club, or join any club and can be seen in the way that former players (of that or any other club) made up virtually every volunteer position at the each of the rugby clubs studied. This last point exhibits a commonality between all of the VSCs interviewed and indicates in this instance that the Bourdieun concern with social reproduction provides a more convincing explanation of individual volunteering within a VSC than the democratic strain of social capital.

The notion of the imagined community also serves as a reminder that notions of community are contested (see chapter 3) and that the privileging and reification of community by New Labour has boosted the importance of social capital as a means of interpreting social processes. It is significant that whilst stakeholders tended to make a range of functionalistic assumptions concerning the contribution that VSCs could make to their particular agendas, VSC members of different clubs tended to confound these

generalist assumptions by arguing that their particular club was 'the community' and that benefits and profits of social capital did not extend beyond this community. Indeed there seems to be little consideration given by stakeholders to the internal processes within clubs, other than ensuring that either club-accreditation is taken up or that a VSC meets sufficient modernisation criteria necessary to ensure that service delivery is maintained.

The apparent paradox of this situation pits modernising pressures against pressures of mutuality within the VSC and hence puts great pressure on the expectations of VSCs to deliver more than they can actually produce. The external pressures of one particular context versus the internal pressures of a more contained and restricted context are once again indicative of the tension implicit to the incorporation of civil society within the managerial capitalism of New Labour. The explicit emphasis by VSC members of the importance of volunteering, both at a personal and organisational level, reminds one that it is this aspect that tends to facilitate individuals' identification with their particular collectivity. Moreover, in accepting some of the arguments of both the critical and rational strains of social capital VSCs are not the democratic entities that appear to be envisaged by stakeholders, but are rife with issues of identity, power and social reproduction.

In this manner, the evidence from the VSCs of LA1 and LA2 indicates that social capital continues to be distributed unevenly and that the mutual aid focus of VSCs is the key mechanism serving that function. Indeed, because of the mutual aid nature of the VSCs surveyed, the pull factor associated with any one particular VSC is more likely to concern the maintenance of a normative framework that operates at a subconscious level to ensure that like-minded individuals are drawn to a particular club. In this manner the normative context of VSCs, where trust is an outcome of the social capital present, becomes a self-reinforcing situation that can exclude more than it can include. This of course resonates with the previous analysis of self-selection in VSCs and suggests that the critical and rational strains of social capital are best placed to explain the micro-level creation and expression of social capital in VSCs.

Theoretical and Conceptual Contributions

Implications for social capital theory

It is asserted that this thesis has made a number of new contributions in meeting its stated aim of 'examining the perceptions held by external stakeholders and voluntary sports club members of the role of voluntary sports clubs in forming and sustaining social capital'. In meeting this aim the thesis has explored a number of concepts and issues which have established a clear relationship between social capital, VSCs and the political and policy context within which they operate. These explorations have been guided by four objectives, which as well as receiving substantial attention within this study, have also directed this study towards addressing previously under-researched areas concerning the relationship between voluntary associations and the formation of social capital. This study is believed to be one of the first to carry out detailed research using VSCs as case studies to examine the concept of social capital. It was notable that despite the abundance of academic research on social capital that there was very little that advocated any sort of synthesis between the three strains outlined in this study. This is clearly a theoretically significant issue and in this respect there are a number of suggestions from this study that will facilitate a more coherent approach to the use of social capital theory in and for future research.

The first suggestion concerns the conceptual coherence of the concept of social capital itself and its application to interpreting practice. In chapter 1 Putnam's stretching of the concept to explain civic engagement became apparent and was commented upon by a number of critics. The analysis and interpretation of the empirical findings of this study through the lens of the democratic strain has further tended to reinforce some of the shortcomings of Putnam's approach. For example, the notion that collective action can be inferred upwards from individuals, given the importance of individual interpretation of particular situations and contexts demonstrated by this study, seems at best misguided and something of a methodological fallacy. This is largely attributable to the persistence of a lack of conceptual clarity in the writings of Putnam and those who have followed his approach such as Stolle and Rochon (1998). Consequently, the democratic strain of social

capital, notwithstanding allusions to a number of conceptual approaches which include collective action theories, new institutionalism, and human capital, does not exhibit the conceptual depth of either the rational or the critical strain. Coleman uses the theory of social capital in response to shortcomings in existing theories and as a tool with which to rectify problems in existing theoretical work. Bourdieu, on the other hand, uses it to expand his own work on the reproduction of inequality, and develops his version of social capital to complement his concept of cultural capital.

In particular the democratic strain never fully takes into account structural factors and this is exacerbated by Putnam's greater emphasis on agency in his later work, which suggests that individuals can drive civic change. The bland acceptance of the democratic strain as an explanatory tool is however to accept a more functionalist interpretation of VSCs and does not necessarily account for individual agency as a reflexive condition, which this study has sought to do throughout. Indeed evidence from the VSC members tended to contradict that of the stakeholders and to that extent contradicts the assumptions made by Putnamian methodological approaches predicated on counting and measuring the volume of voluntary associations in any one area as a measure of social capital. Thus the apparent manner in which the majority of VSC members seemed to approach the running and organisation of their particular VSCs tended to resemble those rationalistic ideas put forward by Coleman.

The empirical findings from this study are unequivocal in considering that context is crucial to interpreting and understanding the minutiae of complex relationships that form between individuals and which facilitate action. Specifically, this study identifies the political opportunity structure, itself constructed from a series of interrelated elements and factors, as significant for VSCs and the potential they have for creating social capital. The POS thus confers on social capital an important role as a 'meso level social structure' which serves an integrating function between individuals and wider social structures (Edwards and Foley, 1997). In this respect the wider social structures are represented by the stakeholders and the antecedent policy structures that can be said to make up part of the particular POS of each organisational and structural level. The overwhelming

evidence from the case studies is that the emphasis on relationships and values, which are implicitly bound within the club-culture of the VSCs, indicates that the maintenance of this culture, or a club ethos, is essential for club members as well as external stakeholders for the establishment of mutually beneficial relationships or partnerships.

The issue of contextualisation is further complicated by the nature of the structure within which individuals, from differencing VSCs and in differing localities find themselves. Whilst the rational strain helps with the interpretation and explanation of some of the unintended consequences of VSC activity in forming social capital it also reveals a significant limitation. In particular issues such as club-culture and even the culture of particular sports that may exist in a particular location are not considered by the rational strain (Field, 2003). In contrast, for the critical strain, social capital not so much facilitates action rather it determines it, with the structuring structure pre-eminent in explaining inequality, which extends to VSC membership, based upon the unequal access to social, economic and cultural resources. In this respect both the rational and critical strains see the benefit of social capital for those who have it, or access to it, and VSC membership represents the necessary resource to mobilise this type of social capital. This study presents no evidence to suggest, as does the democratic strain of social capital, that collective action can be generalised to the societal level from individual or organisational interactions. The overwhelming picture is one where social capital can be seen to have value, but where that value exists within the context of specific networks within which it is created.

In considering issue of individualism whilst also problematic for the rational strain in terms of squaring the circle between methodological individualism and collective action, also potentially allows researchers to distinguish between types of social capital and the location of its production. The evidence from the study that different VSCs from different sporting traditions and in different localities can produce different types of social capital, and that that social capital may be private or public or a mixture of both, suggests that structural factors such as those identified in this study are indeed important for the formation of potential social capital resources. There is, in this regard, no reason why the

democratic strain cannot be expanded to take into account other factors and significantly Putnam and Feldstein are more willing to acknowledge and countenance the role of such structures in *Better Together* (2003).

Taking the issue of economic inequality and its relationship with social capital, it is apparent that whilst Putnam has insufficiently considered this issue, the two other strains clearly bring a different analytical bent which might aid the conceptual clarity of the democratic strain. Bourdieu (as well as Portes and Foley and Edwards) highlights the impact of existing economic status of the 'value' of social capital. This expands on Putnam's (following on from Coleman) point that social capital is 'a resource in itself', in the sense that it assists in either individual gain or collective action. This insight from Bourdieu (and those operating within the critical strain) demonstrates that social capital, while a resource in itself, will be more valuable if the economic status of those involved is of a higher value. The implication, evidenced in chapters 7 and 8, is that certain VSCs that are well connected, therefore having a high stock of social capital, will receive various benefits that would not be present in the absence of these connections. Yet if a VSC and in particular the majority of its members are financially disadvantaged, then there is a limit to what this stock of social capital can achieve. This clearly illustrates the point made by Serageldin and Grootaert (1999) in respect of their notion of 'complementarity' (chapter 2, p.20), but also highlights the theoretical struggle with conceptual compromise.

A second implication concerning social capital theory relates to the empirical value of bonding and bridging social capital, which this study has identified, are very difficult to sustain when explored at the micro-level with individuals who have many allegiances, identities and values depending upon circumstance and context. As chapter 2 has shown the problem with such a distinction is that it is conceptually underdeveloped and by Putnam's own admission it is difficult to distinguish between the two empirically. In many ways it is perhaps best to adopt a simpler taxonomy of horizontal social capital with the rider that the context of the network concerned will inform on the nature of those relationships. The findings from the two local authority case studies suggest that VSCs,

through the process of self selectivity and within the specific context of a club's mutual aid and club ethos, tend to attract individuals who share a range of similarities with other members of a VSC. Many of these bonds of attraction are normative, but in employing the Bourdieun insight that social capital is profoundly embedded in social strata it is possible to argue that most bridging and bonding forms of social capital actually represent relations to others within the same social stratum.

This insight reinforces once again that the value and importance attached to social capital lies in the identification of the context within which networks and relationships are embedded. The evidence from the VSC members interviewed tends to suggest therefore that the bonding and bridging functions of social capital lead individuals to bond with and trust others who are more or less like themselves. This is of interest for the debate between the three strains of social capital not least because it informs the dominant methodological approaches inherent to each strain and signals a further limitation to the democratic strain. The main problem with bridging social capital interaction for the democratic strain, as this study has shown, is that it is best analysed at the micro-level. It is in this respect that the work of both Lin (2001) and Portes (2000) support this micro-level approach to bonding and bridging capital, with Lin arguing that the abstractness of the macro-level approach can result in social capital becoming 'merely another trendy term to deploy in the broad context of improving or building social integration and solidarity' (2001: 26). The definability of specific groups and networks, which has clearly been the case with each particular VSC involved in this study, is essential for a clear focus on the individual interaction that is at the heart of social capital.

Furthermore, Portes (2000) identifies two significant problems with much of the macro-level work on social capital. First there is the lack of conceptual coherence by those espousing this view which has meant that 'the transition of the concept from an individual asset to a community or a national resource was never explicitly theorised' (p.3). Second, those working at the macro-level have never disentangled causes and effects whereas at the micro-level the material and informational benefits 'were clearly separate and distinct from the social structures that produced them' (p.4). It is believed

that this study has avoided some of the pitfalls of the macro-level approach and has provided a suitable analytical framework for the analysis of social capital to be conceptually cogent. Thus the dense networks associated with bonding capital, evidenced in chapters 7 and 8, are still best viewed through the lens of the micro-level methodological approach as a means to interrogate the social and relational context of that capital. In this respect when two members of Club D each separately referred to their club as 'a clan' and 'a gang, the whole hunting in packs thing' (Graham and Ethan players), the less discernible intricacies and the more obvious signs of bonding capital become easier to see. Similarly those subtleties of bridging social capital interaction are almost impossible to gauge, except through the case by case basis that has provided the substance for the case studies that have been the empirical focus of this study.

The point made here about methodological limitations is crucial for a) interpreting and judging accurately the outcomes of various CSOs essentially charged with the same function (in this case collectivities providing specific sporting opportunities); b) the insistence throughout the study that context is crucial to interpreting the value, structure and meaning of relationship networks between and amongst individuals and; c) refuting both the overly positive or moral inflationist interpretation of social capital stemming from VSCs as a public good and as something that can be consciously created without consequences. Indeed the measurement of social capital, on the evidence of this study, is not necessarily reflected in utterances about trust or one's apparent involvement in civic-minded voluntarism. Rather it is the concrete relations and attendant norms and values associated with specific social contexts that need to be accounted for in any consideration of social formation or destruction.

The mechanics involved in the conscious creation of social capital are at the heart of the policy context surrounding the promotion of VSCs as doubly virtuous locations within civil society – the virtuous activity of volunteering in promoting the virtuous activity of sport – enabling and facilitating greater and better networks to arise through increased participation. Certainly the evidence from VSC stakeholders was that at the strategic level and framed as improving the 'quality of life', social capital among a community can

be developed as a public good. Putnam is really the only major theorist to go down the route of the conscious regeneration of civic engagement, and it is this that is possibly the main source of his wider appeal.

Certainly in chapter 6, the appeal of consciously creating social capital lay in the potential for establishing a vibrant community resplendent with a variety of CSOs, such as VSCs, that sponsored civic engagement. The strategic value of Putnamian-infused policy in this respect is therefore dependent on the establishment of a clear causal direction between civil society and civic engagement. It is instructive therefore that at no point does any evidence from any of the empirical chapters point towards a clear direction of causality. At the stakeholder level there is some anticipation that VSCs will fulfil a civic function, and in so doing will be guided via modernised processes to form social capital that bridges in a number of directions. Instead the evidence from the VSCs points towards a dominance of voluntaristic altruism in establishing collective action whereby social capital is formed as a by-product and may be inclusive as much as it exclusive. The case study evidence therefore suggests that social capital creation in VSCs relies on individuals making altruistic acts, without the insurance of reciprocity, which have no tangible short-term gain (although they are both often present within a VSC). These final points indicate that there are some important implications for policymakers who wish to establish and develop particular policy agendas.

Implications for policy aimed at forming social capital

The use of the political opportunity structure (POS) has provided a clear picture of how important the political context is to establishing social policy. Used as an analytical tool to inform on the relationship between VSCs and social capital the POS has highlighted the importance of structure and top-down processes in developing social capital at grass roots level. In this respect New Labour's modernisation programme was clearly indicated as a key structural process with attendant demands for structural adaptation.

The potential for VSCs to operate in a manner that enables social capital to be formed is clearly evidenced in this study, as being constrained within particular opportunity

structures that are themselves determined by broader structural currents. In this regard a number of organisations and agencies act at intermediate levels to mitigate the particular structure each VSC will encounter which subsequently impacts on the type, volume and sustainability of any social capital formed. The POS has been a vital analytic tool of this study and has largely exploded the explicit assumption of the democratic strain that social capital is best developed upwards from voluntary associationalism to the societal level as something of a canard.

The apparent lack of desire for CSNs, from the evidence of VSC members in both local authorities, suggests that for the VSC the CSN may be something of irrelevancy and far removed from the essential purpose of a VSC in the first instance. Indeed, it raises the question of whether VSCs want or see the value in a voice beyond their own sport or beyond the constituency that each club was identified by its members as playing to. This assertion tends to question much of the direction of dominant policy strands concerning the apparent emphasis of the democratic strain within a policy discourse concerning the power of civil society to build social capital upwards from the grass roots.

The evidence from VSC stakeholders is contradictory and implicates these stakeholders as having a clear strategic orientation to social capital outcomes, which at the policy level has tended to be manifested in notions of quality of life. Indeed, the linking of VSCs with this metaphor indicates that the democratic strain is not only accepted but has become translated at the local level, and consequently has implications for VSCs as the major providers of sporting opportunities. In one sense it is possible to speak of the hegemonic domination of the democratic strain of social capital at the county level, which indicates that the exercise of power in the decision making process not only corresponds with, but reinforces, the ideological and rhetorical functions of modernisation. Moreover the acceptance by Cultershire County Council, espoused by the Head of Heritage and Recreation, that VSCs 'are good for the quality of life across the whole county', presents a normative position, which puts the VSC in the position of creator of social good, extender of social networks and by default being an engine of social inclusion. Indeed the evidence from chapter 6 indicates that the emphasis placed upon VSCs by

stakeholders is not in the sport specific, development 'of' sport mould, but is more to do with fostering the associated norms and values that are presumed to come with VSC participation. In other words the associational value of the VSC is viewed by stakeholders in line with policy expectations in terms of recreating Tocquevillean 'mores'. Thus according to the democratic strain of social capital, VSCs are more than just sports organisations, they act as a communal inventories of generalised trust and social norms that give rise to mutual obligations and cooperative action.

It was in this context that external stakeholders broadly held an expectation of VSCs contributing to local identity and local expression, referred to in some of the literature as 'new localism' (e.g. Stoker, 2006). This was ably summed up as 'a sense of place' by the Council Leader and confirmed that the dominant approach of stakeholders to VSCs was in placing them as indicators of social munificence. This approach is indicative of a relatively coherent policy cascade that has incorporated the democratic strain of social capital to the exclusion of the rational and critical strains. Indeed as the study shows, New Labour's desire for Third Way politics coupled with a policy framework that assimilates the democratic strain of social capital, has meant that VSCs have become incorporated in meeting wider social objectives. Consequently, for Cultershire County Council, VSCs are viewed strategically as doubly virtuous locations that have a clear impact on the public's perception of 'place' and identity, which the council obviously considers valuable. Indeed the evidence from CSP officers was that they were intent on ensuring that they fulfilled their duty to support VSCs, where support was couched in unthreatening terms that bade no mention of the potential for VSCs concerning their role in enhancing quality of life.

This normative position has been further entrenched by the acceptance of club accreditation processes, viewed by VSC members as being bounded within a constraining set of issues that compelled them to exercise their responsibility to develop in relation to the parameters set by particular NGBs. The perception of VSC members of this instance is indicative of the fragility of the democratic strain of social capital when examined in terms of the choices and decisions made by individuals. This is largely because whilst

club accreditation is partly concerned with ensuring that VSCs meet a minimum standard of operation, it is also implicitly concerned with the governance and accessibility of VSCs. It is this latter context that club accreditation accentuates that aspect of the modernisation process that encourages professionalisation and formalisation within VSCs. The logic of this process of ensuring the development of partnerships and networks is to create the conditions for normatively thick trust to be generated through the collective action of mutually bonded and reciprocally minded individuals. In this respect, and given that in chapter 2 (p.28) trust was identified as a psychological trait emanating from the presence of social capital, it is likely that social capital may have indeed been created, albeit in a limited and bounded fashion.

Indeed the findings from this study are persuasive in recognising that intra-sport networks are far more significant as collaborative ventures between VSCs, furthermore intra-sport networks within specific sports tend to be legitimised even further by the VSC members themselves. However, even among the participants of the three sports surveyed there were clear differences between sports, with rugby club members signalling a clear willingness and desire to work with other clubs within NGB constructed cluster groups. The swimming clubs tended to rely on the connectedness of their coaches to form partnerships with other clubs which for Club E appeared less problematic than for Club B as the coach of Club E is a well respected Olympian with strong local coaching connections with a big city club. The one football club surveyed, even though a charter standard development club, was acknowledged by members as not contacting other clubs due to local rivalries, but liaising with a local school, Cultershire FA and the local authority.

To be sure in all of these instances social capital is being formed and used as a facilitative device in terms of enabling resources to be mobilised and to this extent it is unintentionally created. Moreover, the social capital created would appear not to be that, which the prevailing policy context with its democratic strain leanings, is aimed at achieving. In short, the rhetorical dominance of the democratic strain with its influence in forming policy agendas is not borne out in terms of the outcomes of policies which tend

to follow the modernised trend of liberal entrepreneurialism and focus on individualised product and consumption. Thus, whilst most social policy, and particularly that which is applied to VSCs is shrouded in the rhetoric of civic engagement and community benefits, and social inclusion and equality of opportunity, most of the outcomes of policy evidenced in this study suggest that the social capital that is being formed is consistent to that conceptualised by the rational or even the critical strain. In part this is consistent with sport's mythopoeic status (Coalter, 2007a) and in part a misreading of the malleability of volunteering that is at the heart of the mutual aid function of VSCs.

Indeed over-reliance on the functionalistic appropriation of VSCs by policy makers as tools of policy has tended to reduce VSCs to the level of unproblematic entities which, in establishing the democratic strain of social capital, has meant the over-emphasis in policy on aspects of agency to drive civic engagement. Conversely the rational and critical strains seek to balance aspects of agency and structure, and emphasise the importance of structural restraints respectively in relation to the possible formation of social capital through policy intervention. In this regard the continuing contention between agency and structure is reflected in the apparent struggle between the issues of compulsion and liberty, which are both implicit to the conformist process of modernisation (Rustin, 2004) and inherent to the whole New Labour project. Indeed given that club accreditation is evidenced as a performance need and that VSCs are presumed by stakeholders to be reflective entities, then the reflective practice of VSCs together with the desire for professionalisation is interpreted by stakeholders as VSCs increasingly taking onboard the mantle of club accreditation. Conversely in terms of VSCs owning the processes of their governance, the indication from VSC members was that although they were instrumentally adopting partnership and network development they were also acquiescent in succumbing to structural determinism. That is to say as individuals operating in a political context of 'managed capitalism', VSC members acted in accordance with the prevailing norms of liberal entrepreneurship which are themselves reinforced through the operation of VSCs.

In terms of considering the formation of social capital where benefits can be judged as a public good it is necessary to examine the whole edifice of modernisation particularly as the findings of this study have identified that the structural framework for club-accreditation is gradually becoming more dominant. In this regard the recent publication of Sport England's *Strategy 2008-2011* (2008b) which empowers NGBs with a stronger role in determining the structure and organisation of their constituent VSC members, but also ensures that stringent targets and conditions are in place, further shores up the influence of modernisation in terms of outputs and outcomes of particular sports policy.

The Sport England *Strategy 2008-2011,* whilst indicating a level of autonomy for NGBs, imposes a range of conditions and targets that relate to funding and consequently acts to restrict freedom and ensure that centralised strategic decisions dominate grass roots sporting organisations, the VSCs. Taken at this level policy development maintains and reinforces the inherent tension between autonomy and control that has bedevilled much policy that has followed the rhetorical imprecation of civic regeneration based on the democratic strain of social capital as increasing social networks as a public good. The pursuance of these policies may be more likely to reinforce the policy entrenchment of the rational strain of social capital, particularly as VSCs exhibit a movement from collective self-rule to a situation where the NGBs more openly determine how the clubs run themselves. In essence, this plays out the tension between modernisation and mutual aid resulting in a move from thick forms of mutual trust (mores) to the thin horizontal bridges that facilitate connections among individual utility-maximisers. If current and future policies manage to achieve this then it is very unlikely that social capital for the public good will be formed and the reality will be in opposition to the rhetoric of policy.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I - Phase 1: Interviewees (by role)

Interviewees	Pseudonym
Cultershire Connexions: Manager	Jenny
Cultershire County Council: Council Leader	Eric
Cultershire County Council: Senior Education Officer (Sport)	Clive
Cultershire County Council: Director of Heritage and Recreation	Cliff
Cultershire County Council: Head of Sports, Community and Outdoor Services	Ian
Cultershire RFU: President	John
Cultershire Schools Football Association: Chairman	James
Cultershire Senior Schools and Colleges Football Association: Chairman	Gary
Cultershire County Sports Partnership: Director	Penny
Cultershire County Sports Partnership: Sport Development Manager *A*	Lisa
Cultershire County Sports Partnership: Sport Development Manager *B*	Glynis
Cultershire County Sports Partnership: Club and Volunteer Development Officer	Ruth
Cultershire County Sports Partnership: Swimming Development Officer	Mark
Cultershire County Sports Partnership: Rugby Development Officer	Jeremy
Cultershire County Sports Partnership/ Sports Coach UK: Coach Development Officer	Brian
FA: Women and Girls Football Development Officer	Alison
FA: County Development Manager	Simon
LA1: Portfolio holder Heritage, Culture and Sport	Jane
LA1 School Sport Partnership: Partnership Development Manager	Mike
LA1: Sport Development Officer	Steve
LA1: Volunteer Centre: Manager	Fraser
LA2: Cabinet member for leisure	Cedric
LA2: Chief Leisure Officer	Richard
LA2: School Sport Partnership: Partnership Development Manager	Sean
LA2: Sport Development Officer	Nick
Regional Development Manager: RFU	Peter
Regional Development Manager: Swimming	Rodney
Regional Sports Board: Member	David
Regional Youth Offending Team: Manager	Rob
Sport England South East: Sport Development Manager – club development	Liam
Sport England South East: Sport Development Manager – workforce capacity building	William

Appendix II – Themes and questions for Key Stakeholders

Theme	Indicators/Questions
Connections and networks	Do you work with all VSCs in this area? How do you choose those you work with & those you don't? Are some clubs better at getting things done than others? [How willing are VSCs to link with your organisation?] Local network of support?
Value of the club	What value do you place on the work of VSCs? (how valuable are clubs to you) Do you value some clubs more highly than others and why is that? Is this value attributable to whether VSCs are helpful in fulfilling your aims & objectives? (government aims) Prompts: [How willing are VSCs to go through accreditation] Do you share the same values as VSCs?
Trust & community composition	What do you think VSCs contribute to their local neighbourhood? In what ways do VSCs contribute to the major cross cutting agendas within their local community? [What are the general community benefits of VSCs?] Would you say that you can trust VSCs? Has your level of trust in others changed as a result of working with VSCs?
Volunteering	How best describes the value of the volunteering occurring in VSCs? (public Vs private benefits) What impact has the governments view (political context) of volunteering had on volunteering & voluntary associations? – Is there a political context for volunteering or the promotion of volunteering? Does this volunteering have any value to your aims & objectives? Does active participation in VSCs vary according to the relative deprivation of where VSCs are based? Are VSCs willing to take on volunteers/youngsters you have suggested?
Partnerships	What do you expect from your partnerships with VSCs? Who would you say makes the key decisions in any partnerships with VSCs? Working in partnership with VSCs, what public needs are met?
Policies	Do you see VSCs being involved in debates concerning community level issues? Do you expect VSCs to be involved in cross cutting aspects of the wider policy process? Are community cohesion and active citizenship on your agenda? Do VSCs have a role to play in these 2 agendas? Do you consider the emphasis on sport's value for community development (& SC development) being as strong now as it was a few years ago? Has the agenda moved on from social benefits to focus more narrowly on health benefits?
Modernisation	Do you consider VSCs to be organised effectively? Are VSCs organised effectively in relation community level activity? (should answer the Q: do you see evidence of VSCs modernising) Are VSCs willing to modernise? How do VSCs have access to channels of communication and influence? Do VSCs have a voice?
POS	Is the environment for working with VSCs different to that which existed pre New Labour? How do you work with VSCs? Through individual contacts or through local Sports Councils/Sports Forums? What would influence you to develop informal relationships with some VSCs? [What are the key landmarks/developments in the political environment for voluntary associations? (VSCs)]

		Right so its 10:30, Friday the 12th, and in umm *** office in Nottingham court and you're quite happy for some questions now, are you?
		Yes, yes
		Oh right, I'll fire away. So, umm a range of things, I'll just go through a couple of questions.
		Mmm
		Do you work with all vulnerary sports clubs in, in this area?
		No. certainly not, I mean our remit is to cover the whole oh sport in *Cultershire* umm, and the isle of white which is quite a sizable county, and we have got thousands and thousand of clubs across the county umm, so what we have to do is, we have to home in and work strategically, umm with our partners in a number of clubs and those clubs are usually, mostly related to our priority sports.
		Mmm
		Which there's something like thirteen, fourteen of them, there were eleven but we've just taken our paper to the board. So it usually, umm, very sport specific.
		Right
		Umm orientated.
		And presumable those priority sports are derived from sporting amongst…
		Umm, well we do have a list of thirty…something like thirty two priority sports from sport England, but what we've done is umm, initially thought the active sports program and existing umm, work, the area prioritised those eleven sports. And then subsequently what we've done is invited sports, but have said, so that been our kind of, you know we've been proactive
		Yeah
		Saying these are our priority, for a whole range of reasons. Some because we've…they've been identified through the actually sports programs, some like for example gymnastics and badminton, where it reflects one, the long term athlete development program, which is… so that gymnastics is very important to us as sport…
		Yeah

		...to implement that, which is a key strand of our strategy and badminton just because umm, we have such an, umm.... breath of volunteering clubs across the county and activity in badminton
		Ok
		That umm, it made sense and it makes sense
		Yeah
		For us to work with them, and we've invested some money in them, a specialist facility as well. So umm, so those are the eleven sports, but then we've gone out to the national governing bodies and said 'ok' you know, 'for your sports, is *Cultershire* a priority for you? Do you have a county plan? And if so do you need assistance...' Yes
		'...delivering that plan'
		Ok
		And from that there are several sports that have come forward, that we have something called a partnership agreement and we report and deliver their sports. So, you know, it's been a two way process really.
		Mmm
		Uh huh
		Ok. Umm, so you know, you say you work with many hundreds of thousands of sports clubs across *Cultershire*. Umm, how do you choose those whom you work with and those you don't?
		Ok, well in a sense we're helping with those clubs though, you know, those generic services, like the umm, website and internet so like anybody can look up...can access the information
		Yep
		The information on our website. We also produce the annual sports guide which is all the clubs and all the sports across *Cultershire* and the isle of white. So, in a sense we're helping...we will be helping all clubs to, you know, a small extent.
		yeah
		But we will focus in on specific work with specific clubs in certain geographical areas, and that is identified through, what we call our sport action groups. So, for example you've got a swimming action group and it has a representative group of the various partners that meet regularly and produce an annual plan. And that annual plan will be based upon...its development will be based upon local knowledge...

		right
		...so local knowledge will inform that time, and it might be you know, that they want to work with a specific club to deliver elements of umm, that umm, annual plan or the club may want specific support around developing new coaches or umm, recruiting volunteers or facilities or assistance with their club accreditation , all those sorts of things. And club accreditation is a key umm, what we are looking for is to work with clubs who are looking for club accreditation and that will bring in a whole raft of measures that they need to address within a club. Some they'll be very, you know, some clubs will be very, very umm good at delivering those things already and in other areas they might need a little bit of support. It maybe that they have level one coaches and they need to get at least one level two coach
		Mmm
		So we will target resources to those clubs with a view to getting them accredited either through the sport England generic accreditation or through their own sports accreditation which in the case of some...Mumbles
		So do you find that some clubs or most clubs are good at getting accreditation or are happy to go though that process?
		Yeah, err...I mean as you know we've done the research on this
		Mmm
		And what we know about clubs is that those clubs that have not embarked upon the process, will kind of look at club accreditation and think 'oh my goodness', you know
		Mmm
		'Does is actually do anything for us? We're a good club anyway', so they are not necessarily bought into the benefit that club accreditation can bring them. They might feel that they don't have to resource and capacity to be able to work towards club accreditation because it is, you know, it is...
		Yeah, yeah
		...quite a demanding process. What we do know is once we have found that 'champion' if you like, in the clubs that is prepares to sort of say, 'yeah I'll take on club accreditation', and they start working through it the value of club accreditation becomes very clear to them, very quickly and they then become strong abdicates for club accreditation
		Great
		And similarly with those that do achieve accreditation, they really do think its something that has added value to their club
		Presumably because once their accredited they can then link into another range of services, or...
		Yeah, well what we're trying to do and, you know, is an indication of how much importance that we really place on clubs and volunteers, is that we're trying to build a package of benefits. So on the one hand we are saying you know, we would like our clubs to become accredited

		yeah
		But, once you become accredited it's great, you know you've got the status, but what benefits is it bringing to that club. So, Debbie at the moment is going to be working with some of our colleagues in facilities, and so on to say, 'realistically what sort of benefits can we give to clubs?' Could we give them for example if they're accredited, discounts on facility hire?
		Yes
		Umm, you know, what sort of thing would a club expect, can we give them, I don't know, free coaching courses, those sorts of things are going to add something to the club or you know, kind of make it worth while for them to get there.
		yeah
		Eventually you know, our kind of long term vision, our aspiration if you like is that young people and their parents, and adults will understand what club accreditation is, what it means and would...seek out a club that is accredited as opposed to a club that isn't.
		Yeah
		But we're a long way off that because they are so few clubs that are accredited.
		Ok, I don't want to put you on the spot, but what do you sort of understand accreditation to mean then?
		Umm, I see it as...the way I would describe it is something akin to umm, what we would call performance managing tooling in our sports development business. Something like you know, quest, your tied ups, you charter marks. Those sorts of things that helps you look at your processes and your practises and your policies and your strategies and say, 'yep', you know,' you doing a good job here, its quality assured' and so on. What we are hoping for...what I'd say about club accreditation is that it enables the club to reflect on their practices. How they run their club, you know...
		Mmm
		Are they looking after their finances? Do they have the right number of volunteers? Do they have the right number of coaches at the right standard? You know, coaching to the right standard.
		Yeah
		Are they friendly, are they welcoming? Do they have their child protection practises in place? Are they even aware of child protection? It allows them to have a good close look at themselves to see if they are effectively putting the right package of things together to make the club, what we call...I think the strap line is something like, friendly, safe.....and I cant remember the rest of the strap line is. But that's want we are aiming to do because our long term vision is that we want people to be active in sport throughout their lives.
		Mmm
		So its really important that when that person, whether it's a child or an adult, when they go to that club has a really good experience, that they are greeted, that they do feel that its friendly, that they aren't made to feel a little bit silly, that they are going to receive good quality coaching. To make sure that the experience is a good one to make them want to go back again and again and again.
		Yes, sure. Yeah well I think that's, as you say quite important. I just wonder how you see the clubs, seeing the accreditation process; do you get a feeling of how they view it?
		I think they view, as I say, the ones that have either embarked upon the process or have

		done it and they view it very positively. Those that haven't are probably a little bit sceptical; it seems like a lot of work for very little reward. What we're trying to look at is how we can make it a little bit more attractive, because what we do know is that once clubs are underway...
		Yeah
		They are receiving it very positively. 'Cause other wise one would argue 'why are we promoting club accreditation if it doesn't add value?'
		Yes, yes
		What we know from the clubs that have done it or are doing it, it adds value to their clubs.
		Yeah, do you think it impacts on the way that any one particular club is tied into the local community, or the local environment, or the local network if you like? Do you think it has an impact on the relationship of the club, whether it's just the club in itself or whether it's a club not just for itself but the community?
		Mmm. I think that will often depend on the culture of the club
		Right
		...and I think you'd probably get a mixed experience even of the ones that are accredited. What I do know is that because of the way club accreditation is structured, it will make a club look a little bit more externally
		Right
		You know? It will encourage a club to make links with its local authority, sports development unit and all the sports clubs partnerships and all those sorts of things. So it will start to encourage a club to look outwards rather than just being totally internally focused on, 'have we got the right number of couches?'
		Yes
		'Are they qualified for it?' I mean there is, it does have the outward look on things. It does have the ability to be able to encourage, you know, that kind of...well we've got a responsibility to...
		Yes
		...a wider community' but I do think that that often depends upon you know, the culture of the club
		Yes, yes
		And the personalities in the club and what sort of people they are and what they are trying to achieve.
		Yes, right. I was just looking at the accreditation for a minute because it's quite and interesting area.
		Mmm
		Do you think that there are some sports that are better, in general, at getting there clubs to go though this process? There are some issues there, one is how proactive are the governing body? And I supposed there is something about certain sports that will help clubs to go down the accreditation process.
		Mmm. Erm if, if...definitely, if you look at national regional policy and from sport England point of view, from the national governing bodies point of view what they've come to realise and particularly, I've realised, through the sports development program, its really started to help people understand this, it that club accreditation is an absolute priority for them.

		Ok
		This come actually before, because what we found with active sports...active sports was about four stages, and the first stage was about giving young people a coaching experience. The second stage was about working with the clubs, what we found was that in actual fact those two things were the wrong way around. We needed to be working with the clubs first, to make sure that the young person's first experience, that first taste of that activity...
		Yes
		...was the most positive that it's gonna be, that we were confident that the clubs had got the right sort of people...
		Yes
		...and customer practise in place and so on. The national governing bodies realised that, particularly those national governing bodies that were involved with the active sports program... sport England as one of its core functions of a counter-sports partnership, *Cultershire* and the isle of white is one obviously, that is part of our core function. There is no...you know, you cannot misunderstand that. Your job is to ensure that we are getting more clubs accredited. Then you've got the youth sports trust, that have got there school sports partnerships, that are engaging, kind of motivating young people in the school environment, either through the physical education or the extra curricular sports environment...
		Yes
		...to be more active. What they want it to be able to sign post those young people to continue that experience in the community.
		Right.
		But they want to be confident that they are sign posting them to somewhere that their young people will pop in and so on. So there is no misunderstanding, club accreditation is the most important thing for the national governing bodies, for the national organisations, for the counter sports partnerships and also down to your local level, down to your districts and so on. Some governing bodies have been perhaps better at communicating that message than others. Some...you know swim 21 for example have developed their own program, its been really helpful I think for them to have been able to help a club identify what type of club they can be.
		Right
		So that they can be very focused on what path of the kind of pathway of a young persons, performance pathway that they contribute to, because what they've said is that you need access to 'x' number of hours to be able to develop a ..... At this level. You need that many hours to develop to that level and so on. To ..... You need that number of hours. I'm not sure what number of hours it is, but it's quite a lot. So immediately clubs could say, 'ah, right our job is to be able to, unless we can get anymore water time...'
		Mmm
		'...our job is going to be able to teach young people to swim and get them to a level where they can train.' Another club that's got lots and lots of hours can say, 'right we can teach people to swim and put them on the Olympic platform.'
		Yeah, right
		I think that that has been a really good model. I mean it wont work for all sports, it just works well for swimming, it's the nature of need the water time and the water space, its so

		expensive and not very easily accessible because you've got to accommodate swimming sessions and so on.
		I'm just gonna say three sports that I'm using, ones swimming, ones rugby and ones football.
		Uh huh
		Mumbles well football because it's the most popular team game, it's our national sport.
		Uh huh
		Rugby because of the success of the rugby world cup. I think it's important to look at that as a successful sport. Swimming as an individual sport, also has a resource issue. I think the resource i.e. a swimming pool it by and large public funded. For the other two may not necessarily...
		Mmm
		...you know, I think most rugby clubs tend to own their own grounds. Football, umm, football clubs, there tends to be a mixture, again they tend to play on more local authority...
		Mmm

		...pitches. So those are the three sports, I just wondered out of those three...
		Other three. Rugby is probably...I don't think, in terns of the number of clubs...what you've got there is, rugby has probably got 50 something clubs.
		Mmm
		To football that's got hundreds of clubs and swimming has got something like, I think its somewhere in the middle...I think its got less than 100, I'll have to check, I'm not sure.
		Yeah
		Now rugby, when I first came to *Cultershire* which was probably about 18 years ago now, it was only, you know, you'd have probably have been looking at a form of club accreditation for 12 years or more I would say, rugby. It's called seal of approval...
		Right
		...and it started in *Cultershire*, with our development officers. Eventually that was adapted, sorry adopted nationally and seal of approval is rugby unions own sort of club accreditation, they don't use...in fact none of the sports use the sport England one, they all run sports specific club accreditation. So I would say, obviously the seal of approval, from where it started out to where it is now is probably, well is very different. However that's where it started out so rugby clubs in this county are very, very familiar with seal of approval, it's been around a long time, they are very familiar with it, what we are trying to achieve with it and so on. I would say probably, that sport it terms of club accreditation maybe a little bit more advanced that swimming and football. Umm, I don't know where...football **Mumbles** it's hard to say because you've got hundreds and hundreds of clubs.
		Mmm
		I mean maybe football have got more...they have these different levels as well.
		Yes
		I don't fully, I mean off the top of my head, I don't know about it because I don't work with football directly but, they've got the different levels. So they have got a lot of clubs

		that are accredited in one way or another, you've got to go through sort of levels where as the seal of approval, you've either got it or you haven't.
		Football clubs seem to be. They seem to be youth clubs and then if you want to play adults you go to an adult club. Where as the rugby is all the way through and swimming is all the way through.
		Yep
		In terms between mixed, I mean rugby the idea has taken off with women's rugby. Football from what I see, they have youth clubs, like both girls and boys.
		Mmm
		And then they'll play adult and go to an adult club. It's slightly different, as you say one might be accredited in one element and then not in another, whichever.
		Mmm. You're looking at three at a national governing body level, three reasonably well resources governing bodies' as well.
		Mmm, yeah
		So, the FA would be and swimming of all three of them put a lot of resource into encouraging their clubs to become accredited. If you took another sport, I don't know…something like
		Netball?
		Netball, yes. Not terribly well resourced, although they do **Mumbles**
		Yes
		As a governing body and also within clubs they do seem to be very well organised as volunteers I would say.
		Yeah
		Yeah
		So I mean, so that's quite interesting with the accreditation and how important that is and I think that's important to and explains to a certain extent how you place the work in a voluntary sports club. I think it explains really how valuable sports clubs are to you.
		Yes
		I mean, would you say that you value some clubs more highly than others?
		Erm, no. I think, I mean we're pretty realistic about…you see, you know some would argue that you should only be ..... into accredited clubs but in reality we can't do that and the other thing, because there's just not enough of them. **Mumbles** to be able to access a club sometimes.
		Mmm
		And also just because a club isn't accredited it doesn't mean that there is bad practise going on in that club.
		No, no
		There could be a really rock solid club, they've just never heard about club accreditation or they've heard about it but haven't really been switched on to…they don't feel the real benefits and value of it sufficiently enough to want to embark upon the process.
		Mmm
		And those clubs, you know, have a really valuable contribution to make to voluntary sports in *Cultershire*. So what you'd want to he doing is to be engaging with those clubs and just keep adding the message about club accreditation because we do believe that that's got

		value to them. Over time will increase in value because we can get more and more club accredited, then the signposting to accredited clubs is that if you've got two clubs to choose from in an area and ones accredited and one isn't, well what's the school teacher going to do?
		Mmm
		Where is he or she going to send those pupils? Probably to the accredited club.
		Mmm
		So umm, no you can't and you know you've got to recognise that clubs they, you know you'll have as you've just described, the rugby club that can take minis right the way through to vectrem teams…
		Yeah
		…you know, they'll have a team in every age group you know, a really fantastic club atmosphere with lots of activity going on. Fantastic to you know, such and such badminton club that is actually made up of one team of players that can't participate in a league.
		Yeah
		Now, the value to those, lets say ten players that might be playing for that club in a league is no less valuable than the person experience in the rugby club is it? In terms of playing.
		No
		What you might argue with the big clubs is that you know, they've got a club house, there's a lot of social events as well as the actually participation in the sports, that there's a much bigger value to that club.
		Yeah
		But from those six, ten people that want to play their badminton, train twice per week and play a match once per week and they are doing it for their fitness and their enjoyment of that sport. There's no less value to that than to the person who plays rugby.
		Mmm. I if just take that a little bit further, because you said yourself that all the clubs have a valuable contribution to make…
		Yes
		…I was wondering what you meant by that valuable contribution.
		Well the way I see it is the contribution to facilitate, to enable people to be active in a sport that they enjoy, often love.
		Mmm
		So that they've got all the health benefits, that feeling of well being, there may be a social element to that lot of sport you know, have there match meals and all of that. In some cases will provide a sense of belonging you know?
		Mmm, yes
		One of the things that I always say I've got, you know, three young children and I really want them to find a sport, or sports that they enjoy, that they can play throughout their lives.
		Mmm
		Not necessarily because I want them to be Olympic performing athletes or whatever it might be, but because wherever you are, if you move areas, you know if they go to university if they move out of the area, if they move for a job and you play badminton or

		you play rugby, well you just look up your local badminton or rugby club and go and already you've made some social contact in that area so you don't feel so isolated and unfamiliar with your surroundings. You've got a quick way of being able to meet new people, to make new friends. So sport for me has a whole range of benefits, it's not just about the actually participating in the sport itself.
		Yeah, I mean I totally agree with that, that's important. Is it making a contribution outside sport as well? Or do you think it's more limited to the sport itself?
		Do you mean in...if you take, if I take something like Melchester rugby (not real name) club because that's going to be one of your focus areas isn't it?
		Mmm
		I've been down there; there are hundreds of people playing down there now. Often mums or dads will drop of young people; some will go home and continue with whatever they are doing.
		Yeah, yeah
		Some will stay and they'll have a cup of tea and a bacon butty in the club house and some will be engaged in coaching activities and some will be engaged in serving the cups of tea or doing the match kit. So yeah, for me I think it does have a service beyond that actually players itself. It could be about their family, feeling part of that wider community. I went to a gymnastics, erm what's it called? You know, like a festival, on Sunday, it was the opening of Basingstoke's new gymnastic facility.
		Oh was it?
		So they do their kind of like, end of year festival. I went along to that and there's probably, well...a minimum of two hours of performances from ..... that were in the recreational program from you know doing their first forward roll right that way through the elite performers. There were ..... Performers in there and ballet and other dance groups performing in there doing their bit. The audience was, every seat was taken it was fantastic. Now one of things that they were doing was they got their summer display team doing a bit of a session and they will be out at school fates and summer events during the summer. That will be partly about that clubs promoting itself in the community and saying, 'have you ever thought out trying gymnastics? Come along, here we are'. But it's also about supporting communities isn't it?
		Mmm
		You know, they will do charitable events and activities and they can be relied upon often to you know, if you need any help or support in the community, to kind of come out and do that. I'm just thinking about the fireworks display in my local village, it's usually the football or the cricket club that run that. Now, yes that it about partially promoting their clubs...
		Mmm
		...but it's also about being involved in that community.
		Yeah
		Putting on an event that that community can share in.
		Yes
		It has a much wider...
		Do you think clubs have a more regular impact **Mumbles** do you think that they have a more regular impact in their local neighbourhood, local community as well?

		I think definitely, particularly...because obviously you only have to pick up your local newspaper don't you? And usually the back at least two pages, if not more are filled with sporting activities that are taking place in your area and if you pick up the conical, some of that will be about what's happening down at the rose bowl or at the ..... We don't usually pick up *Big City* because we don't cover that area but saints and *Cultershire* cricket. Then you've got all your kind of what I call you community activity going on you know, the team of young people or you know, the person that's kind of won their first you know, local medal or their national medal or you know, whatever it might be. There is a sense of pride that I think that brings to the community and the kind of message that can bring to a community to just remind ourselves sometimes that you know, actually not all young people are on street corners causing a nuisance.
		No. Haha
		But it brings really positive images of you know, young people engaged in really positive activities because if all we saw was that negative stuff then people might feel that you know, thins is not a very you know...
		Yeah
		...good area to live in. Yeah, I think it has a whole range of ways in which it can provide some identity to a local community and provide some local pride in a community particularly you know, if your teams are doing well.
		Mmm, absolutely yeah. Do you also think that, how do you see voluntary sports contributing to **major cross cutting agendas** that seem to be around within the local community? Do you think it will have an impact in that sense?
		I think you'll see that more and more but, it is already happening. See if I give you an example...what can I give you an example in? The one that comes to mind is the test valley area. So Andover rugby club and there are some other sports involved as well, have been working with test way housing.
		Right
		And test way housing work on several housing estates where they've identified antisocial behaviour taking place, so they've worked with police and so on.
		Right
		They've identified young people that are causing the nuisance and then have directed them in to some kind of activity. It started out with rugby, that's why I said rugby, it's extended to football and it might even be cricket now. But anyway umm, it's been really successful.
		Right
		The young people have gone along, had a really positive experience and have actually stuck with it. Their attention rates are fantastic, but also the police and fire services and so on have noticed and have recorded less incidents of crime or misdemeanours or however they label it.
		Right
		And umm, the club have been up for that and no doubt some of those young people one might never have though about rugby or weren't quite sure what to expect but also might not be some of the easier young people to work with...
		Sure
		...in terms of listening to instruction and taking instruction and so on. That doesn't seem to have, that's been taken really well and each year they've been able to extend the number of sports that they are working with. So that's definitely seen sports as a ..... to offer

		sports as an appropriate challenge to engage them in something more positive.
2		Right
3		A more active life style to what they were previously doing. You are seeing more and more of that. I'm thinking of something called....what was it called? Something street.....street sports or something like that down in Havant. Similar sort of thing based much more around your sort of inline skating.
4		Sure
5		Or alternative type sports.
6		Yes, yes
7		I was listening to a chief officer talking the other day of working with a rugby club and making big investment in facilities and club houses and so on in an area. But in return they will expect the club and you know, that's been part of the sort of on going talks.
8		Yeah, yeah
9		To be able to support the council in working with that local community to engage them, whether that's a volunteer, whether that's as a participant in the activity that they are going to be providing us and you know, lovely new facilities.
0		Right, that's in *Cultershire*, is it?
		Yes that was in Alderborough actually (not real name). So *Large Town* they do a lot of work, they work very closely with their network of clubs and umm, they've probably got really good examples as well, I can't think of one off the top of my head. But you see more and more of that because as the local authorities have been....Eastleigh you'll go to they've been doing lots of...and I don't know whether its supported by clubs or not but they've been doing like...its definitely been supported by the FA, I don't know whether its supported by a club. It's umm, not midnight football but late evening.
2		Friday night?
3		Yes Friday night, yes that's the one. Umm, those sorts of things because as the local authorities have become more engaged in this cross cutting agenda themselves, they are now passing these messages out to their clubs.
4		Right
5		And local authorise value clubs very highly, again that's that access to that network of voluntary sports and so on and if they're having to provide those activities themselves and pay for it...
6		Mmm
		...it'd be huge amounts of money that you know, they just couldn't. You wouldn't have the same range of activity. So umm, as local authorise become more geared up I think you know, the clubs are kind of getting some of those messages and supporting the local authorities along the way.

		Ok. I just wanted to ask you a quick question about trust.
9		Mmm
0		Umm, would you say that you can trust voluntary sports clubs? How would you rate them in terms of...?
		In what way?
		Umm, just in the sense of I suppose can you trust them to say what they are going to do

		and trusting them to provide I suppose the services that they say they will provide? Or do they just do what they want to do? From your experience of working with voluntary sports clubs, would you say that you can trust most of them?
		I think you'll find a mixed bag really. I mean my personal approach to life is that I start trusting people…
		Mmm
		…you know I have a lot of faith in people you know, I work with some fantastic people both at paid employment and also in my voluntary life. I know that generally people, on the whole can be trusted. What you will find it's like anything that you do in life really; it's all based upon experience. So you know, you start to build up a relationship with you know, a club. Be that initially with one person or their comity or whatever and you know, you talk and you find out whether you share the same sort of principals, values and ideals, whether you hare the same objectives you know, what's motivating you? Why do you want to be a volunteer? What is your club about? What do you want to do? Then if you feel that you can, if you know, your response to that is something that you can work with then you would do some work with them. Now if over time and I can think of a couple of examples but I wont name the clubs but erm, what you find is if you are let down and there's no good reason for that then your going to be very careful about working with that club again.
		Uh huh
		Its like anything in life, then you'd be back to, 'can we build up the trust again?' I can think of a club that did that, they just didn't deliver and you're just kind of a little bit sceptical now about if they want to get involved. Is it worth your time to get involved again?
		Is that just that club; are there other similar clubs as well or not?
		Well, only one that I can think of but I'm sure the Activator will tell you of lots of other clubs that you know, **Mumbles** On the other hand I've been working with another club for a long time and we'd agreed some funding to deliver some activity and umm they employed a coach and unfortunately it didn't work out, but they let me know.
		Yeah
		So, 'July we've not been able to spend your money because the coach for various reasons needed to leave. So what we'd like to do now…' and I had a choice at that stage to take the funding away or claw it back in because they've not spent it.
		Yes, yes
		Or we can agree what the next process was, and they have now since recruited another coach and the work that they're doing is fantastic and the coach is great.
		Mmm
		But again, we can't predict that everything in life is going to work out…
		No, no
		…as we've planned and so on. If the communication is there, the honesty you know?
		Right
		Then you know, right they've been honest with me, that person's moved on, they cant spend the money but they've come to me with another plan of action
		Sure
		This is how they are going to execute it, and they did execute it. So again your trust has gone up two fold hasn't it? Because they've been honest with you and secondly because they've executed the plan that they've said that they were going to.

2		I was about to say is communications a big issue?
3		Yeah
4		I mean there maybe an issue with the other group you've mentioned, I don't know. It maybe something else.
5		It definitely is communicating I mean, I know the club very well. It is about communication and it's also about having that contact in the club, that consistent contact and that champion and if that...if the person moves on which is what happened in that case. The person moved on, nobody else moved up to the plate and it breaks down.
6		And I thought, that previous point about how willing clubs are to be...to go out if you like, you know, if the club is willing to go out then you might find more people. If the clubs is not too fussed but one person is, that person as you say moves on. And it you know shuts down again.
7		Mmm
8		That, that, I'm not saying that will happen, but its quite interesting really to hear that.
9		Mmm
0		Would you say you level of trust in others has changed as a result of working with voluntary sports clubs? Do you think voluntary sports clubs have had an impact on how you, how trusting or how trustworthy you think others are outside the club situation?
1		No erm, on the hole because at the end of the day, it's what I always say and I say this to my children all the time. At the end of the session I always say you know, say thank you to the coach 'cause in most cases they are volunteers and they are just ordinary people who often are very busy in other parts of their life doing their paid job and so on. I just have great admiration for people that just unselfishly give up their time to do a job, and I'm not...I don't believe in being judgmental. The only thing that I would feel uncomfortable about I guess is where I don't feel people are in it for the right reasons. Its about motivation, but nine times out of ten people are there just because they want to give a bit o their community it might be because they are wanting to support their child, they've played themselves and they want to give something back or they just want to put something back into their local community and I'm just full of admiration for people that do that.
2		As I say I mean, the fact that it's volunteering and putting something back, is that the best way you can describe the value of volunteering that goes on in sports clubs?
3		You know, I don't think you can actually play for value for volunteering in sports clubs because its...who was I talking to the other day about...I was talking to somebody the other day about...or they were telling be about the setup in ??? (45:39) and clubs and often you can't actually replicate what goes on in other countries because the British sporting workforce is built upon volunteers...
4		Yeah
5		...and in its own right that is a hugely valuable, culturally valuable thing to this country I think. I think it would change the face of sport if we started to undermine that and undervalue it because generally the great British nation have a great sense of you know, wanting to make a contribution above and beyond you know, what they take a salary on. So for me volunteering is hugely important for obviously, for the kind of...in whatever way whether it's supporting administration or fiancé or coaching or whatever, people are getting an experience of that. Often there's that, for the individual there's that added value, feeling worthwhile, feeling like their doing something that is useful, that's important in that particular environment. It might be a social thing, and outlet for them so

		you know, how to you measure things like that? How do you measure people wellbeing or happiness on a scale of one to ten…?
		Yeah.
		…because they volunteer in sport?
		They've measured it, the government have measured it...sport England rather have measured it financially, an average wage and the research said that X billion pounds and X billion number of hours we spend and so on and so on.
		In terms of measure, it does not measure how that person feels through consequence of sport volunteering. I remember having a conversation with somebody who was doing some sport coaching, yeah umm voluntary coaching and he was just getting increasingly frustrated for a whole range of reasons, and I said to him, 'You know if that's how its making you feel you need to think about whether you need to be volunteering'.
		Hmm
		Because actually volunteering should be something that makes you feel good, you know that you should come away feeling…you know you'll have your days of frustration or somebody's not sent their check off, that persons not return my call or…
		Yeah
		…is that child going to be available or the adult going to be available for the next match, they've not given me a response. You know, you might have your frustrations but on the whole, volunteering should, you should feel good about it. The day that you don't feel that way it the day when you have to kind of revisit whether you're getting something out of it in a sense.
		Yeah, yeah. I just wanted to ask also about volunteering do you think that the governments view, the political context on volunteering has had an impact on volunteering, or voluntary associations? What has the governments view on volunteering changes voluntary associations?
		We had the year of the volunteer last year, certainly I'd say at a national level and a local level awareness of volunteering. My perception is that its increased and certainly politicians are very keen to look at recognising the volunteerers, recognising the volunteerers being kind of a strap line that's been around for a couple of years and I think its very much been taken, been tarnished by political members. It's something that as I say even as a sport partnership we are doing far more to recognise volunteers than we did before. Not that we I'd say they were undervalued any less, I'd say that perhaps our awareness is greater about the need sometimes to say thank you and well done.
		Would you say that there have been any changes to the national political context for volunteering or of volunteering?
		Well London 2012 is going to have another…I think probably Sydney was the games where volunteering was really brought to the sport on that international stage and the Sydney Olympics, they did all the parades and that really was the first time that that had been, well certainly done as publicly as it was. I think London 2012 is going to be the same I mean they had their volunteer, requesting people to volunteer and so on and they closed the site down because they'd got more volunteers than they knew what to do with. I just think that yeah, it is not going away it's, again its one of the core services, every counter sport partnership across the country will have to provide. They will be measured; their performance will be measured on it, that didn't really exist before. It's very much under the public gaze.
		Ok, let's talk a little bit about deprivation for a minute; do you think that active

		participation in sports clubs varies according to the relative deprivation of where sports clubs are based?
9		What do you mean is there greater participation in certain geographical areas?
0		Yeah, in relation to, how do you see you know, active participation in sports clubs in a more deprived area as opposed to as more affluent area?
1		Well what we know about participation is it is still very good at reaching white middle class people and less good at reaching less advantages groups.
2		Would you say that for the partnership in *Cultershire* or in general?
3		I think our performance stacks up reasonably well but I don't think we are anywhere near where we would like to be. The thing about…I was talking to the youth service yesterday…getting people out whether its participation in sport or whether its turning up to school, turning up to their doctors appointments, all those. It is such a complex thing, it is so difficult to press, its fine with a white middle class motivated person that turns up to school and has got a reasonable school set to play sport, fantastic self esteems, very high you know, very confident about taking part. But if you're not in the fortunate position it is very, very complex on how to get that young person to you know, have you got the right kit? Are they motivated? When they turn up are they going to be face with lots of people that, 'oh I don't feel very comfortable with' you know, the club will be dominated with white middle class people and so on and they don't feel very confident in their company and then they think I've not done this before. It's about actually motivating people to go along to a club, its very, very tricky. I want to get more sophisticated about how we do that and targeting groups to give them an experience in a less threatening environment so you can make the transition easier to the club. We were talking about yesterday in the youth service that the youth service can help us do that because often their working in either out reach work or youth clubs where they will meet those kind of disadvantaged groups that we're trying to reach and you could give them a taste of sport in an environment that they're comfortable with. As they build their confidence you can do the kind of youth worker to young person, sort of saying 'now you've got a good set of skills here, you're doing really well. Would you like to take that further?' If they do they then go…but then the difficulty for us is how do we provide access to that club at a price that they can afford?
		Yeah.
		Then that presents another challenge to us because my daughter, her swimming costs me £32 a month for her to swim competitively. That's before you take into account any competitions that she might enter, that's just her training fee, £32 a month. You know, the average wage can but immediately there is a barrier for the average person. Forgetting about the fact of have they got the skills, have they got the equipment?
		Yeah.
		So it is a bit of a challenge.
		Also in deprived areas, I'm just wondering are there fewer club in deprived areas? Or are those clubs in deprived areas, do they have the same level of active participation, I supposed volunteering. Do they get the same level? Do you see it being a different issue or whether there is a perception about what affect deprivation may have on peoples willingness to get out there or to get the club going.
		Yeah.
		You've got your deprived area say and the clubs over here in the nice area and they can go over.

		Yeah
		There is that transfer over to the posh place if you like. I just wondered if you set the club up in this other area…
		Yeah, I know gymnastics clubs have been very successful working in deprived areas and recruiting young people from disadvantage backgrounds, so ford and armour have been set up in Eastleigh. When they first started out they were in the Fornhill estate and working out of east point and they built their club up from there and they run it very successfully so I'm assuming that they recruited volunteers, you know I can remember having a conversation with the coach about a young girl that they were taking to Russia on one of their…and she'd go out and buy deodorant and toiletries and thing like that because the family couldn't afford to buy things like that. And that's the sort of thing that the club was doing because they...when clubs are very close to their participants like that, eventually they get to know what their circumstances are and so on, so often you will find that clubs will go the extra mile. In Aldershot again, the same place where they are building the clubhouse, it's in Aldershot park and its next door to the gymnastics academy that opened up there and I know that they have been very successful in recruiting people form the local area including mums that may have taken their children up there to participate in pre school gymnastics and have become coaches umm, so I can think of examples of clubs that have done well in those areas and have been populated by people from those areas, not just people crossing the boundary.
		Yeah, yeah.
		Going in but erm, is it more difficult? Well, my instinct and I've got no research evidence although Debbie might, to support this. But from my experience, I'm a governor, I volunteer in school governing body and what you find initially you cant make a sweeping generalisation, its not true all of the time for all of the people but children from disadvantaged backgrounds are often less supported in terms of the parents first of all taking interest in their out of school activity secondly being prepared to get them there, sometimes they cant get them there because they don't have a car or transport might be and issue but they're not as well supported so a young person participation can be hampered by the disinterest or the lack of motivation from the parents.
		Also in some of these clubs in deprived areas the club has to work that much harder to get people helping out or volunteering in the club that sort of active participation? Or even the local STO or whoever it might be then has to go in and help create that volunteering culture if you like within that club?
		Definitely, it's not necessarily that they don't want to because they can't be bothered, it's often more about confidence. I was reading some research yesterday actually that's they did down in Gosport and… but when you look at some of the quotes on parents of how they feel about their local community and the fact that its deprived and so on, there's that sense of hopelessness really, you know cant read cant write. Reading, you know one person was talking about you know, 'Reading is a problem and writing I just don't even bother with.' What with their experience at school, did they even attend school? Did they get a good education and so on? 'I can only get jobs like washing up and I really wish that I could do something else but I can't.' its not that the motivation isn't there its just that they've not been equipped with the skills to be able to go and do other things. And that was researching in particularly deprived areas and that's why schools are becoming extended schools you know that young person education isn't just about that young person turning up in that class room and going home again. The school will now be looking at how can they…because if the mum and dad can't read or can't write very well or not at all,

		it's very difficult for that young person to be supported back at home.
8		Absolutely.
9		Umm, and so what they do you know, arrange a pre-school you know parent type classes or basic skills type classes to offer them along side their children going to school and that's you know, that's extended schools. So getting people to either volunteer in sport or take their children to take part in sport and so on is very complex and we are reliant for other experiences to take place within other areas which is why networks are so important now particularly the community sports networks which is where you've got PCTs and your education people aswell as your sports people around the table cant do this job on our own, none of us can.
0		No, no so it's very much as you say partnership or anything else, and you sort of said what you expect when you're partnerships with sports clubs isn't the right word but that's sort of what you're referring too. In any partnerships that you do have with voluntary sports clubs who make any of the key decisions in those partnerships?
1		What with the club?
2		Yeah
3		Yeah we'd see that as a partnership just as with any...whether its education or colleges or health colleges or whatever you know, we'd still see it as a partnership where we're both trying to push in the same direction we both want more people that are more active and so on.
4		Who would you say makes the key decisions in those partnerships?
5		I think it's a mix of who the partnership is between, if it's between our club development officer and a club talking about accreditation umm, who would be the key decision maker? It comes back to that champion again, have you got that champion in the club? And they will be making decisions about something's and our club and volunteer officer will be making decisions about other things and then negotiate that in a way.
6		Yeah I'm just trying to see where the balance would lie or how the club is going to do what it's going to do.
7		Yeah in a partnership you wouldn't have one key decision maker in that sense because its got to be by negotiation because at the end of the day you know your working with volunteers you cant direct. If I, if somebody that I manage, if I want them to do something invariably I don't instruct I cant remember a time when I instruct you know its all through negotiating but if I needed to instruct somebody to do something I could do that by the employer employee relationship. Erm in partnerships you've got to be able to both agree that you want to move in the same direction and I can do that to help me do that and you can do that and then we have to both go away and do it.
8		So the key decisions are essentially by mutual agreement
9		Yeah they have to be because you've got to take people along with you, you can't force them too...
0		And in the work you do with the sort of partnerships with the voluntary sports clubs? What public needs would you say are met the most?
1		Umm, well for us it would be all about participation, whether that is about participation in the sport itself or you know actually going out on the pitch and kicking about or whatever and also about the participation thought volunteering. So participation, that's what it all boils down to.
2		And sort of pushing that boat along a bit in terms of I supposed community level issues do you see voluntary sports clubs being involved in any debates concerning community levels

		issues?
3		What sort of issues?
4		Well I suppose any aspect of what they do, what they are involved in or their immediate neighbourhood in terms of any specific issues relating to the community. Are voluntary sports clubs involved in that debate at all, that you know of?
5		Umm, some of them would be and could be, it depends upon the nature of the local area...for example Basingstoke have got a really strong sports association where clubs come together and they work together and there has been a long history of clubs getting involved in the local decision making and so on.
6		I suppose those community development issues, where and when the community is developing in certain ways I just wonder if sports clubs as you said earlier the emphasis being placed on volunteering, if sports clubs are having a most significant role in...or actually having a say in those community level issues or wanting to have a say. There are two issues there, whether they have a say or whether they want to have a say.
7		I think umm, again I think it depends what it is. I mean I can think of examples from around the county for example young people have said 'oh there's nothing to do, we want a skateboard park.' and they've been involved in first of all asking is they can have a skateboard park then in the design and the development in the skate park then the ..... (1:09) about that skateboard park afterwards. So that wasn't a club as such but it was a collective group of people that had an interest in skateboarding in the instance. So yeah I mean it was their idea, effectively at the end of the day the assistance of the local authority, they've executed that and continued to look after that facility. You will have examples of where a club will want to develop, you know when Basingstoke wanted to develop their swimming pool at the 'aqua drome', the swimming pool have got some key times because the...it was all part of their swimming strategy that the clubs had contributed, well actually clubs is closer because the clubs came together eventually. The clubs in the area contributed so they've got key times set aside for them and so they've been very much involved in that. It is usually decision making around clubs and facilities and things that relate directly to them.
8		Yeah, yeah. Umm, again development for that, are community cohesions and active citizenship on your agenda?
9		Umm, I'd say that sport contributes to community cohesion and what was the second one you said?
0		Umm, active citizenship and active cohesion and the next follow on from that is do voluntary sports clubs have a role too ..... agendas.
		Umm, well we've got obviously examples of where we are dealing with the 'step into sport' and 'young officials' programs that is working with young people about volunteering in sport, be that as official be that as a helper or running festivals and so on. But what is that if it isn't about cohesion and active citizenship? Its just one form of that you know, it's just happens to be volunteering in sport. It's just about that message of living in your community and giving something to your community, contributing to your community. So sport is doing an awful lot around that area of work.
2		OK so I think that that's a key area and then it goes back to a certain extent to accreditation, I think they're all related and umm...
3		I think you know, young people may not stay in sport as a volunteer all their lives.
4		No.
5		But what they've got is an understanding and awareness about volunteering and they

		might when they go to university decide that they want to work in the local charity shop or they get involved in one of the university clubs and organisations but in a different way. But what you've been able to show them through volunteering in sport is the value that being part of your community has to a community.
6		Yeah.
7		That hopefully if they take that through the rest of their lives.
8		That goes on to another point I want to raise, would you consider voluntary sports clubs to be organised effectively? In your opinion.
9		You've got a mix you know, some are very well organised and some are not so well organised. That's inevitable because you're talking about people and you're talking about people being different so therefore you will get this inconsistency. I think that's probably another point about club accreditation that if a club does go through accreditation you have got a better chance of having some consistency, so you know that you experiencing that club. You might get something that resembles it in another club that's accredited but it does, it really depends upon the people.
0		You don't think it's a culture thing for certain clubs? That they are year in year out organised effectively whether they've been through accreditation or not, that organisational effectiveness seems to reproduce itself year in year out and umm...
		No you cant, no.
2		You think it's more to do with the individuals?
3		I do think because you can develop a really sound system and you know, an individual might have done that and he or she has got everybody in the swing of 'that's what we do and that's how we do it'. But I you know, I've come to believe over time and with experience that these things don't happen by chance and you do have to, through the leadership of an organisation have a commitment to those on going processes, the things that are important to do on time to the right standard to make somebody else have a good experience in that environment and provided that you .....(01:14) you know if you've got your club set up with you've various comities and so on and as long as you've got good leader ship within those comities you've got a better chance on continuing that.
		Right.
		You know, I'm looking at it like the head of a school, the head of a school...I cant think of schools in this area that have been right at the for front of schools and are performing really well and you get a change of head, change of personality, change of culture and suddenly you know, there underperforming there putting in special measures or whatever and I can think of one in the local area that that happened and if you put a new head in, that is now over subscribe that school.
		Right.
		And that can happen in clubs, it really can you know, you've got a good chairman with good comity structure and if that chairman hasn't managed too recruit and put people in critical positions and develop them along the way and share the faith if you like that when that chairman steps out it all just falls down and it can fall down very quickly.
		Yeah I know, absolutely with certain clubs. This is one of the last questions just one of the questions that I want to finish of with. Do you think voluntary sports clubs have a voice?
		To a certain extent, I don't think it's a strong as it could be. Erm, in the past there have been networks of sport association where representivies from clubs come together in a geographical area and that's been pretty, you know, you'll have good associations and not so strong associations across the county. I think that through sport action groups and the

		way that we've worked with out priority sports, clubs have a voice but only certain clubs with have a voice depending on the clubs that we're working with.
		Right.
		Erm, and then you've got some national governing bodies that are probably better geared up as well too give their clubs a voice than others. So I think you've got...its definitely not consistent and it could be better.
		Right. So some can communicate and influence agendas as it were.
		Mmm.
		And some cant?
		Mmm.
		I suppose that depends on how proactive they are or it goes back a step. Oh ok that's fine. Umm, OK last area on the cards a couple of questions is the environment for working with voluntary sports clubs different to that which existed pre new labour? So pre '97
		Yeah, I'd say so just because of the changes, I'm not saying that it's down to the labour government in anyway but...
		I'm not saying that it's better or worse just that it's different.
		But it definitely is, you can just look at the evidence in terms of the investments that's been put into clubs and volunteers and coaching across the ..... in an educational environment and the activity thought the DCMS and I would say that its much greater recognition in investment in volunteering since then.
		You said how you work with voluntary sports clubs, the range of contacts you tend to have with sports clubs would you say they are more individual contacts or through local council or sports forums? Erm, I'm trying to get out the level of type of contacts, the extent of the informality or formal contacts, which one you tend to use.
		We would only have direct and formal contact with those that we are working with to help them through the accreditation process generally.
		Right.
		On the whole, because that's how we prioritise our work and yeah because the areas so huge we've thousands of sports clubs you have to find a way to be able to get it to a manageable size.
		Yeah.
		So umm, yeah direct contact really. You might be meeting several clubs at once for example, if you're looking at umm, you might have a one to one relationship with some clubs during the accreditation process. In other areas there might be more like four clubs together and certainly the governing body officers are looking at whether...'cause club accreditation often boils down to getting similar types of processes and so on in place. So you might bring in a geographic area like in you know, the Melchester area (not real name), you might bring in all those clubs that are interested in working toward accreditation into a three hour evening session to talk about accreditation, what does it mean are you going to be supported is there access to the services? And so on and so forth. So you might have a one to one or you might have a group relationship.
		Yeah. It's just that which is the predominantly...is liked to be more formal....err contact is it? It that what you say or...
		yeah
		Or a mixture?
		Yeah it'd be most formal contact when your working with clubs towards accreditation and informal contact with clubs that you might be just you know, you might receive and

		enquiry to for with a website, you might receive a telephone call, it might be us going out to them and asking them to update details on their club, who's their club secretary and so on to put it into the sports guide to promote them effectively. So…
		Would there be anything that influences you to develop more informal relationships with some voluntary sports clubs?
		Erm, if voluntary sports clubs felt that there was a service that we could provide, develop, provide for them that would make there jobs easier and we could resolve that then yeah we would always you know, we would always look at that.
		That's fine I mean I think I've covered all the area that I've wanted to. Are there any questions that you wanted to ask me? Anything further that you wanted to add?
		No.
		I mean you've answered lots of questions in full you've given some good answers I think in lots of different areas so it's been very drastic.
		Mmm.
		Thanks very much for that.
		You're welcome.

Appendix IV – Phase 2: Interviewees (by club and role)

Interviewees	Pseudonym
LA1	
Club A – Rugby club	
Chief Executive	Harry
Chairman	Euan
Secretary	Rory
Club B – Swimming club	
Chairman	Angus
Head coach	Derek
Assistant Head Coach	Max
Senior Swimmer	Chris
Swimmer	Ryan
LA2	
Club C – Football club	
Chairman	Kenny
Secretary	Alfie
Senior Coach	Ross
Coach (L1 U13 team)	Neil
Player a	Toby
Player b	Rhys
Club D – Rugby club	
Chairman senior club	Geoff
Secretary/Chair of standards group	Dai
Chairman junior club	Phil
Head coach junior section	Josh
Player 1st team/social secretary	Ethan
Player/captain 2nd XV	Graham
Club E – Swimming club	
Chairman	Malcolm
Learn to Swim Coordinator	Ronald
Head coach	Alexander
Assistant head coach	Martin
Senior swimmer	Curtis
Swimmer	Oliver

Appendix V – Themes and questions for VSC members

me	Indicators/Questions
munity composition	How long have you been a member of this club? What sort of people are members of the club? Do you live in the area & how long have you lived in the area? Can you describe the kind of people who live in this area? Is the area better for some residents than others? Would you say this club is attractive to all in the local community? What sort of profile would you say the club has in the local community? Do club members reflect the local population Do you consider the emphasis on sport's value for community development (& SC development) being as strong now as it was a few years ago? Has the agenda moved on from social benefits to focus more narrowly on health benefits?
ections and networks	Can you briefly describe the purpose of your club Does your club work with the local population? How does the club inform local people about what is going on, promotions, events What are the expectations of local people of the club? What are your expectations of the club community relationship? Does the club have links or connections with other organisations/networks (local/regional/national) Are schools part of your organisational/network links?
nunity capacity and pro- ty	Is it easy for local residents to become involved in the club? Do you fundraise in the local community Do you fundraise for the local community Is the club proactive in seeking support, liaising with external organisations How do you go about searching for funding? How important is tradition for the club
vement and participation	How does the club enable individuals to participate? Would you say these methods are effective? For what reasons are you a member of the club? Does the club help other/work with (weaker) clubs (same sport) Have you taken action over any social issues during the past year?
lteering	How many hours do you volunteer/week Do you volunteer outside of the club What is the value of volunteering to your club How does the volunteering relate to the club's aims & objectives What is it that volunteers as opposed to paid people bring to the club Where does the club recruit volunteers/members from
ity to engage in on-making processes	How does the club seek the views & opinions of residents on how best to develop its activities? How does the club seek the views and opinions of members on how best to develop its activities? Would you say that the club could influence local authorities and sports bodies in your locality? How do you participate in decision-making in the club?
es/Strategies	To what extent are the aims of the NGB reflected in the aims of the club To what extent does the search for funding affect what you as a club do What do you understand by modernisation Would you say that the club is organised effectively? How much has the club modernised Who makes the key decisions in any partnership with outside organisations Does the club have any strategic value for any outside organisations Why are external organisations/stakeholders keen to work with this club
y, belonging and tions of neighbourhood	How would you say you identify with the local community as a result of your involvement with the club? Do you think there is a sense of community identity and/or commitment to this area? How does your club respect differences (gender, race, religion, age etc)?
	What do you think the club contributes to the local neighbourhood? In what ways does the club help people to work together towards a common purpose? How has your level of trust in others changed as a result of your involvement in the club? Would you say that club members trust you to accurately represent their interests in the running of the club
ction with life and well-	If you could wave a magic wand and improve one thing in this organisation/area, what would it be? What is it about your club that makes people feel good

Strategic orientation to social capital			
Name	**Accreditation/ Modernisation**	**Partnerships/Networks**	**Club matter/ethos/Volunteering**
Player b - Football Club	Sponsorship says something – it makes you feel a bit professional…and the club approaches games in a professional manner … [means] take in seriously, not mucking about… Accredited status means a 'fair club' I'm not sure what it means, but thinks it is imp that they have it as it shows we are a 'proper run club' [who] 'must be doing something well' I think most local clubs have it, doesn't seem to give us anything extra I feel a little proud that we have accreditation – it's on our website.	There are a few clubs to choose from, and the club has 2 teams…it is the best team in area – some [other players] get brought along through friends and gradually meet new friends Network would cover 4/5 diff schools as players come from that many schls	[club] members live in general area and most go to the same school word of mouth 'go to school & tell everyone and they tell people' It's the best local team I can get into, the school is an influence on my decision to play for the club. A lot of my friends play for the team as well, [and] you don't want to play for a team where your starting from scratch
Player a - Football Club	Charter mark important as it means getting involved with the community and having links with other schools & stuff, and being a decent club. It's important to get it…so you can get more interest and become a bigger club and if you've got that and someone phones up the FA and asks for a team in their local area, they will say Hamble United because we've got the award. All players will know about it because dad always says "oh were a charter standard club" but they won't know what it means.	We work with Hamble secondary school (SSC) and some of coaches go in to coach Important to talk with other organisations to develop more and become a bigger club. [There are] goods & bads for both, goods are that you can get paid and enter conference leagues, so you get more quality, bads are that it becomes more competitive and you have to train harder.	Decent people members of club not loudmouths and all local to area Good [club profile] its decent to children, don't swear at children, these are set out in guidelines that each team has (coach won't swear at you so no swearing at the coach) . Most vols are from friends and family, 1or 2 parents that go to committee meetings, and we have a secretary but not team secretaries, people fill multiple roles.

Coach - Football Club	A lot of people find chartered status quite intimidating because a lot of teams aren't chartered status. I feel quite honoured to be part of a charter stated (sic) club, but I'm not sure how it works to be honest... I think they [players] know we have it but like my youngest son they're just happy to play football, they're part of a team, part of a community team which makes them feel good, but I'm not sure they're interested in chartered side to be honest. I was asked to come along because we did a lottery thing and it involved a lot of teenage girls playing football and obviously they needed a female coach	Each team has got a different sponsor, but it will be through parents that play in the team normally which gets the sponsorship for a team at the beginning of a season. Someone's dad will approach their company where they work "will you sponsor us for the year?" I speak a lot with [the head coach] and get a lot of feedback from him, but not outside of the club really. I do feel part of the [wider] coaching group, but because I am a woman men do find me quite intimidating [The chairman] does a lot with the school, he talks to them and will go into the school and talk to the kids about football , does presentations, about being part of the community and that sort of thing I think there is a lot of avenues (sic) available to take if I want to take them and doing the level one...has got me more recognised within the community and recognised in the club itself. I do take my coaching job very seriously.	You've got to have a strong link with the community to run any sort of football team, that's the whole reason for having a football team or whatever, could be a netball team. You've got to have community backing and support for it to go ahead. I didn't realise how rewarding it would be...these people really look up to you, bless em! (sic) For one I started off with my two children playing, two I'm now the under thirteen coach and three I really enjoy it I'm helping them and I get the feedback from that and I wouldn't want to be paid for what I do...its done because I enjoy to see my children play and to see children being happy and enjoying sport...is a great reward for me.

Senior Coach - Football Club	...if parents want their children to come to a club its nice to have that sort of status because they know that they're going to be trained and looked after by a professional body. Not just some old dinosaur...who thinks thy can get a team going by may be swearing and shouting and running the around ragged. Life isn't like that anymore in football and it has to be more structured. I think he would have done it [volunteered to help] anyway because he know me and knows the sort of person I am...I do feel that because we're charter standard that probably does help, because we're a professional body that does help. Because of accreditation [outside organisations keen to work with us] and they have come down and seen how we work with all the children	We visited schools to let them know what HUFC were trying to do and grown from there by word of mouth and speaking to people The schools are aware of what you are,...some allow us to coach their children at the end of the school day with the opportunity of them coming to join the club...free of charge...some schools take it onboard Try to link with junior neighbourhood warden scheme and maybe we would do some coaching on junior neighbourhood warden event days I play football with a fellow who's a nurse...he said he'd love to get involved with something like that [HUFC]. He said "I wouldn't mind coming down and doing some physio stuff for you...he said I'd love to coach". "If you're really interested" I said, "maybe I can get you a coaching course through our club". He said "could you do that?" I said "I could" and so I had a word with [the chairman] and he's more than happy because there's another professional body onboard. He's come from the nursing side, he's willing to do the physio on a Sunday if there's a problem and he wants to coach. Jus knowing what the club is and what it stands for, once he starts, he might talk and it goes somewhere else. [Getting club started] all really friends of [chairman] and [secretary]. [Chairman] would have met quite a number of people through his tyro league activities. So he's picked up friends...through the tyro league system and he's seen it in such a way that some of these clubs run things...not for the children, but for their own egos. Clubs are clubs, if they're there they'll either survive or they won't...but we don't get involved with other clubs because we're still young ourselves and getting ourselves on a footing, and we certainly don't want to be seen to be interfering. Football clubs in the local are very possessive and you could cause a rift quite easily...I think its to do with rivalries...a friendly rivalry it should be...normally it's the parents who get carried away.	Most of those I work with are trained coaches...we bounce off of each other The children are there to enjoy themselves, if they win an honour or two on the way then in my eyes that's a bonus for them. I don't think football alone is enough, I don't think that it would give the drive that's needed...we need to go further a field to get the bigger funding we need to grow as a club... [county] FA call upon us quite a lot, as we are the only charter standard club in the area, and ask if we work with something in the community schools...normally some football skills. I'll take a day off work as a holiday and we run a whole session for the whole day... We look for volunteers to come into the club As a friend of [chairman] I felt that I wanted to give something back to the community an this was a way of doing it...I did the coaching... and it helped my job as well because I became more confident... it doesn't just help the youth of today, it also helps the elderly, because if they're not there on a street corner causing problems and they're away doing something positive then what you've done is give them a quality of life. You've given the youth a quality of life by just doing one thing.

Organisation structure to deliver			
Name	**Partnerships: CSNs, NGB, LA**	**Internal Decision making/autonomy/power**	**Club processes**
Player b - Football Club	External organisations probably keen to work with us because of charter standard	They listen to players, but not given a chance to comment which 'doesn't really matter' as 'we get a chance to feedback informally through training'	
Player a - Football Club	Sees the club-community relationship as OK but 'could do a bit more – more teams, more coaching days, more opportunities Links SSC & local primary schools Not that proactive with local people but more with others such as Hamble school, County FA External organisations willing to work because of development of football. The club can offer something they [LA] haven't got.	Communication tends to be internal only – they seek the views of players Club brochure shows that we are organised well Chair & secretary make key decisions, but also will include the head teacher if working with schls [Would like] club to be bigger...get more coaches and teams [would] then be able to get more respect from other teams & other organisations, probably also get more funding, sponsorship [and] lottery funding	To improve coaching, getting involved with the community. [Do we] get involved with the community? We do & we don't. We have the coaching days and go out to schools and coach their football teams but that's it really, its all football based.
Coach - Football Club	We do a lot of work with Hamble school ...also some community coaching and it does take them off of the streets...see kids smiling, laughing and enjoying their football, I get a lot of feedback from that just to see them enjoy themselves. We are a good club with good intentions and in among the community, its not like we are a football team that doesn't take into consideration the community...we're there for everybody basically	We are quite strong on [communicating internally] if someone's got something they want to say, we like to hear about it. Parents are more than welcome to get involved...and everybody sort of rallies round The funding we get...is for the kids and the community Key decisions are joint decisions	We do community coaching with kids that come down at half term Sometimes that word of mouth is more important [than the website] because anyone can look on the website, but if someone's talking about that with a passion people will understand it better... But we are not a money orientated club...we do a lot of presentation evenings, were family orientated basically and were marketed through word of mouth, flyers and the website basically

Chairman - Football Club	With the FA SSCL, the FA will pay you a certain amount…I had five coaches up there at some times for nine weeks in the end and for that nine weeks they gave us £180…all of that went straight into the club. So its nice if we can get some payment to go into club funds Once we've got the pitches, we can apply to FA, Hants FA all sorts of charities to get funding for a clubhouse …if we think that there is a link there that will benefit us or benefit the club then we will definitely pursue it …if we're fortunate enough to get this ground…I hope the FA will look on us and say "these guys are actually trying to do it right, so we *need* to support them", rather than just say "oh it's just a football club". There is resentment that we are a charter standard club, and there is resentment in tyro leagues and other clubs of charter standard clubs We can influence [local SDOs] because they benefit from being involved with us I think there are times when the governing body says a lot of good things and there's nothing there for clubs like us and that's frustrating because you set your stall out to achieve certain things and they've recommended that we do this and we're doing it, not because they're making us do it but because we want t do it…we had a meeting with three other charter standard clubs…and they were talking about what benefits it was to be a charter standard club, well there isn't any. There's no benefit at all other than the fact that you've got to put more hours in to achieve it and to do it properly. I think governing bodies need to recognise what charter standard clubs do, and they need to be supporting them a lot better than they currently are.	…because we haven't got our own ground its very difficult to organise things at the police college because you cant have open house with active units there We don't turn anybody down…if they haven't got any kids at the club but want to become a fundraiser or coach we'll interview them…fill out a CRB form and if they're prepared to accept our conditions then fine – we'll use and abuse…as long as their the right people we'll take them on and we'll educate them. If we become a community club and we can get this facility which will give our own ground and then the people at the FA, Hants FA, EBC support us and give us funding so that we can build a clubhouse…then the whole concept changes for the kids as well as the people involved in the club. We don't go out to get people involved, its an open door We were looking at working with adult clubs, but then we decided that we don't want to work with adult clubs because we want to become one, and we don't want to lose our players to them… Every year we send out a questionnaire to all players…they get discussed at committee If I'm totally honest I would say that if I make a suggestion at the club most of the time the committee will agree with me…that's because they know if I'm asking to do something its me that's going to be doing it…but because I'm the main founder they are happy to go along with that…because they I'm doing it for the right reasons [Accreditation] drives the club it's not just me pushing other people I've got people outside of the club pushing me…pushing is maybe the wrong word, guiding is probably a better word because they don't make you do anything – they'll ask you if you want to be involved in this or that the same as [SDOs] do.	If we get the pitches at HS we will be having summer courses for the kids to attend and open days that sort of stuff because we have to do it. If we don't do it we won't survive …now getting to be quite a high profile because of all the work we're doing and we're not afraid to advertise ourselves…I want to get four jackets for the coaches that will say H. Utd community club, because if we're doing that much coaching in the community that's the only way people will get to know us. Because we haven't got a clubhouse, because we haven't got a ground with a big banner across the top…it's looking at peoples jackets and saying "Oh its H. Utd". In football circle I think they respect what we say…because of the work we've recently done with the schools, there's teachers there who say these guys have done a good job for us and maybe we should be saying that if little Johnny wants to play for a football team, then this is the one The way the club is organised, the codes of conduct…they [the FA] have had a big input because the constitution got is basically cribbed from what they suggest you use There is always an ulterior motive [SSP SDO] has got a lot on his plate that he needs to achieve and has boxes he has to tick and he's happy to tell you "I need this doing, and can you be involved in it" and that's fine because at the end of the day I'm doing something I love and so are the people that are involved in it. If we cant do it we'd say no [respecting differences] I think its part of what the charter standard does because if they're prepared to accept the conditions that mean they can be involved with this club means that they're the sort of people who will be open to those sorts of things. If you've got volunteers and they all want to go different ways you haven't got a club, its something the charter standard does for us because it gives us a direction from the beginning

Perceptions of VSC members of the role of their club

Name	Community value	Mutual aid/club structure	Community identity	Networking/Trust/ reciprocity (QOL)
Player b - Football Club	The club contributes a place to play football, have fun, and meet new people people who run the club its not like some of these fantastic people who come out and run a football club…its normal people with normal lives…and that's quite comfortable We've got a young lad…he comes to every training session because…we don't turn anyone away and if we can offer that kid off the street corner into playing football which gives them a little bit of responsibility makes them feel good about themselves, then I think that's a really good thing to do.	The club is the best for playing & has more training than other clubs…twice a week. Most of the people who play are friends outside of the club Do something good for themselves and for the club, everyone has their good points and bad points and that's what balances out a team. Place to play football, meet people [and] allows mums and dads to come down & watch…a lot of my best friends do play for the team We do a lot of fundraising which goes back to the club and to the kids People volunteer because they feel part of the team kids and everybody benefits	I am and I feel quite honoured by that. But that's being part of a community club and being a level one coach as well has earned me a lot of respect from a lot of people. Stadium as wish would mean the club would get even more respect & would say something about the area, possibly allow the club to get more respect …its sort of got me up the ladder a bit in terms of respect and the people who know me	People who volunteer mean they care about it a bit more, most people who are volunteers are friends or they're parents I want to do my level two…I really enjoy it…So if I can give that back then I've achieved something I do it because I want to not because I want to be paid for it actually, I'd find that quite insulting…if someone said "you can come and coach and we'll pay you 25 quid" but why would I want that. I go there because its what I like to do, so why would I want to be paid, and if I was the case that I was paid I would put the money back into the club anyway… you don't get paid for doing things that you enjoy. Ive got two boys playing and I cant be in two places at once…without someone saying alright Fran I'll take them to football the club wouldn't be where its at today.
Player/Coach Football Club	Inform [community] through word of mouth, flyers etc, and we have had coaching days where youngsters come along & get free coaching & a match at the end. Had one day that was a fundraising event as well – fairly direct way of informing. if had opportunities [to fundraise for local community] we probably would, but haven't done yet.	Hamble united family so to speak, they volunteer because its their kids and their next door neighbour's kids and the person round the corner's One reason is because dad is the chairman and manager of our team, but it's a local team…[its] about playing & enjoying it. It helps that I know most through school already… [I'd] rather stay in a team with my mates. 'its like a family atmosphere…we all know each other and we all have a laugh, its football [we] just enjoy football…because we all know each other quite well its like a family…there's not just one group of people we talk to, we talk to everybody.	Biggest club can become more cliquey can get small groups within each team that are cliquey Contributes a sense of being part of something, being part of the community as it is a community based club. We are for the community and if we can help any kids or if somebody approaches us and wants us to go and help coach or even make a fun day for some kids…some parents cant afford to send their kids to a football club…and just to know that every couple of months they can bring their child down to the Astroturf and have a fun day – I think that's really good. 'were open to anything' 'the better you're doing the more interest you'll get' "Oh your that coach who coached us" "Yeah there it does help [develop] a sense of community	People who live in area are decent people, probably middle working class jobs Have xmas dos, it's where we get most of our profit from – they help bring people together. If the parents get along it's easier to develop & stuff (& most seem to get along)
			For people to realise in this community that they can do that, I mean not a lot of people have got as lot of money and we know that…and if we give up a day of our work or a days holiday to go and give these kids, sometimes underprivileged kids, give them a sense of being part of something. It just creates a really good sense of being part of	I'm quite a trustworthy [trusting] person and I hope that reflects on what I do and how I do it so people find me trustworthy. I think it's a really good thing to do (CRB checks) makes sure everybody is kosher because you are entrusted…you've got to make sure that people are safe to be around these children.