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Coalfields regeneration and improving 'best practice':: an analysis of Easington district

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Coalfields Regeneration and Improving 'Best Practice':

An Analysis of Easington District

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October 2004

Abstract

This thesis explores the reasons for the persistence of deprivation in East Durham despite the concerted efforts of the East Durham Task Force and the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership over the last 15 years to tackle the social, economic and environmental problems caused by the rapid run down of the mining industry in the District. It uses a critical realist methodology and techniques of documentary research, (participant) observation and semi-structured interviews to analyse the processes of strategy formulation and the devising of regeneration projects. The research was an ESRC collaborative research project with the District of Easington Council.

The thesis uses a number of theoretical debates in contemporary social science to interpret the evidence collected in East Durham which in turn contributes to the development of those debates. In particular, the research engages with debates on the changing role and geometry of the state and the purported 'hollowing out' of the state which is often characterised as a shift from government to governance. The evidence collected in East Durham suggests this is not happening in the field of regeneration and that the central state remains of primary importance. Local governance occurs 'in the shadow of hierarchy' (Scharpf, 1994). This is explored through Jessop's (2003) concepts of metagovernance and, in particular, metaheterarchy. These approaches echo Foucault's concept of government as 'the conduct of conduct'. Foucault's (1982) concept of power as something positive and technical is used to understand the changing role of the state. The governmentality approach provides the conceptual tools to understand the processes of governance and the way in which the centre can influence local actors without direct involvement in regeneration. Patterns of interorganisational cooperation are observed, however, which cannot be adequately explained by the shift to governance, and Grabher's (2002) concept of project ecology is used to understand governance in turbulent environments.

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acknowledgements

Chapter One

Introduction

The Easington District has experienced major processes of economic restructuring, principally as a result of the run-down of coal mining. This has created severe problems for policy makers charged with the economic regeneration of the District. The East Durham Task Force, established in the wake of coal mining decline, is cited as an example of national and international best practice for the innovative approach taken towards regeneration in the context of large scale and complex problems. Over a ten year period, much has been undertaken in the way of physical development. This has included the reclamation and redevelopment of former colliery sites, environmental improvement of the coastline via the Turning the Tide initiative, smaller scale environmental improvements and new building and the provision of community facilities. This emphasis on physical development has led to a step change in the perceived image of the District.

However, physical regeneration and enhanced image have yet to translate into employment creation on a scale commensurate with local employment needs. Furthermore, there has been significant employment loss from existing industries in the post-mine closure period, notably clothing. Not surprisingly, severe localised economic decline has also led to major social problems but social development is only now beginning to gain prominence and a higher priority on the regeneration agenda. The extent and depth of socio-economic problems was dramatically demonstrated by the DETR's Index of Multiple Deprivation (DETR, 2000) which highlights the main problems still blighting the District despite the work of the Task Force. Easington still suffers from severe social deprivation in terms of health, housing, employment, education, geographical access, child poverty and income. In overall terms it ranks as the fourth most deprived local authority area in England (the first three are London boroughs), from a total of 354 local authority Districts. Furthermore, 21 of its 26 wards fall in the top 10% of deprived wards in the country. In 2001 the government introduced new institutional arrangements, in the form of Local Strategic Partnerships, in an attempt to tackle these problems of multiple and persistent deprivation.

This research emerges, therefore, from a convergence of interests between key policy makers within the District of Easington Council and current academic debates on the nature and efficiency of particular forms of regeneration and the changing concepts of regulation and governance in the context of the regeneration process.

The main question that the research seeks to address is why, despite all of the effort and resources that have gone in to the regeneration of the District since the establishment of the Task Force in 1991, do the problems faced by the District remain so acute? Finding an answer to this question is obviously highly significant for the District Council and the Local Strategic Partnership as efforts to regenerate the District continue and large amounts of money continue to be spent by a number of agencies in the District. In order to tackle this question, however, it needs to be developed into a series of manageable research questions. These are set out towards the end of this chapter, but first evidence is presented on the nature of the problems faced by the District and the attempts which have been made to tackle them.

The District of Easington

The District of Easington is a small, rural district on the coast of north east England. It is located between the conurbations of Wearside and Tyneside to the north and Teesside to the south (Figure 1). The District has the largest population (93,993: Census, 2001) of the seven Districts of County Durham despite a population decline of 16,000 (15%) since 1970. The District covers 145 square kilometres and is the second smallest District in the County. There are two main towns in the District, Seaham and Peterlee, and 16 smaller villages. The administrative centre of the District is located in Easington Village, although a growing number of agencies and public services are locating in Peterlee.

The economic and social history of the District is dominated by a single industry – coal mining. Before the extraction of coal began in the early nineteenth century, the District was a small agricultural backwater.

Figure 1 Easington District as represented in the East Durham Task Force's 1993 Programme for Action

(source: EDTF, 1993: 6)

The legacy of coal mining in Easington

Coal mining was the economic raison d'être of the District of Easington for over 100 years. The District's dependence on coal was ultimately a factor in the enormous social and economic problems which faced, and continue to face, the District following the run-down of the nationalised coal industry.

The early years of coal extraction in the District created the 'texture' of life which remains today. The growth of many of the District's villages is directly related to the sinking of pits and the employment that this created. A number of the District's villages even bear their origins in their name – Easington Colliery and Shotton Colliery for example. Even the District's new town, Peterlee, is named after a celebrated miners' leader. Mining, therefore, gave rise to the settlement structure of a large number of small villages spread throughout the District. This structure originated in the need for miners working round-the-clock shifts to live close to their place of work. As employment in the mines declined and eventually disappeared this dispersed settlement pattern itself became an obstruction to the development of the District. The new forms of employment that the District was able to attract have tended to locate in the main towns, particularly around Peterlee, creating significant transport problems.

The built environment has also been substantially influenced by the mining heritage of the District. The expansion of mining occurred rapidly in the early decades of the twentieth century. The demand for labour in a formerly largely sparsely populated district necessitated significant in-migration and the construction of housing to accommodate the miners and their families. Consequently, colliery villages are characterised by a relatively uniform built environment of small, brick built, terraced houses characteristic of the early twentieth century (Figure 2). These houses, built at high density and without amenities, have created a legacy which continues to influence the health and quality of life of the District's residents today. The District also has a large stock of comparatively old social rented accommodation which, although well built, no longer adequately meets modern housing needs. In addition, much of the housing in the District's new town, Peterlee, suffers from structural and design problems despite its original conception as a solution to the 'squalor' of the

older mining villages (Clarke, 1946). The exposure of many of the District's coastal settlements to the ravages of the North Sea coast has exacerbated the structural problems and speeded up the decay of many properties.

Figure 2 Colliery Houses, Shotton Colliery

Mining has also influenced the natural landscape of the District. Although largely removed through expensive regeneration schemes, the District was once dominated by the spoil heaps associated with the mining industry, and the coastline polluted by the disposal of colliery waste at sea.

Coal mining has also potentially shaped the people of the District in more subtle ways. On the positive side, authors such as Frankenberg (1969) have described the way in which the shared experience of physically demanding and dangerous work and economic hardship have fostered the creation of strong communities with a sense of their own identity and social support structures. On the other hand there has been considerable rivalry, even hostility, between different pits and different settlements. This antagonism, cultivated by the Thatcher governments during their attack on the

mining industry, remains today amongst the District's older residents. In addition, mining was a strongly paternalistic industry and the District has a strong Labourist political culture. This creates challenges for the District in the current climate with its emphasis on entrepreneurialism. The District has a large aged population which expects the local authority to provide for their needs in old age. The District is not immune to wider social changes, however, and the Council now has a large stock of council housing for which demand is falling as younger generations no longer aspire to live in social rented accommodation (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Social housing awaiting demolition, Peterlee

The nationalisation of the coal industry

The coal industry was nationalised in 1947. The coal industry in County Durham had been in decline since the early decades of the twentieth century, with output having reached its peak in 1913 (Reid, 1970 in Hudson, 1986: 171) while employment reached its maximum of over 170 000 in 1923 (Bulmer, 1978 in *ibid*: 171). The period from nationalisation until 1958 was one of comparative stability in coal mining

in the north east. The rate of decline accelerated in 1958, in the midst of the period of post-war expansion in the economy. This was largely due to the policies of the UK state for the management of the nationalised industries. Over the three decades following the nationalisation of the coal industry and before the election of the Thatcher government in 1979 a consensus gradually emerged within the UK state between the Conservative and Labour governments as to the way in which and criteria by which the nationalised industries were actually to be operated. Although not the 'commanding heights' of the economy, the nationalised industries, including coal, were seen as central to the performance of the national economy. Since the objectives set for the nationalised industries were defined in terms of underpinning the competitiveness of private manufacturing capital and the national economy they had to be operated on the same sorts of 'efficiency' criteria as those used by private capital itself. This was made explicit in 1961 with the introduction of the rate of return on investment criteria for the management of the nationalised industries. These criteria were largely accepted by both political parties and the workforces and unions of the nationalised industries.

In 1958 a decision at national level by the UK state to switch to a multi-fuel economy caused an acceleration in the rate of decline in output and employment in the north east coalfield. There was a distinctive geography to the closures as production was concentrated in the larger collieries on the east coast where the unit costs of producing coal were lower. Although many of Easington's pits survived the early closures, given the advantages of their location, this was the start of the District's unemployment problems since many of the District's mining jobs were filled by experienced miners relocating from the west of the County. Young men entering the labour market were no longer able to find work in the collieries and youth unemployment became a problem for the District.

The north east continued to lose mining jobs throughout the 1970s despite the apparently greater emphasis on the role of the coal industry within national energy policy signalled by the 1974 *Plan for Coal* produced by the newly elected Labour government, the NCB and NUM following the strikes of 1972 and 1974. The emphasis remained heavily on producing coal 'competitively'. Producing competitively and rate-of-return criteria were used to direct investment and run down

production in high-cost collieries, which included most of those in the north east. By 1981/2, all but three of the NCB's collieries in the north east were classified as loss-making by the Monopolies Commission (including all of those in Easington). The closure of the region's remaining pits followed swiftly. "The implications in terms of unemployment were all the more severe because – in contrast to the 1960s – there was no commitment to even *attempting* to implement a regional employment policy. Coping with the social and economic impacts of decline was to be left to the individuals affected, to local authorities in coalmining areas, and to the cosmetic policies of ad hoc agencies such as NCB (Enterprises) Ltd." (Hudson, 1989b: 192) (Figure 4).

Figure 4 British Coal Enterprise's Industrial Units, Horden

Industrial change in the north east

Until 1958 the region's employers, both private capitalists but especially the NCB, vigorously and successfully opposed the introduction of any new male-employing manufacturing industry in the region. After 1958, the shift to a multi-fuel economy

and the corresponding contraction in the mining industry, along with other nationalised industries concentrated in the north east, especially shipbuilding, led to the re-creation of extensive male and female labour reserves in the region at a time of tight labour market conditions in the growth regions of the UK economy as well as those in other major capitalist states. These large reserves of labour and central government financial incentives, particularly after 1966, to encourage private capital to invest in the north east, together with changes internal to the organisation of production within companies, led to some diversification of manufacturing employment in the region, although there was very little net growth and an overall substantial reduction in industrial employment because of the job losses in mining. Across the region, "this diversification was accompanied by significant qualitative changes in the types of jobs available and the gender composition of the wage-labour force, for almost half of the net increase in manufacturing employment was for women." (Hudson, 1986). Furthermore, this industrial diversification was to sow the seeds of future structural problems since the north east in the 1960s was a particularly attractive environment for capitals which could profit by locating in branch plants those parts of their overall production processes which required de-skilled labour power. Thus the north east became one link in chains of corporate production and restructuring which were, and are, increasingly globally rather than nationally based. This type of industrial development has proved to be highly transient, and the region has subsequently moved from being a 'global outpost' within the international division of labour to largely redundant to the requirements of an increasing number of industrial capitals. This story is particularly clear in the history of the clothing and textiles industry in the District of Easington.

Industrial decline and changing employment patterns in Easington

The local economy of the District has been hit by successive waves of deindustrialisation. Mining in the District survived the early rounds of pit closure in the 1960s and 1970s largely unscathed. The District's pits were larger, deeper and more productive than those in the west of County Durham, and it was not until the changed political environment of the 1980s that District's pits began to close on a larger scale. This had a significant effect on the nature of deindustrialisation in the District. The closure of the mining industry in Easington District was extremely

rapid. The scale of the job loses in mining over such a short period of time posed significant problems for the re-employment of redundant miners. In addition, the closure of the mines during a period of intense global restructuring in manufacturing and in industry more generally, left little prospect for the creation of employment on a scale commensurate with the needs of the District. The District continues to suffer today from the speed and the scale of the job loses in mining, with only 12 years having passed since the closure of the last pit.

The District's history of re-industrialisation is largely characterised by its transitory and gender-specific nature. One of the earliest new factories to be built was the Dewhirst textiles factory in Peterlee new town in the 1950s. The District successfully attracted further branch plants during the 1970s and 1980s, such as Walkers Snack Foods and Mattel. These plants tended to employ female labour. The 1980s, therefore, saw a shift in the gender composition of the labour force of Easington. This can be characterised as a shift from male to female employment, from full to part-time work, and from well paid, skilled work in the mining industry to poorly paid, unskilled work in branch plants.

Social and economic deprivation

The rapid and large scale job losses associated with the deindustrialisation of the District have led to widespread economic deprivation. The District also suffers from extensive social deprivation. This takes many forms, such as poor health, low levels of educational attainment, poor quality housing, social tensions and anti-social behaviour and transport problems. These are examined in more detail below. The social and economic deprivation in the District are manifested in the depressed local housing market and the steady depopulation of the District.

Social and economic deprivation are related in complex and mutually reinforcing ways. There are multiple causes of deprivation which interact in to produce a variety of effects, ranging from poor health and low aspirations to social exclusion. Although it is often impossible to separate the causes of deprivation, and indeed it is difficult to separate causes from effects, the main patterns of deprivation in the District are outlined below.

Unemployment

One of the most fundamental causes of deprivation in the District is the high level of unemployment and joblessness. The effects of the high levels of unemployment are compounded by their longevity. The pattern of unemployment in the District reflects the historic dependence which Easington District has had on the coal industry (Hudson *et al*, 1984). In 1971, for example, the coal industry accounted for just under half of total employment (49.4%) and over two-thirds of male employment (67.6%). Between 1971 and 1981, employment in coal mining fell from 17,962 to 12,092, a net loss of 5,870 jobs (-32.7%), the majority of these losses affecting male employment. During the same period there was a net expansion of male jobs outside mining of only 818 compared with the loss of 5885 male jobs in the coal industry itself. Furthermore, there were significant increases in long-term unemployment among men of all age groups, suggesting that redundant miners were not being absorbed into jobs in other sectors of the economy (*ibid*).

The unemployment problems faced by the District escalated during the 1980s with the further rapid run-down of the mining industry and additional job losses in manufacturing (Table 1).

Table 1 Change in Total Employment Count, Easington District 1981 - 1989

	September 1981	September 1989	Change	Percentage
Male Full Time	22,900	14,000	-8,900	-39%
Female Full Time	6,100	7,300	1,200	19.9%
Male Part Time	600	600	0	0%
Female Part Time	4,400	5,000	600	12.5%

Source: Census of Employment, Nomis

Unemployment remains high today, although changes in recording methods mask the scale of the problem considerably. A considerable proportion of the unemployed population are no longer counted in official unemployment statistics because they are registered permanently sick or disabled and receiving incapacity benefits or have taken early retirement (Table 2). This is a reflection of the 'real' scale of unemployment and the poor prospects of finding work which propel large numbers of

the working age population to become economically inactive (Beatty and Fothergill, 1996; Fieldhouse and Hollywood, 1999).

Table 2 Economic Activity of the District's population 2001

Resident population aged 16 to 74 (percentage)

	Easington	England and Wales
Employed	48.2	60.6
Unemployed	4.3	3.4
Economically active full time students	1.4	2.6
Retired	15.3	13.6
Economically inactive students	3.1	4.7
Looking after home/family	7.4	6.5
Permanently sick or disabled	16.3	5.5
Economically inactive	4.0	3.1

Source: 2001 Census, ONS

Many of the miners made redundant following the closure of the mines in the late 1980s and early 1990s have failed to be reabsorbed into the labour force and have remained economically inactive ever since (Table 3).

Table 3 Long term unemployment in the over 16 population, 2001

Resident population aged 16 to 74

	Easington	Percentage
All People aged 16 – 74	67731	100
In employment	33432	49
Not in employment	34299	51
Not in employment, last worked in 2001	1648	2
Not in employment, last worked in 2000	2729	4
Not in employment, last worked in 1999	1962	3
Not in employment, last worked in 1998	1630	2
Not in employment, last worked in 1997	1291	2
Not in employment, last worked in 1996	1203	2
Not in employment, last worked in 1995-1991	6317	9
Not in employment, last worked before 1991	13286	20
Not in employment, never worked	4233	6

Source: 2001 Census, ONS

The District's current unemployment problems are masked to a considerable degree by the dependence of many older redundant miners on sickness and incapacity benefits.

Health

According to the Department of Health, "People [in Easington] experience much worse health than the general population in England and Wales. Deaths from all causes are increased for residents over 15 years of age. Twice as many women die from cancer of the stomach than the national average; the occurrence of lung cancer and malignant melanoma in women is much greater than the national average. Cancer deaths in men show a 50% increase over the national average, most notably in stomach and lung cancer. In both sexes, death due to heart disease and stroke are more than 40% more likely than in the rest of the country." (Department of Health, in Guardian 26.03.03). In addition, 30% more people than the national average experience mental health problems (*ibid*).

The poor health of the District's residents is compounded by the structure and under-funding of the local health service. There is no hospital in the District, and hospital services in Sunderland are under threat in the latest round of health service re-organisation. People requiring hospital treatment have to travel out of the District to Durham, Sunderland or Hartlepool. In addition, despite serving one of the most deprived districts in the country, the local Primary Care Trust receives only 78% of its target funding and despite receiving one of the largest increases in funding of any Trust in the country will still be £24 million per annum below target by 2005/6 (Bolas, quoted in Guardian, 26.03.03)

Table 4 Self-reported health status of the District's population, 2001

Resident population (percentage)

	Easington	England and Wales	England and Wales Rank / 376
Good	57.8	68.6	
Fairly good	24.9	22.2	
Not good	17.3	9.2	1

Source: 2001 Census, ONS

The health of many of the older residents of the District bears the legacy of their employment in the mining industry. Rates of long-term illness are substantially higher than the national average, with 30.8% of the District's population reporting a long term illness compared to an average of 18.2% for England and Wales. Easington has the highest proportion of residents with a long-term illness of any District (Census 2001, ONS).

In addition, standards of public health in general are low, reflecting a wide range of factors, including high levels of smoking and alcohol consumption, poor diet and widespread poor housing conditions. Teenage pregnancy rates are also high in the District. The District's health problems are related in complex and reciprocal ways to the problems of economic deprivation, poverty, poor housing, lack of opportunity and the sense of powerlessness that many people feel in the face of the problems they face.

Education

Levels of educational attainment in the District are low. The pass rates for GCSEs and GNVQs of the six secondary schools in the District are significantly below the national average and are the lowest in County Durham. They are shown in Table 5. Ofsted reports have found the quality of the District's schools to be lacking. In addition, there are significant adult numeracy and literacy problems with one third of adults having basic literacy and numeracy problems compared to a national average of 24% (Basic Skills Agency, 2004). The working age population of the District possesses significantly fewer qualifications than the national average (Table 6).

Table 5 Secondary School Performance 2003: GCSE / GNVQ Results

Percentage of pupils aged 15+

	5 + A* - C	5+ A* - G	No passes
England Average	52.9%	88.8%	5.2%
Easington Community School	45%	87%	7%
Peterlee St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School	41%	87%	5%
Dene Community School of Technology	23%	74%	6%
Shotton Hall School	38%	83%	7%
Wellfield Community School	35%	88%	7%
Seaham School of Technology	40%	84%	6%

Source: DFES

Table 6 Qualifications 2001

<div align="right">Resident population aged 16-74</div>

	Easington	Percentage	England & Wales Percentage
All People	67731	100	100
No qualifications	29889	44	29
Level 1	11963	18	16
Level 2	11619	17	19
Level 3	3315	5	8
Level 4/5	6135	9	20
Other qualifications / level unknown	4810	7	8

<div align="right">Source: 2001 Census, ONS</div>

Housing and Environment

The District has one of the highest proportions of local authority owned housing in the country. Much of this housing is in a poor condition, and the District Council estimate that £300m is required to improve its stock to the government's 'decent homes' standard (DEC, 2002). This large social rented sector reflects both a strong local socialist political tradition and the dominance of the mining industry in the District. In addition to the social rented sector, there is a large quantity of former colliery and NCB owned housing which is now privately owned and is of relatively poor quality and inadequate for modern requirements (Table 7). Furthermore, as the population of the District ages, there is a change in the nature of demand for social rented accommodation from family houses to bungalows adapted for the elderly. This has combined with a general trend of declining popularity of local authority housing to produce significant problems of void properties due to lack of demand. The council is beginning to address these problems through selective demolition, although this is proving to be both expensive and controversial (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Easington Colliery

Table 7 Housing Stock 2002

Total Dwelling Stock

	Easington	Percentage
Total Dwelling Stock	41153	
Local Authority Dwelling Stock	11805	29
RSL Dwelling Stock	1690	4
Owner Occupied and Private Rented Dwelling Stock	27648	67
Unfit Local Authority Dwellings	4371	
Percentage of LA Dwellings that are unfit		37
Owner Occupied and Private Rented Dwellings that are unfit	2361	
Percentage of OO and PR Dwellings that are unfit		9
Total Unfit Dwellings	6732	16
Percentage of LA dwellings requiring 'Capital Type' investment at 1st April 2002 and associated costs of less than £5,000		30
Percentage of LA dwellings requiring 'Capital Type' investment at 1st April 2002 and associated costs from £5,000 up to £14,999		50
Percentage of LA dwellings requiring 'Capital Type' investment at 1st April 2002 and associated costs of over £15,000		15

Source: DEC, 2002

The poor quality of the existing housing stock has a negative impact on the well-being of the residents. Until recently, coal fires were common and standards of insulation were low.

The poor quality and variety of the housing stock combine with the depressed local economy and the general poor quality of the local environment to depress the local housing market (see Table 8 below).

Table 8 Housing Market Profile 2001

£'s and number of households (percentage)

	Easington		England & Wales	
	Average price	Percentage of households living in this type of property	Average price	Percentage of households living in this type of property
Detached	89,165	12.5	178,806	22.8
Semi-detached	45,617	38.0	101,733	31.6
Terraced	28,526	44.3	89,499	26.0
Flat	41,942	5.1	120,185	19.2
All property types	45,554		119,436	

Sources: 2001 Census, ONS
The Land Registry, 2001

The built environment of the District is also generally of a poor quality. In many settlements, for example, there are significant numbers of empty shops and houses, and many properties in advanced states of disrepair. The depressed local economy means that many of the shops that do survive are poor quality, marginal enterprises (Figure 6). The relationship of the poor physical environment with social and economic deprivation is a complex one. On the one hand many people believe that the poor quality of the local environment serves to deter outside investment in the District. On the other hand, the poor quality local environment has a significant impact on the well-being of the District's residents who commonly cite it as their priority for improvements when consulted on the spending of regeneration money (for example through the Community Appraisals carried out for the District Council by consultants in 2002).

Figure 6 Local Shops, Shotton Colliery

Crime and Anti-social behaviour

Levels of crime in Easington compare favourably with the national average (see Table 9). Of greater concern, however, are levels of anti-social behaviour which have risen sharply in recent years (see Table 10 below).

Table 9 Levels of Crime in Easington 2000 - 2001

Notifiable offences recorded by the police. April 2000 - March 2001.

	Violence against the person	Sexual offences	Robbery	Burglary from a dwelling	Theft of a motor vehicle	Theft from a motor vehicle
Total number of offences recorded Easington	629	35	22	536	458	571
Rate per 1,000 population Easington	6.8	0.4	0.2	5.8	4.9	6.2
Rate per 1,000 population England and Wales	11.4	0.7	1.8	7.6	6.4	11.9

Source: Home Office

Table 10 Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints 1998 - 2001

Antisocial behaviour complaints received by the police. 1998 - 2001

	Easington
1998 – 1999	5,869
1999 – 2000	c. 6,900
2000 – 2001	7,183

Source: District of Easington Community Safety Partnership

An outline of regeneration policies and practices in the District, 1991 – 2003

A large amount of effort and considerable resources have been spent in the District of Easington in the decade since the closure of the last mines in 1993. The processes of economic restructuring described above began in the 1960s. They were as much the result of central government programmes as local initiatives. The Peterlee New Town Development Corporation, which was appointed by central government, played a significant role in attracting new manufacturing jobs to the District. Local efforts to secure economic development continued throughout the 1980s in a largely ad hoc fashion with relatively small scale work undertaken by both the District and County Councils, including the construction of industrial units and improvements to the transport infrastructure of the District. The first concerted attempts to tackle the District's problems caused by the decline in the mining industry came in 1991 with the establishment of the East Durham Task Force. The organisational structure of the Task Force and the strategies it produced directed regeneration in the District for 10 years. In 2001, the Task Force was 'wound up' and replaced by the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership. The Local Strategic Partnership has subsequently taken on the role of producing a regeneration strategy for the District and co-ordinating the regeneration work of the many partners which now operate in the District. The regeneration of the District is outlined below through the lens of these organisational structures.

The East Durham Task Force

The East Durham Task Force was established with the approval of government ministers in 1991 and represents the start of recent efforts to revive the economy,

physical infrastructure and social and environmental conditions of the former East Durham Coalfield. The East Durham Task Force was different from previous regeneration activity both in its scale and its approach to the District's problems.

The Task Force brought together representatives from Durham County Council, Easington District Council and the regional directors of a number of government departments and agencies to address the problems caused by the closure of the District's mines. The Task Force quickly produced a 'Programme For Action' detailing the work the members believed needed to be undertaken to tackle the District's severe problems and secure its future prosperity. The Task Force had three main aims in producing the strategy. These were, first, to gain greater recognition of what was needed to reverse the area's decline. Secondly, the Task Force sought to secure the continuing active involvement of all agencies in the regeneration of the District, a reflection of the extent to which the District was in competition with many others to secure the resources necessary to tackle its problems. Thirdly, the Programme for Action sought to develop a series of initiatives through which the District's problems could be addressed (EDTF, 1991).

The Programme for Action, which drew heavily on a report on the potential for investment projects in East Durham commissioned from consultants in 1988 (Ecotec, 1988), sets out the Task Force's understanding of the main causes and solutions to the District's problems. The emphasis of the Task Force's first Programme for Action was squarely on creating jobs to replace those lost with the closure of the mines. Jobs could only be created on the scale needed to match employment needs, the Task Force reasoned, by attracting inward investment to the District. In order to attract investment, the District had to be made attractive to manufacturing investors. The Task Force's approach essentially reiterated the development model of the Aycliffe and Peterlee Development Corporation which was wound up in 1988. The Task Force's strategy sought to make the District attractive to inward investment through improvements to the District's poor transport infrastructure in order to make the District more accessible. Once opened up by the construction of new roads, industrial land and industrial property needed to be developed to attract companies to the District. The reclamation of derelict land and the despoiled coastline were also central elements of the Programme as the Task Force believed that it was necessary to

create a high quality environment to attract mobile investment to the District. Programmes were devised to provide training to equip the population with the skills necessary to work in the new industries, and business support agencies were created to cater for the in-coming employers. Settlement renewal and the provision of community facilities also featured in the Programme to improve the general quality of the environment. Finally, a number of measures to increase the contribution of tourism to the local economy were proposed.

The Task Force estimated that £158 million was needed to implement its 1991 Programme for Action. The Programme was revised in 1993 following the closure of the last mine in the District, and, as the number of jobs needed rose to 10,000 so the cost of the Programme was increased to £390 million. The second Programme, subtitled 'Signs of Hope', continued the emphasis of the first Programme on attracting inward investment through the development of the transport network, industrial land and premises, although it acknowledged that "the wider experience in the region suggests that the manufacturing sector is unlikely to be a major net contributor to employment up to the end of this decade." (EDTF, 1993). The Programme was updated once more in 1997. The final programme, subtitled 'The Road to Success', continued the earlier Programmes' emphasis on industrial land and premises, but also reflected a broadening of the Task Force's approach to include themes such as community safety, a greater emphasis on housing and the comprehensive regeneration of the town of Seaham. By 1997, the total cost of the Programme for Action was estimated at £541 million (EDTF, 1997).

The Task Force did not have an income or budget of its own. Its running costs were largely met by the District and County Councils providing staff on secondment, and by a small amount of finding from the EU's RECHAR programme. Funding for the Programmes for Action and the projects they contained came from a variety of sources. Both the District and County Councils contributed money from their mainstream budgets, but the majority of the funding came from other sources. English Partnerships provided a considerable amount of money for the reclamation of derelict colliery sites and the construction of roads and the development of industrial land. Substantial funding was also received from the European Union (RECHAR and Objective 2) and from the government (Single Regeneration Budget). This funding

formed part of wider regeneration programmes upon which the Task Force was able to draw, and these programmes are considered in greater detail below.

RECHAR

The RECHAR programme was a European Community programme aimed at tackling the problems of the former coal mining areas. The District received £8m from the first RECHAR programme, which ended in 1993, and a further £8.5m from the second programme between 1993 and 1999. Like most other funding programmes, the RECHAR funds were allocated through a competitive bidding process and bidders were expected to secure matched funding from other sources to enhance the impact of the funding. The Task Force's RECHAR bids comprised a package of a large number of small projects, each of which was to be funded up to 50% of its cost from the RECHAR funds. The Task Force's bidding documents drew heavily on the Programmes for Action and sought to highlight the links between the aims of the Task Force and the European Union's RECHAR programme. The Task Force's RECHAR 2 package sought funding for 82 separate projects, ranging from the construction of access roads, through the development of credit unions, funding for the East Durham Development Agency, training for industry, basic skills and bio-technology (EDTF, 1995).

Objective 2

Objective 2 funding forms part of the European Union's Regional Development Fund and is targeted at areas affected by industrial decline. The first round of Objective 2 funding was distributed between 1997 and 1999. The second round, which incorporates the needs of former coalfield areas formerly addressed through the RECHAR programme, runs from 2000 to 2006. The District of Easington secured £4 million from the EU under Priority 3 of Objective 2 for a £10 million package of projects which aim to tackle East Durham's deep-rooted problems through the provision of a complete portfolio of strategic sites, and through complementary human resource development support targeted at those most in need. The District secured a further £3 million under Priority 4 of Objective 2 for a £7 million package of projects to secure 'community economic development' in 17 designated wards.

Single Regeneration Budget

The Single Regeneration Budget is a central government programme to distribute regeneration funding through a process of competitive bidding. It was established in 1994 and brought together a large number of separate programmes into a single source of funding. The 'competition' has been run six times, and for each round the government has issued bidding guidelines to give an indication of the types of regeneration projects it wishes to see put forward in bids. As with the European regeneration funds, bidders are required to secure matched funding from other sources to complement the government's resources. The District secured funding from the Single Regeneration Budget in rounds one, five and six.

In round one the District secured £4.6 million from the Single Regeneration Budget for a programme with a total cost of £13.1 million. The programme included infrastructure improvements, environmental improvements, business support and training provision in Murton and Seaham between 1995 and 2002. The Task Force submitted an unsuccessful bid in round three of the SRB in 1996 for its flagship regeneration project in Seaham. This was interesting since it was one of the first signs of a significant mismatch between the government's approach to regeneration and local perceptions of what needed to be done. The Task Force's SRB3 bid sought money for the extensive physical re-modelling of the town of Seaham at a time when the government was moving towards 'softer' regeneration measures focussing more on people than capital development projects. The District was successful again in round 5 in 1999, securing £4.96m towards a project focusing on the improvement of housing in Dawdon and Parkside as part of a £26 million county-wide bid. The project included the clearance of void and derelict properties, improvements to local authority owned housing and the preparation of sites for the construction of low-cost private sector housing. The District received a further £3.2 million in the final round of SRB (round six, 2000) as part of a county-wide bid focussing on health, housing, youth and community safety.

The East Durham Task Force came to an end in 2001. It had always been envisaged that it would require at least ten years to begin to address the District's problems following the closure of the mines, but the orderly succession from the Task Force to

other organisational arrangements was somewhat overtaken by events and policy developments by the government.

The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are a central element of the government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. They were first proposed in April 2000 by Policy Action Team (PAT) 17 – 'Joining it up locally', one of the 18 Policy Action Teams established in the wake of the Social Exclusion Unit's 1998 report "Bringing Britain Together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal" (SEU, 1998). Hilary Armstrong, then minister for local government and the regions, described "the key idea of "local strategic partnerships", bringing together local authorities and other service providers, business, voluntary sector and communities to develop more co-ordinated approaches to the challenges they all face." (DETR, 2000: 5). Government guidance accompanying the Local Government Act 2000 gave local strategic partnerships a central role in the production of Community Strategies (ODPM, 2000).

The Local Strategic Partnership agenda was embraced enthusiastically in the District. The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership became, nominally at least, the successor to the Task Force, although operationally there are significant differences between the two partnerships. The membership of the LSP is markedly different from that of the Task Force. Whereas the Task Force brought together regional directors of government departments and regional agencies, the LSP has a much more local focus. Its members include the District Council's director of housing, the chief executives of the local Primary Care Trust and Groundwork Trust, the leader of the District Council and a number of District and County Councillors, the local police divisional commander and representatives of the local community. The membership of the East Durham LSP is shown in appendix A. The LSP has, however, adopted a very similar structure to the Task Force with a small executive, a number of thematic policy groups focussing on areas such as education, health, the economy and housing, all of which report to the Partnership itself which ultimately is the nominated decision making body. The structure of the East Durham LSP is shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7 The Structure of the East Durham LSP
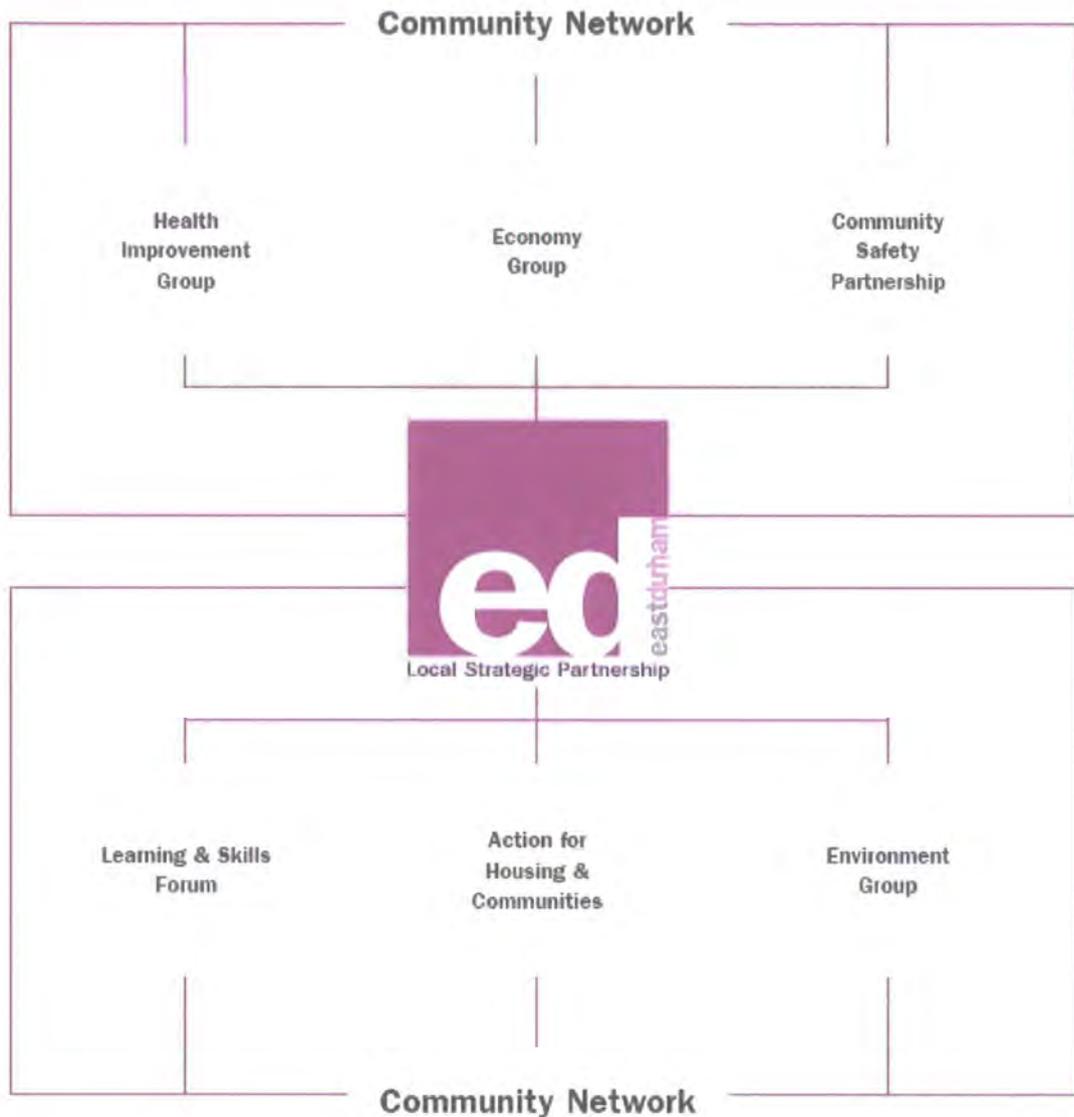
Source: East Durham LSP Community Strategy, 2003

Unlike the East Durham Task Force, the Local Strategic Partnership has its own funds to resource its regeneration strategy. These funds have come from the government in the form of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. In contrast to other government funding regimes, such as the SRB, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund is allocated according to need rather than by competition, and the LSP has been, nominally at least, free to decide how it is spent. The policy context within which the LSP operates, however, is markedly different from the environment in which the Task Force worked. Although the LSP is free to choose how it spends its NRF allocation,

the government has placed a number of conditions on the partnership in order to qualify for the funding. First, the LSP itself must be accredited by the Government Office for the North East. This process requires the LSP to demonstrate that it meets certain criteria, namely that it is strategic, inclusive, action-focussed, performance managed, efficient, learning and developmental (DETR, 2001: 19). Secondly, the LSP is required to produce a Community Strategy and a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which must again be approved by Government Office. Third, the LSP has to monitor the spending and the impact of the NRF monies and provide Government Office with monitoring information. Fourth, and most significant, the LSP has an obligation to address the government's floor targets in areas such as crime reduction, education and health. The East Durham LSP has, nevertheless, had considerable freedom in shaping its structure and the way in which it spends its NRF allocation.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

The District received £9.9 million in the first round of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocation for the period 2001 – 2004. It has subsequently received an additional £17.7 million for the period 2004 – 2006. The East Durham LSP is one of only 26 to receive additional funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in the second round in recognition of the 'distance' the District remains from the government's floor targets.

The Community Strategy

The East Durham LSP published its Community Strategy in June 2003. The strategy contains contributions from each of the six thematic Implementation Groups of the Partnership, and it "includes the views of local people gathered through consultations undertaken over the last two years". (EDLSP, 2003). The Community Strategy will direct the work of the partnership and sets out a vision for the District which it hopes to achieve by the end of the decade.

Other Central Government Programmes

The District has also benefited from funding through other central government programmes to improve public services in deprived areas. Examples include Education Action Zones, Sure Start and Health Action Zones. Recently the Council

has created an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to manage its housing stock to enable it to borrow a considerable amount of money to fund the repairs needed to meet minimum quality standards.

The Coalfields Task Force

The Coalfields Task Force was established by the Prime Minister shortly after the election of the Labour government in 1997 and produced its report, "Making the difference: a new start for England's coalfield communities" in June 1998. Kingsley Smith, Chief Executive of Durham County Council and Chair of the East Durham Task Force was a member of the Coalfields Task Force. The Coalfields Task Force's report highlighted the particular problems facing the former coalfields and emphasised the need to acknowledge coalfields as a priority in their own right. The report set out its authors' belief that generating wealth through jobs is central to securing the future of the former coalfield communities. The Task Force envisaged job creation through inward investment, call centres and tourism, although community businesses and Intermediate Labour Markets also received a passing mention. The report concentrated on the need to provide training for the unemployed, industrial sites, improved accessibility through new transport links, financial support, fiscal incentives and the relaxation of planning guidelines to encourage inward investment and business development. The report also highlighted the poor quality of the housing stock in the former coalfields and the problems caused by absentee private landlords, transitory populations, void properties and depressed housing markets. The report records the "shock" of the Coalfields Task Force at the "dreadful conditions" it saw on a visit to Easington Colliery (CFTF, 1998: 23). Cleaning up the dereliction left by the mining industry and improving the environment of the former coalfields is also identified as a priority for action.

The Coalfields Task Force Report sets out recommendations for changes to mainstream policies and regeneration funding streams in order to reflect the needs of the former coalfields. It also emphasises the importance of partnership working, involving the private sector, greater integration of public services and empowering communities in tackling the regeneration of the coalfields (Coalfields Task Force, 1998). The government published a detailed response to the Coalfields Task Force

Report which it presented at a conference at Peterlee Leisure Centre in December 1998. The response set out what the government was already doing to help the former coalfields and presented a paragraph-by-paragraph response to the recommendations made by the Coalfields Task Force (DETR, 1998). This response was followed up by a progress report published 12 months later (DETR, 1999).

County and Regional Governance Structures

There are three tiers of local government in the District of Easington. At the lowest level, the District is covered by 18 Town and Parish Councils. The District Council is the local authority with responsibility for housing, environment and, following the Local Government Act 2000, the social and economic well-being of the District's residents. Durham County Council forms the upper tier of local government and has responsibility for education, social services, highways and is actively involved in economic regeneration. The County Council was established in 1888, along with England's other County Councils. Easington District Council was formed in 1974 by the merger of Seaham Urban District with most of Easington Rural District. The two tier structure of local government was the subject of a review in 1991, although at the time the commissioners recommended that the structure be left unchanged. The structure of local government in County Durham is once more the subject of review as part of the government's proposals for a directly elected regional assembly for the north east. The government has stated that should there be a vote in favour of a directly elected regional assembly local government should be rationalised. Six of the seven districts of County Durham have commissioned a study from the Institute of Local Government at the University of Birmingham and now favour the formation of three larger district councils and the abolition of the County Council (INLOGOV, 2003). The County Council, on the other hand, has made a case for the abolition of the seven district councils and their replacement by a single county authority.

Although the establishment of the LSP represents a considerable devolution of responsibility to the local level, notwithstanding the limitations placed on the exercise of that responsibility alluded to above, County and Regional governance structures remain significant for the regeneration of the district.

The County Council plays a significant role in the regeneration of the District in a number of ways. As the Local Education Authority it is responsible for the shape of educational provision in the District. As the local highways authority it continues to play a significant role in the development and maintenance of the District's road network. The County Council also has a large and active regeneration department and continues to spend large amounts of money on regeneration throughout the County. The County Council has a longstanding involvement in the economic development of the county, which includes the establishment of the County Durham Development Company as the Council's inward investment and business development arm. The County established the County Durham Economic Partnership in 1994 which brings together a large number of partners involved in the economic development of the county. The County's economic partnership has produced two economic development strategies for the county, the first in 1994 and the second in 2002. The County has subsequently established its own local strategic partnership – the County Durham Strategic Partnership. This brings together representatives from the seven LSPs in the county and other representatives from the public and private sectors. The County Council has a difficult role to fulfil in spreading its resources among seven districts each with deep rooted but substantially different problems and balancing the claims of the formerly industrial east with the rural west.

The highest level of sub-national governance which engages in the regeneration of the District is the Government Office for the North East. The Government Office plays a particularly important role in relation to the LSP. This takes two forms. First, the government office is the body responsible for implementing the central government's monitoring requirements of the way in which the LSP spends its NRF. Second, there is high level representation from government office at all of the LSP's meetings. Historically, government office had a significant role in the administration and monitoring of the Single Regeneration Budget in the regions, although the administration of the remaining projects of the final rounds passed to the regional development agency, One North East, in 1999.

As well as monitoring the final rounds of SRB, the regional development agency is responsible for the Single Programme Fund. The agency has, however, devolved the distribution of the Single Programme money to the four sub-regional partnerships. In

the case of Easington, the sub-regional partnership is the County Durham Economic Partnership which has an allocation of £34m from the RDA's Single Programme to spend in the County between 2002 and 2005. One North East's other significant contribution to the governance of the region has been the production of the Regional Economic Strategy. Regardless of the merit of this document it is highly significant as it forms a central reference point for most county and district level strategies.

The Research Questions

The research undertaken for this thesis was carried out in the context of the Economic and Social Research Council's CASE programme for collaborative research. The project was developed in collaboration with the District of Easington Council and the research questions arise from a convergence of interests between key policy makers at the District Council charged with the social and economic regeneration of the District following the closure of the mining industry there and academic researchers in the Geography Department at the University of Durham. The research questions seek to address issues which are both of relevance to policy makers and contribute to a number of current theoretical debates in the social sciences. The research questions are outlined below, and the theoretical approach underlying the development of the research questions is presented in chapter four.

The central empirical question which forms the raison d'être for the whole research project is why, despite all of the effort and resources which have gone into the regeneration of the district since 1991, do the problems of social and economic deprivation described above remain so acute. This central research question is addressed through a number of smaller concrete research questions.

The research was undertaken as an interpreted case study of regeneration efforts in the District in light of a body of literature on governance, governmentality and the role of the state. This has shaped the way in which the research questions have been developed. The research methodology is informed by critical realism and by shifting between the concrete and the abstract seeks to understand the relationships between structures, mechanisms and events (Sayer, 1992). The research questions seek to uncover the relationships between the regeneration activities of various organisations

that have worked in the District over the past decade and the impact they have had on social and economic conditions in the District. The evidence provided in this introduction suggests that so far much of the regeneration has had relatively little impact on the District, especially in terms of the social and economic well-being of the residents. The research will try to uncover why this has been the case. First, the research will ask how problems are made visible and amenable to solutions. This will seek to uncover how regeneration activity is shaped by different agencies' understandings of the District's problems. The influence of government policy on the shaping of solutions to local problems will be examined.

Having acknowledged that there are multiple agencies involved in the regeneration of the District it then becomes necessary to address the relationships between those agencies and the balance of power in shaping and delivering regeneration in the District. The research will investigate the balance of power between central and local government in the regeneration of the District. The East Durham Task Force and the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership will be analysed in order to answer questions about the changing nature of governance. The factors which influence the outcome of partnership working will be examined. A key activity of regeneration partnerships has been the formulation of regeneration strategy. The research will seek to understand the relationship between strategy, regeneration problems and solutions. It will examine the role of strategy in the governance of regeneration and the function of strategy as a governmental technology. Finally, the research will investigate the ways in which governance and strategy combine to produce concrete efforts to tackle deprivation. These research questions will provide an understanding of the factors which have limited the impact of past and present efforts to tackle deprivation. The findings will, therefore, be significant for future efforts of regeneration partners in Easington and in other areas characterised by industrial decline and for central government.

Improving 'best practice'

The concept of improving 'best practice' is central to this thesis and this is reflected in its prominent position in the thesis' title. The importance of improving best practice stems from the CASE context of the research outlined above and has significant

methodological implications for the work. As has already been noted, the East Durham Task Force is regarded as an example of national and international best practice, and the subsequent efforts of the East Durham LSP are also highly regarded. Given the scale of the problems that continue to face the district, however, the Council and its partners are keen to improve the impact of their regeneration activities, and this is one reason for their participation in the project. The goal of improving the District's 'best practice' is, therefore, implicit throughout the whole thesis. By analysing what has taken place in the District over the last 15 years by way of regeneration and seeking to identify the reasons for the successes and failures, the thesis will enable the District and its partners to learn from their experiences and improve future regeneration policies and practices. To this end, the thesis will contribute to the process of place based learning.

Best practice is not, however, a politically neutral term. Central government is also interested in improving 'best practice' and sharing it with other places. The transfer of best practice between places poses some significant problems for the concept of place based learning. Whilst there are no doubt lessons that can be learnt and shared between places, the uncritical transfer of best practice between places suggests that place does not matter. The thesis will, therefore, explore the extent to which government policy, in its own drive to improve best practice, balances knowledge transfer with the importance of place and place based learning.

Conclusions

This chapter set out the rationale for the thesis and highlighted the importance of the research questions to the District of Easington. Patterns of social and economic deprivation in the District have been explored and their origins in the District's distinctive industrial structure were analysed. In particular, the role of the state, through its energy, industrial and regional policies was shown to have been central in shaping the structural problems with which the District has had to deal. The District's problems stem from the almost complete dependence of the local economy on coal mining as a source of male employment, and the fragility of the manufacturing employment which the District had managed to attract in the face of mining decline. The District's problems were crystallised by the rapid and total closure of the mining

industry, which left more than 10,000 miners out of work when the final colliery closed in 1993.

Despite the implication of the state in the District's problems, efforts to tackle the legacy of the mining industry and the impact of its rapid closure have been largely undertaken by local institutions. This introduction has outlined the role of the East Durham Task Force and the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership, two consecutive local governance structures established to tackle the District's problems. The operation of these two institutions and the transition between them form the focus for the substantive research on which this thesis is based. Although considerable progress has been made in tackling the physical problems associated with the decline of mining, including dealing with derelict land and property, cleaning up the despoiled coastline and improving accessibility through road building and the provision of serviced industrial sites, this has not yet led to job creation on a scale commensurate with local need as envisaged by early regeneration strategies. In addition, only recently has policy makers' attention turned to the social deprivation associated with the decline of mining and the problems of long-term unemployment, poverty, ill health, anti-social behaviour and low levels of educational attainment which the District now faces. These themes are developed in subsequent chapters.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured as follows. The first part presents the literatures within which the research is set. Chapter two presents a critical review of the regeneration policy literature which deals with government responses to social and economic decline. A critique of government regeneration policy is developed on three levels. First, policy is analysed 'in its own terms'. Second, a social science critique of the theoretical underpinnings of government policy is developed. Third, the governmentality perspective is used to analyse regeneration policy in relation to the processes of governing. Chapter three reviews the literature on theories of the state, governance and governmentality and presents an argument for the centrality of the state in political economic analyses. The chapter lays the foundations for integrating the governance and governmentality approaches through Foucault's conceptualisation of

power and Scharpf's 'shadow of hierarchy' thesis (Scharpf, 1994). Chapter four presents the methodology which shaped the design and implementation of the research. The philosophical approach, namely critical realism, and the research methods used are explained.

Then the thesis analyses the structures which have been developed in the District to secure regeneration following the closure of the mining industry. Chapter five explores the changing patterns of governance of regeneration in the District and evaluates the extent to which these constitute a shift from government to governance as described in the literature. The East Durham Task Force and the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership are considered in turn. Chapter six re-asserts the importance of the central state in local regeneration through an exploration of Jessop's concept of meta-governance (Jessop, 2003) and technologies of government (Rose, 1999).

The final chapters focus on the regeneration strategies of the East Durham Task Force and the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership. Chapter seven analyses the formulation of regeneration strategy and the way in which problems are identified and solutions devised. Chapter eight examines the ways in which governance structures move from regeneration strategy to regeneration projects. This chapter uses Grabher's (2002) concept of project ecology to develop an understanding of the way in which governance structures shape the implementation of regeneration strategy and the impact this has for understanding of governance.

Chapter nine presents the conclusions and policy recommendations.

Images of East Durham
The following images are included to give a flavour of the District of Easington, the challenges it faces and the ways in which it has attempted to respond to these challenges.

Figure 8 A new call centre awaiting tenants, Whitehouse Point, Peterlee

Figure 9 Peterlee North West Industrial Estate - 'old' manufacturing units

Figure 10 Houses in Peterlee New Town

Figure 11 Terraced Houses, Horden

Figure 12 Aged Mine Workers' Homes, Easington Village

Figure 13 Easington Colliery Primary School in the centre of the village

Figure 14 Terraced Houses, Easington Colliery

Chapter 2

Regeneration Policy

Introduction

This chapter presents a brief outline of central government regeneration policy. This is important, since "[t]he framing of the problem, the language or discourse that is used ... determines the way in which the problem is viewed, the causes that are thought to be operative, and the policies that are thought to be appropriate." (Oatley, 2000: 89). It then explores the conceptual underpinnings of regeneration policy. A critique of the foundations of policy is developed at three levels. First, a critique of key policies is developed 'in their own terms'. The implications and limitations of policies are explored. Second, a social science critique of regeneration policy is developed which engages critically with the concepts on which policies are based. Finally, the governmentality approach is used to develop an understanding of the way in which policies are related to the processes of governing. This will form the basis for an engagement with the concept of governance in chapter three.

Trends in government approaches to regeneration

Stewart (1994) identifies the dispersal of concentrations of the population in congested and decaying urban areas to edge-of-town and new town locations in the years following the Second World War as the first phase of an identifiable urban policy. This approach was based on the belief that tackling the environmental conditions of poor urban areas would improve the lives of their inhabitants. The re-emergence of social problems in the newly constructed social housing in the 1960s and 1970s caused a re-evaluation of the nature of the urban problem. Urban policy underwent a shift in emphasis which identified social pathology as the cause of urban problems (Stewart, 1994; Lawless, 1988). This approach assumed that poverty was a limited problem generated by inadequacies operating at the levels of families and individuals and concentrated in small areas within which a definable anti-social culture could be identified – what Callaghan described as a 'deadly quagmire of need and apathy' (Callaghan, 1968 quoted in Lawless, 1988: 532). A series of small scale, experimental special programmes followed, including the Community Development

Projects (1969 – 1972) and the Inner Area Studies (1972). The reports of these projects demonstrated that there was in fact nothing unique about the areas they were studying, and that they suffered from the same problems as other inner urban areas, namely economic decline, contraction in employment opportunities and diminishing individual and community wealth (CDP, 1977 in Chatterton and Bradley, 2000; Lawless, 1988). The implications of these reports were clear: deprivation was not confined to easily identifiable areas, and the revival of the local economy was central to tackling deprivation. These findings were reflected in the Department of the Environment's 1977 White Paper 'Policy for the Inner Cities' (DoE, 1977).

The Community Development Projects

The Community Development Projects, a series of 12 action research projects established between 1969 and 1972, and eventually wound up in the late 1970s, are still regarded by many as the high water mark of community involvement in area-based regeneration initiatives (Foley and Martin, 2000). The projects were set up to empower inner city communities suffering from multiple deprivation to press for improved services and to organise self-help schemes. The projects challenged existing assumptions about the causes of deprivation and argued that poverty was inextricably linked to deep-seated changes in the political economy of inner city areas, in particular the large-scale withdrawal of private capital associated with the decline of manufacturing industries.

Conservative Urban Policy 1979 - 1997

The direction of urban policy shifted again, however, with the election of the Conservative government in 1979. The Conservatives' neo-liberal explanation of structural decline shifted the parameters of the regeneration debate. The solutions to the problems of deprivation were to be found in free-market liberalism and entrepreneurialism. Thus regeneration policy in the 1980s was characterised by property-led development (Robinson and Shaw, 1994) and included initiatives such as the Urban Development Corporations, Enterprise Zones, and City Action Teams. Furthermore, the 1980s saw the increasing centralisation of control over regeneration and reduction in the freedom of local authorities in the areas of capital and revenue

spending and housing (Lawless, 1991). The limitations of property development and the failure of 'trickle down economics' to spread the benefits of growth to the most disadvantaged were, however, implicitly recognised by the Major government with the launch of City Challenge in 1991 which sought, largely unsuccessfully, to involve the local community in regeneration projects (Nevin and Shiner, 1998). As the number of initiatives to tackle the problems of the declining urban areas proliferated in the late 1980s, the National Audit Office described the government's urban policy as "a patchwork quilt of complexity and idiosyncrasy." (NAO, 1989 in Lawless, 1991: 19). This report laid the foundations for a fundamental review of regeneration policy in the 1990s and the replacement of a large number of regeneration programmes with the Single Regeneration Budget.

The Single Regeneration Budget 1994 - 1997

The introduction of the Single Regeneration Budget in 1994 can, therefore, be seen as a response to a decade of policy which had little impact upon disadvantaged localities (Hall and Nevin, 1999). The Single Regeneration Budget promised "holistic, locally devised solutions to complex, socio-economic problems to be delivered by local, inclusive partnerships" (*ibid*: 477). It retained the broadly economic focus of earlier policies, but the emphasis shifted from development and capital grants to employment related skills, education and job prospects – what might broadly be termed 'supply side' measures. Most importantly, the Single Regeneration Budget recognised that there was a role for both local authorities and 'the community' in regeneration, although their opportunity for influence and control over the outcomes is open to question. Whereas previous regeneration policy had been targeted at least ostensibly at the areas of greatest need, the Single Regeneration Budget took the form of an open competition to which all local authorities were eligible to apply. The result has been that resources have been spread much more thinly than before, with only five out of 555 successful bids receiving funding equivalent to a City Challenge bid by 1999. This has led some to question whether a 'critical mass' of resources for regeneration is available any longer (*ibid*). The Single Regeneration Budget is one of the longest lived regeneration initiatives, and even the modifications made by the incoming New Labour administration in 1997 represent only relatively minor modifications. This continuity is all the more surprising given the Labour Party's pledge to end the

"beauty competition approach to regeneration funding" whilst in opposition (Labour Party, 1995 quoted in Hall, 2000: 10).

New Labour and the Local Government Modernisation Agenda

Regeneration policy since 1997 must be understood in the context of the local government modernisation agenda. The democratic reform of local governance has been a key priority of the New Labour government since its election in 1997. This has taken two forms. First, there has been a great deal of emphasis on the institutional reform of representative systems of local democracy designed to make decision-making processes within local authorities more transparent and accountable to local electorates. Examples include the Best Value review process and reforms to the structure of local authorities. Second, the government has placed increasing emphasis on the role of active citizens as direct participants in the politics of local service delivery. This emphasis on participatory democracy encourages citizens and communities to mobilise themselves and take on active roles in the way they are governed (DETR, 1999 quoted in Raco and Flint, 2001: 586). Reforms have sought to widen community participation in decision making processes and devolve decision making to the community level in order to increase the efficiency and accountability of service providers. Indeed the emergence of 'community' has been one of the underlying features of local state restructuring over the last 30 years (Cochrane, 1986; Hastings, 1996). The pace of this reform has accelerated since the 1997 election.

The Best Value regime

The Best Value regime is the centrepiece of New Labour's attempts to 'modernise' local government. It aims to increase the role of service users and communities by enabling local people to hold councils to account for improving the responsiveness, quality and cost-effectiveness of local services (Blair, 1998; DETR, 1998b). It aims to bring about "a fundamental shift in power and influence towards local people" giving them "a bigger say and a better deal" (DETR, 1998c: 1). These changes are brought into force by the Local Government Act 1999 which places a duty on local service providers to consult widely on all aspects of their activities with service users. Best Value authorities have to involve users, citizens and communities in reviewing

current service provision and setting future performance targets. They are required to publish Best Value Performance Plans giving details of recent performance using both national and locally developed indicators, specifying targets for year-on-year improvements in cost-effectiveness and service quality and outlining the authority's plans for achieving them. A standard set of questions has been developed which councils are obliged to use following a centrally prescribed survey methodology to produce performance indicators of 'user satisfaction' in seven key services delivered by local authorities (Foley and Martin, 2000). The Best Value regime represents a paradox insofar as it has its roots in the 'new public management' with its emphasis on efficiency, value for money, inspection and quantitative performance indicators and yet it envisages a key role for community leadership and service delivery (Geddes and Martin, 2000).

Regeneration Policy since 1997

The election of the Labour government in 1997 added new impetus to the 'turn to the community' (Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997) evident in earlier regeneration policy. The government sees the involvement of the local community as essential to the development and implementation of successful area regeneration policy (Foley and Martin, 2000). For example, the Social Exclusion Unit stated in its 1998 National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal that "it has become conventional wisdom that communities need to be involved both in designing what is to be done and in implementing it" (SEU, 1998, para. 2.3). In particular, the SEU has been critical of top-down, provider-led approaches, and its national strategy for neighbourhood renewal advocates much greater community involvement in and neighbourhood management of public services (SEU, 1998). One of the main themes of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is "reviving communities" in order to arrest, reverse and prevent the decline of deprived neighbourhoods. The strategy contains three key proposals to achieve this. First, help should be given to residents to tackle problems that threaten to undermine the community. Second, action should be taken to stimulate community activity and third, residents should be helped to get involved in turning round their neighbourhoods (SEU, 1998 quoted in Oatley, 2000: 88). The problems which the National Strategy seeks to address are framed in terms of neighbourhood, and throughout the document neighbourhood and community seem to

be used almost interchangeably. The consequence of framing the problem in terms of places or neighbourhoods is that policy solutions tend to be area-based (Oatley, 2000).

Whereas the competition-based, challenge funding programmes of the 1980s and 1990s were designed to instil a more business like approach to regeneration in local authorities, the policies and initiatives introduced by the Labour government following the election in 1997 were designed to instil a culture of more collaborative working between local service providers. They emphasise the need for statutory agencies and for the private and voluntary sectors to work with communities to address local priorities (Clarence and Painter, 1998). This is paralleled by a shift away from input-driven and market-oriented approaches and a much stronger focus on 'joined-up working', 'cross-cutting issues' and 'citizen-centred services'.

The Single Regeneration Budget 1997 – present

Despite its promise to end the "beauty competition approach to regeneration funding" whilst in opposition (Labour Party, 1995 quoted in Hall, 2000: 10) the government has held three further rounds of the Single Regeneration Budget since coming to power. The bidding guidelines for the competition have, however, been revised three times, each time placing greater importance on the role of the community. The guidelines issued for round 4, for example, stated that it was important that the scheme "encourages local people, businesses and other organisations to come together as partners" (DETR, 1998 quoted in Foley and Martin, 2000: 483). The role of the community was strengthened in the guidelines for round 5, published eight months later. Bids had to demonstrate that they had the 'wholehearted support of the local community' and had to show "how local communities have been involved in the development of the bid [and] how the partnership will ensure the local community have a say in decisions" (DETR, 1998e: 9). The guidelines for round 6 went further still, encouraging the involvement of the community at the highest level and stating that "it should not be assumed that a public sector body should necessarily lead the partnership. Consideration should be given to building the capacity of other partners, particularly those from voluntary and community sectors to enable them to do so." (DETR, 1999a: 5).

The New Deal for Communities

The government further embraced the role of the community in the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods with the launch of its New Deal for Communities in 1998. This programme, initially launched in 17 'Pathfinder' areas, was an attempt to respond to criticism of earlier regeneration policy. Its aim was to take a radical long-term approach to tackling the problems of the poorest neighbourhoods. (DETR, 1998). In order to facilitate genuine community involvement, the New Deal for Communities funding is not allocated through a competitive bidding process, and longer lead-in times are allowed for the development of 'bids' and funding is provided to support the development of proposals (Foley and Martin, 2000). Partnerships must be able to demonstrate that communities have been involved in both the selection of target areas and the development of programmes. Although the District of Easington has not been a New Deal for Communities Pathfinder, the programme demonstrates the government's commitment to 'the community' as a central element in successful regeneration and its conflation of community and neighbourhood.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Local Strategic Partnerships are a central element of the government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. They were first proposed in April 2000 by Policy Action Team (PAT) 17 – 'Joining it up locally', one of the 18 Policy Action Teams established in the wake of the Social Exclusion Unit's 1998 report "Bringing Britain Together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal" (SEU, 1998). They have a broad and poorly defined remit which ranges from improving the quality of public services in deprived areas to the promotion of economic wellbeing and environmental sustainability. The Local Government Act 2000 imposed a duty on local authorities to produce a community strategy. Government guidelines state that Local Strategic Partnerships should take the lead in producing Community Strategies. The guidelines state that the objectives of community strategies are:

- to allow local communities (based upon geography and/or interest) to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities;
- to co-ordinate the actions of the council, and of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally;

- to focus and shape existing and future activity of those organisations so that they effectively meet community needs and aspirations; and

- to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development both locally and more widely, with local goals and priorities relating, where appropriate, to regional, national and even global aims.

(ODPM, 2000)

The underlying principle behind Local Strategic Partnerships is that the failure to tackle deprivation stems from a lack of local co-ordination amongst service providers and that by achieving better co-ordination problems will be solved (SEU, 2001).

In order to deliver Neighbourhood Renewal, the government created the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, an unhypothecated grant allocated to the 88 most deprived local authority areas (identified by the Index of Multiple Deprivation), to which it allocated £900 million between June 2001 and March 2004. Unlike previous regeneration programmes, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was allocated by central government using a needs-based formula rather than by competition between deprived areas.

A critique of New Labour's Modernisation Agenda

New Labour thinking as it is embodied in the local government modernisation agenda and as it begins to unfold through programmes such as the New Deal for Communities, the Best Value regime and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, contains numerous tensions and contradictions. One of the most significant is the tension between national prescription and local flexibility and the government's growing frustration at variations in standards across the country. It is proving difficult for a government with strong centralising tendencies and a politically driven 'zero tolerance of failure' to reconcile the flexibility it believes is necessary to tackle local problems with the local variations in standards that this is likely to produce. This critique of the new localism (Walker, 2002) makes uncomfortable reading for a government which has invested so heavily in the powers of local communities to manage their local services.

In addition, the effects of a shift from representative to participatory democracy are not fully understood, and the impact of changes in the structure of local government, with the concentration of power in the hands of a smaller number of councillors with the introduction of cabinet-style local government, remains unclear.

The emphasis on greater local flexibility has, however, enabled ministers to pass to local policy makers much of the responsibility for resolving the paradoxes within the new regimes, especially the tensions between the emphasis on 'bottom-up' initiatives and the strong centralising effect of national indicators and targets (Foley and Martin, 2000). In doing so, the government has distanced itself from the responsibility for tackling particular problems. The emphasis on community development has been linked to the wider neo-liberal objective of creating active citizens to promote self-reliance, local initiative and reduced 'dependence' on the welfare state (Kearns, 1992; Lovering, 1995).

The conceptual underpinnings of regeneration policy.

Community

Community has been a central concept in sociology since the early twentieth century. The review of government policy presented above shows that New Labour's enthusiasm for community involvement in shaping local service delivery is being backed up by a number of policies to engage the community at the local level. The theoretical underpinnings of the government's commitment to community involvement, however, remain somewhat ambiguous. The government's approach has its origins in the partnership between state and civil society identified with the 'third way' (Giddens, 1998), and authors such as Pimlott (1997) and Freeden (1999) have documented the influence of communitarian thinking on the Prime Minister. This is particularly clear in the desire to recreate a sense of belonging and association to combat the rootlessness, individualism and disregard of communal obligations that are perceived to have weakened communities.

There are a number of reasons why the government is keen to involve local communities in tackling deprivation. First, communities bring 'tacit' local knowledge to policy debates and programme design which, it is hoped, will result in better decision making and improved programme outcomes which are more attuned to local needs. Second, involving the local community lends policies and programmes greater legitimacy associated with a wider sense of ownership. McArthur (1993), for example, points to increased participation as a means of generating a sense of local ownership and stewardship, which in turn increases the likelihood of communities taking a role in maintaining their neighbourhoods.

Whatever the motivation for involving the local community, the reality of policies and programmes which seek to engage with the community is often less straightforward than those policies would suggest. Evidence from previous regeneration initiatives and attempts to decentralise local services reveals the constraints on the capacities of both communities and service providers to respond in the ways envisaged by ministers and their advisers. The literature on policy implementation contains numerous examples of the failure of organisations to involve the local community in a meaningful way in partnership structures. Furthermore, community aspirations are rarely as homogenous as government policy would imply. Policies fail to recognise that communities can be deeply fragmented and highly politicised. Community representation is also a highly problematic concept for a number of reasons, all of which are glossed over by policies which seek to engage the community. First, community representatives are rarely representative of the communities on whose behalf they claim to speak. They are likely to represent the most powerful groups within the community and may be complicit in the suppression of dissent or minority views. Second, their engagement with the local state and other 'professional' partners is often problematic. Community representatives usually lack the resources of their professional counterparts to engage with policy making and implementation, both in terms of resources such as time and money and in terms of the necessary skills. Although formally recognised within partnership arrangements, it is, therefore, easy for community representatives to be sidelined by professional partners (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994 in Nevin and Shiner, 1998).

The government's approach to community is clearly based on a locality or spatial understanding of the concept. This is reflected in the use of the term 'neighbourhood' almost interchangeably with community in many policy and programme documents (for example the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders). This raises a number of questions about the appropriateness of a spatial concept of community to deliver the kind of outcomes which policy makers envisage. As will be shown below, social change may be undermining place-based communities and removing their ability to deliver the changes envisaged by the government. It also fails to engage with the criticism of previous area based strategies to tackle deprivation.

Although the government appears to favour the concept of neighbourhood in its policy making, Wallace (2001: 2165) – an insider at the Social Exclusion Unit – makes it clear that policy seeks to draw on something more than people living in the same place: "it is essential that neighbourhoods are not seen simply as places, but above all as communities". This is a clear indication that government policy sees communities and neighbourhoods as the potential basis of political organisation.

Partnership

Most commentators agree that partnership approaches now dominate regeneration and local economic development policy (Peck and Tickell, 1994; Atkinson, 1999; Lawless, 2001), even if Peck and Tickell (1994) observed that many partnerships were formed simply to secure competitively allocated funding, whether from the government or from Europe. Furthermore, partnership is "a key component of the emergent process of governance and one which suffuses the governance culture from the very generalised level of national political rhetoric, through to the detailed mechanics of policy delivery, and the allocation of funding and responsibility for addressing substantive issues at the local level" (Jones and Little, 2000: 171).

Partnership "invokes notions of efficiency, of pulling together and getting things done; it implies a meeting of minds, a pooling of resources, maybe even a bearing of souls." (Peck and Tickell, 1994: 251). Scepticism is justified, however, since "the underlying policy analysis or set of assumptions which relates the partnership

approach to successful urban regeneration has been barely articulated by the government. There is no explanation of why partnership is fundamental." (Hastings, 1996: 253). This highlights the tension between structure and process that lies at the heart of the partnership debate. Whilst "the government demands that certain *structures* involving the public, private and voluntary sectors are set up before it will release renewal funds [a]rguably what it actually seeks to tap into, however, are the benefits of partnership as a *process*." (*ibid*: 253). A common theme in critical analyses of regeneration partnerships has been the perhaps unsurprising shortfall between the unstated intended outcome of the partnership process and the output of poorly conceived partnership structures (for example Raco, 2000 on the Cardiff Bay redevelopment, Gibbs *et al*, 2001 on the Humber sub-region).

The nature of regeneration partnerships has changed as the style of regeneration has evolved over the last two decades. Initially, partnerships were formed between the public and private sectors. "Such partnerships [with the private sector] were increasingly seen by hard-pressed councils as a source of expertise, funds and possible channels of influence to central government. Indeed, by the late 1980s, demonstrating that an effective local partnership had been formed between the public and private sectors became a prerequisite for access to funding through programmes like City Challenge." (Bassett, 1996: 540). A number of authors have sought to analyse these partnerships using a variety of theoretical frameworks, including growth machine theory, urban regime theory and policy network analysis (for example, Bassett, 1996; Logan and Molotch, 1987; Lauria, 1997), although these have been largely unsuccessful once removed from their North American origins (MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999). Subsequently, partnerships have evolved to include the local community which is now a key player in efforts to bring about sustainable regeneration (Taylor, 2000).

Many of the criticisms of the partnership approach are based on the differential access to power and influence of the partners. For Atkinson (1999), the problem is created by the rules of engagement within which the partnership is established and operates. These rules of engagement are discursively created through policy documents, operating procedures and funding regulations. For example, although the bidding guidelines for Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Funding emphasise the need to

include representatives of the community in the partnership, the various policy documents associated with the bidding process, including documents expressly addressing how to involve the local community in partnerships (DETR, 1993, 1995 & 1997 in Atkinson, 1999), construct a discourse which "may also have the effect of reinforcing existing relations of domination and control, of legitimating a particular re-presentation of reality which defines what is 'reasonable' and the language in which demands can be made." (Atkinson, 1999: 70). The result is "a process of internalised self-censorship" and reflects the fact that "the discourses through which they [those involved in regeneration partnerships] think and express themselves are not neutral, that they construct problems, solutions and actions in particular ways that are congruent with existing relations of power, domination and the distribution of resources." (*ibid*: 70). In this way, existing institutional actors play a 'gatekeeper' role, controlling the access of community actors to the partnership process (Bache, 2001). These problems are particularly pertinent for excluded communities which often lack the social capital to participate effectively in regeneration partnerships (Taylor, 2000).

A critique of 'community'

The following section provides a critique of the concept of community from the social science literature. It begins with a number of definitions of the concept and outlines the limitations of these understandings when they are applied to contemporary communities. The critique developed below will then be used in subsequent chapters to interpret the evidence collected on the role of the community in regeneration policy making and implementation in Easington.

The term 'community' encompasses the broad realm of social arrangements beyond the private sphere of the home and family but more familiar than the impersonal institutions of wider society (Crow and Allan, 1994). Consequently, community is often defined in relation to state and society. The earliest uses of the term community were as a normative political ideal based on the institutional arrangements for the administration of ancient Greek and medieval European city-states. From the seventeenth century, community formed the basis of a critique of the changes in the organisation of the state. By the nineteenth century, community had come to be

associated with the quest for the perfect society (Delanty, 2003). These changes reflect an ambivalence which lies at the heart of the idea of community. On the one hand, it expresses locality and particularness – the domain of immediate social relations, the familiar and proximity. On the other hand, it suggests the universal community in which all human beings participate. Since the beginning of the modern period, writing on community has been structured by a narrative of loss and recovery of communal forms of organisation. Notions of community have been dominated by a nostalgic and romanticised view of community which is increasingly defined in opposition to both state and society.

One of the most enduring and influential writers on community was Ferdinand Tönnies (Delanty, 2003). Tönnies, writing in 1887, contrasted community as living and natural, based on a sense of belonging and a system of shared traditions amongst its members, with society which was rational and a mental product based on relations of exchange. For Tönnies, with the arrival of modernity, society replaced community as the primary focus of social relations as the principles of society became progressively established in communal life.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, community was understood in terms of local social relations. This gave rise to the spatial concept of community which has remained dominant ever since. The community studies of the middle decades of the twentieth century brought together the cultural conception of community developed by social anthropologists, based on shared meaning and identity, with sociologists' interest in social organisation, interaction and social practices. The result has been the general acceptance of a threefold classification which, with slight variations, has been proposed by a number of authors (Willmott, 1986; Lee and Newby, 1983 both in Crow and Allan, 1994). Without any implied hierarchy, this classification ranges from shared residence in a particular place, through shared interests to a more emotional shared bond, sometimes referred to as communion. These features of community may be present either individually or in combination. This classification is less than satisfactory, since it leads to a romanticised view of the community which lends support to the 'loss of community' thesis. This has only been possible because of the tendency of researchers to "romanticise the community they study, finding and reporting only solidarity and

cooperation and ignoring the schism and conflict in social life, highlighting the positive, celebrated sides of communities and neglecting their coercive and oppressive aspects" (Crow and Allan, 1994: 37).

Early community studies focused on isolated, rural settlements such as mining villages and well defined urban areas such as Bethnal Green (Frankenberg, 1969) which offered the possibility to study local social relations in their entirety. These early studies were subject to increasing criticism as community studies moved on to larger settlements and began to be influenced by urban sociology. Stacey (1969), for example, working in Reading, observed that "physical proximity does not always lead to the establishment of social relations" (Stacey, 1969: 144), and proposed a number of factors which were likely to influence the formation of community in an area, including the degree of heterogeneity in the local population and the rates of inward and outward mobility. Suttles (1972) further undermined the idea that communities are natural and that social order and stability emerges automatically, and instead proposed that communities are created and require the active involvement of individuals and groups in their construction.

The development of the network approach to the study of social relations in the late 1970s further undermined the concept of place-based communities. The network conception of community stresses relationships and flows of activities, and "does not take as its starting point putative solidarities – local or kin." (Wellman, 1979 in Crow and Allan, 1994). This opens up the opportunity for communities that are no longer connected with place, often labelled communities of interest.

Despite the mounting challenges to the concept of place-based community from the work of Stacey and the network theorists which showed that social relations extended far beyond the place where a person lives, place-based communities remain pre-eminent in current work on community, and especially in the conceptual foundations of policy making. The 'place based' understanding of community has such a strong hold and yet is open to such criticism that "the concept of community no longer refers to any useful abstraction" (Stacey, 1969: 134). Rather, community as a concept is dead, if it ever existed at all (Bauman, 2001). If the concept of community is to be useful, we must abandon its romantic, nostalgic attachment to place. The

'traditional', place-based community of mutual support and reciprocity has been undermined by the changing nature of work and social relations. This form of community, which Bauman calls 'ethical community', is rarely, if ever, to be found any more. It has been replaced by a temporary, issue-based, transitory community which can come together and coalesce around a single issue and then disband as its members return to their individual lives. Such 'aesthetic communities' come together to oppose developments, campaign for improvements to local services or protest about the housing of paedophiles in their midst. They are united by a single issue. Such a conception of community has profound implications for government policy. Community does not exist as a resource that can be tapped into at will, but as a force which is brought to life by particular issues or events and then fades away – probably leaving little trace of its existence.

The concept of community on which government policy is based is clearly highly problematic. It is firmly rooted in place even though numerous studies have suggested that place is no longer central to the way in which people's social relationships are structured. Even the notions of solidarity on which the concept is based have been called into question by authors who identify the increasing individualisation of society (Bauman, 2001). The governmentality approach, however, offers an insight into why the concept remains so useful in government policy even when it is apparently so problematic.

A critique of community from the governmentality approach

Nikolas Rose has observed that, in a reversal of Tönnies 1887 formulation, "'The social' may be giving way to 'the community' as a new territory for the administration of individual and collective existence...[This] is indicative of a mutation... in the ways of thinking and acting that used to be conducted in a 'social' language. These new political languages are embodied in the ways in which a whole series of issues are problematized – made amenable to authoritative action *in terms of* features of communities and their strengths, cultures, pathologies." (Rose, 1996: 331).

The governmentality approach identifies community as a potential solution to the problems of government. This is demonstrated by the use of 'community' since the

mid-1960s as a diagram for the reorganisation of publicly provided, bureaucratically organised and professionally staffed services, including community care, community correction, community policing and much more (Rose, 1999). Community, therefore, is "a fertile ground for experimentation in the development of political technologies of government: it was a space in which one could observe the hybridisation of political power and other non-political forms of authority in a variety of attempts to enframe and instrumentalize the forces of individuals and groups in the name of the public good." (Burchell, 1991: 144). This reflects a deep-seated paradox in the concept of community, namely that "On the one hand, [community] appears as a kind of natural, extra-political zone of human relations; and this 'natural-ness' is not merely an ontological claim but implies affirmation, a positive evaluation. On the other, this zone is identified as a crucial element in particular styles of political government, for it is on its properties and on activities within it that the success of such political aspirations and programmes depend." (Rose, 1999: 167).

For Rose (1999), the community through which government is to be re-invented is community as a moral field binding persons into durable relationships, what Etzioni has described as "a web of affect-laden relationships among a group of individuals, relationships that often criss-cross and reinforce one another… and second, a measure of commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, and a shared history and identity – in short to a particular culture" (Etzioni, 1997 in Rose, 1999: 172). Government through community (Rose, 1999: 176) "does not involve the colonisation of a previous space of freedom by control practices; community is actually instituted in its contemporary form as a sector of government… In the institution of community, a sector is brought into existence whose vectors and forces can be mobilized, enrolled, deployed in novel programmes and techniques which encourage and harness active practices of self-management and identity construction, of personal ethics and collective allegiances." Significantly, Rose observes that "[o]ver the second half of the twentieth century, a whole array of little devices and techniques have been invented to make communities real." (*ibid*: 189).

Conclusions

This chapter has presented an outline of government regeneration policy in England since the 1960s. A number of trends in regeneration policy were identified, and particular attention was drawn to the engagement of the community in regeneration. Although popular in the 1960s and early 1970s, community engagement fell out of fashion during the 1980s when government attention was focussed on property-led regeneration, reflecting its neo-liberal understanding of the causes of poverty and deprivation. Government policy returned to the community in the 1990s, tentatively at first, and, following the election of the New Labour government in 1997, community became the central plank of government regeneration policy.

Community, however, is a highly problematic concept. This chapter has critically engaged with the conceptual underpinnings of government regeneration policy. Although policy is only weakly grounded in any form of conceptualisation, the use of community was shown to be particularly problematic. Community was shown to be a highly contested concept, often coloured by a sense of loss and the need to recreate former relationships which might never have existed. Evidence was presented which suggested that community might no longer exist, particularly in the place-based form on which government policy is based. In this context, it should not be surprising that government policy does not deliver the anticipated outcomes.

Finally, community was analysed from the governmentality perspective which gave an insight into the government's use of community in regeneration policy. This approach, developed in subsequent chapters, shows how the way in which government thinks about the problems it faces shapes the solutions which it attempts to implement.

Chapter 3

Governance and Governmentality

State restructuring

This research engages with contemporary debates on the recomposition and re-scaling of sub-national governance in England. This is part of a wider debate on the recomposition of political space (Keating, 1997) across Europe in which a number of authors have identified trends towards a 'hollowed out' state (Jessop, 1997), multi-level governance (Marks, 1993) and a 'three-tier system' of regulation (Tömmel, 1997). The approach taken here draws on Jessop's regulation-theoretic approach to state restructuring to explore the new geographies of governance which emerge as state capacities are reorganised both territorially and functionally. However, whereas many analyses of this era focussed on the region as the pre-eminent scale of the re-structured state, this research examines the implications of denationalisation and destatisation for the relationship between central and local government.

Regulation theoretic accounts of state restructuring stress the socially embedded, socially regularised nature of economic activities, organisations and institutions (Jessop, 1990). The emergence of regulation theory is closely linked to the crisis in Atlantic Fordism and the search for a new social mode of economic regulation (Jessop, 1995). A Fordist regime of accumulation, founded upon the virtuous circle of mass production and mass consumption and regulated by Keynesian macroeconomic policies whereby national growth was redistributed towards social welfare and regional policies to help integrate depressed spaces is widely considered to have been the hegemonic landscape of Western capitalism between 1945 and the early 1970s (Amin, 1994). However, by the late 1960s this Fordist 'institutional fix' ran out of regulatory steam and was no longer able to internalise the sharpening economic, socio-political and spatial tensions (Peck and Tickell, 1994). The resulting institutional meltdown (MacLeod, 1999) was accompanied by a "profound reworking of geographical scales" in the regulation of production, money, consumption and welfare (Swyngedouw, 1997: 153).

The outcome of the crisis of the national Fordist socio-spatial scalar fix has been the territorial and functional re-organisation of state capacities in an attempt to secure the conditions for continued capital accumulation. Jessop (1997) sees this as leading to the continuing movement of state power upwards to supranational regimes, downwards to local and regional levels and sideways in the form of trans-local and regional linkages. As a result, there no longer appears to be a relatively privileged level in and through which other scales are managed (Jessop, 1998). This 'relativisation of scale' and re-territorialization of state power and institutional capacity has serious implications for the ways in which cities and regions are governed.

Jessop identifies a second and equally significant trend in the contemporary restructuring of the state, namely the destatisation of the political system. This trend, often characterised as a shift from government to governance, is associated with a relative decline in the state's direct management and sponsorship of socio-economic projects and an analogous engagement of quasi- and non-state actors in a range of public-private projects. This shift is examined in detail below.

The object of enquiry of this thesis is the evolving form of governance of regeneration over the past 15 years in the District of Easington. This will be presented as an interpreted account in chapters five to eight. Such detailed concrete research is essential in order to develop a full understanding of the processes of regulation given their constitution through unevenly developed social practices (Painter and Goodwin, 1995). This will be explored further in chapter four.

Governance and governmentality are the two broad theoretical literatures within which the research on the regeneration of Easington District is set. These two bodies of work provide a means of conceptualising power and government and sensitise the research to the broad changes which many commentators have described in the relationship and balance of power between the levels of government and organisations beyond government involved in regeneration. The following chapter explores the two literatures which are subsequently critically deployed in shaping research questions and understanding the empirical evidence collected in the District.

Governance

Governance has become an important concept for narrating and/or analysing the contemporary world (Jessop, 1995). It has been used in a wide range of disciplines and has been particularly useful in analyses of political economy. The term has also gained popularity amongst a wide range of practitioners and politicians although in these contexts it is frequently used for rhetorical rather than substantive reasons (Stoker, 1998). Despite its popularity, however, governance does not operate at the level of causal analysis, nor is it a normative theory of political economic organisation (*ibid*). In contrast to regulation theory, with which governance shares many meta-theoretical assumptions, governance theories "tend to be more meso-*political* or more generically *inter-organisational* in scope. Thus they tend to examine specific sectors, localities or functional areas rather than more global systems... governance theory tends to remain at the pre-theoretical stage of critique." (Jessop, 1995: 319; emphasis in original). Despite these apparent short-comings, the governance perspective has much to offer. In particular, new approaches which incorporate Foucauldian writings on governmentality and Jessop's work on meta-governance promise a more refined understanding of the re-organisation of the state and its powers.

Heterarchy and increasing social complexity

The various approaches to governance share a rejection of the conceptual trinity of market-state-civil society. In political economy there has been "growing dissatisfaction with a rigid public-private distinction in state-centred analyses of politics and its associated top-down account of the exercise of state power." (Jessop, 1995: 310). This has been mirrored by an interest in "various forms of political co-ordination which not only span the conventional public-private divide, but which also involve 'tangled hierarchies', parallel power networks and other forms of complex inter-dependence across different tiers of government and/or different functional domains." (*ibid*: 310) Interest has been focussed on "the potential contribution of these new forms of governance to solving coordination problems in and across a wide range of specialised social systems (such as the economy, the legal system, the political system, and the health system) and in the lifeworld (or, broadly understood, civil society)." (Jessop, 2003: 1).

Governance theory arose from a paradigm crisis in the social sciences in which the demise of the period of Fordist regulation saw the taken-for-grantedness of national states, national economies and national societies as units of analysis increasingly challenged by the dialectic of globalisation-regionalisation. Furthermore, conventional binaries which had structured much social scientific thinking, such as state and civil society, market and plan, became less relevant for understanding the organisation of modern society (*ibid*). In addition, growing social complexity poses challenges for both market and hierarchy based systems of co-ordination to which governance theory promises some solutions (Jessop, 1999). As Scharpf points out "the advantages of hierarchical coordination are lost in a world that is characterised by increasingly dense, extended and rapidly changing patterns of reciprocal interdependence, and by increasingly frequent, but ephemeral, interactions across all types of pre-established boundaries, intra- and interorganisational, intra- and intersectoral, intra- and international." (Scharpf, 1994: 37). Theories of governance were one way in which analysts sought to respond to these changes and understand the emergent forms of social organisation.

The governance approach has been strongly influenced by its close linkages with changes in contemporary political organisation to the extent that "Anglo-American work on governance... was largely concerned at first with more substantive problems of effective policy making." (Jessop, 1995: 314). Practitioner interest in governance stems from its promise, however partial, temporary and provisional, to provide a solution to the crisis of state planning in the mixed economy and the failure of deregulated neo-liberal market forces (Jessop, 2003). As noted above, governance also offers the prospect of securing coordination in the face of growing social complexity.

In substantive terms, the governance approach opens up new terrain for analysis between the 'invisible hand' of uncoordinated market exchange based on the formally rational pursuit of self-interest by isolated market agents and the 'iron fist' of centralised, top-down imperative co-ordination in pursuit of substantive goals established from above (Jessop, 2003). Governance, therefore, seeks to examine heterarchy as a distinctive form of organisation between the anarchy of the market and the hierarchy of the state. Heterarchy offers the possibility to progress beyond

description and to offer analytical insight into, if not explanation of, changes in contemporary social organisation. There is, however, a danger evident in some governance writing that governance theory becomes normative and in doing so forecloses the analytic capacity of the approach. The result is what Jessop identifies as "an unfortunate celebratory tendency in some recent contributions to debates on governance (eg uncritical accounts of the potential of stakeholding, associational democracy, or learning regions)." (Jessop, 1999: 2). Following Goodwin and Painter's (1996) work on regulation theory, this dichotomy reflects the analytical and substantive elements of governance. Analytically, governance theory can sensitise investigations of political organisation to the extension of political influence beyond the traditional institutions of local government. This analytical framework can then be used to document the substantive elements of a shift from government to governance. The analytical and substantive elements of governance theory are considered in turn below.

Modalities of governance

Jessop provides a succinct description of the central elements of approaches to governance. "Governance is defined as the reflexive self-organisation of independent actors involved in complex relations of reciprocal interdependence, with such self-organisation being based on continuing dialogue and resources-sharing to develop mutually beneficial joint projects and to manage the contradictions and dilemmas inevitably involved in such situations." (Jessop, 2003: 1). As this definition implies the origins of governance approaches lie in institutional and evolutionary economics. This is key, since it is the emphasis in these approaches on the socially embedded and socially regulated nature of economic systems which gives the governance approach its analytical power. Indeed, the emphasis on the wider social environment and the embedding of the economy in the wider nexus of social institutions characteristic of these approaches are central to theories of governance. It is also clear that the processes of governance represent "a *social* means of *social* coordination" (Jessop, 1995: 317, emphasis added). This is in contrast to the regulation approach which is based on social modes of economic coordination (*ibid*). The distinctive features of the governance approach follow from this emphasis on social coordination.

Governance theories work with the paradox of organisations, institutions and systems which are both operationally autonomous from each other and structurally coupled through various forms of reciprocal interdependence (Jessop, 1999). This has led to a fruitful vein of theorizing on the modalities of governance, including Scharpf's exploration of the usefulness of game-theoretic models for the explanation of real-world interactions in complex institutional settings (Scharpf, 1994) and Jessop's three levels of embedded social organization and their corresponding three distinctive forms of governance (Jessop, 1999). Thus, for Jessop, governance can be usefully examined at three levels in terms of interpersonal networking and the social embeddedness of interpersonal relations, inter-organisational negotiation and the institutional embeddedness of inter-organisational relations, and inter-systemic coordination and the 'societal' embeddedness of functionally differentiated institutional orders (Jessop, 1999). These three levels of governance each have their own preconditions and are also related in 'tangled hierarchies' (*ibid*) such that lower levels are constrained by higher levels yet simultaneously help to shape them. Kooiman (2003) has written extensively on the sociology of the interactions between different societal and political actors which constitute governance.

The role of the state and the shadow of hierarchy

Perhaps the most valuable contribution to governance debates has been that of Fritz Scharpf (1994). Whilst still primarily concerned with the modalities of governance, his approach is nevertheless sufficiently sensitive to the objects of governance to provide a new and fruitful direction to the governance approach. Scharpf's work on structurally embedded self-coordination, for example, has been developed by Jessop through his work on meta-governance (eg Jessop, 2003). Having revealed the limitations of both hierarchy and heterarchy through the abstract deployment of game theory, Scharpf draws on his study of policy-making in the German ministerial bureaucracy to argue that "many of the limitations of negotiated coordination will be overcome, or at least extended, when negotiations are in fact embedded within hierarchical or network structures" (Scharpf, 1994: 37). This is significant since it brings the state back into theories of governance. There is an unfortunate tendency in the literature to consider governance as being coordination beyond the state, especially amongst those more descriptive studies which frame themselves around a

shift from government to governance. As Jessop notes, governance is not a neutral third term in the sequence market-hierarchy-governance (Jessop, 2003). Rather it is another meeting ground for the balance between market and state (hierarchy) to be contested.

Scharpf's work, neatly encapsulated in the phrase 'self-coordination in the shadow of hierarchy' (Scharpf, 1994: 37), shows the importance of the state in governance even when it is not an active participant in the processes of self-coordination. This takes two forms. First there is the contingent insertion of governance mechanisms into the state system. The state is likely to retain control of access to the institutional support and resources needed to pursue reflexively arrived at objectives. As government and governance mechanisms operate on different temporal and spatial scales, success at one scale may depend on what happens at another – an area where the members of the heterarchy may have little control (Jessop, 2003). Second, and more significantly, "the state will often have defined (or even created) the groups and corporate actors whose agreement will be required, and the procedures through which it is to be obtained" (Lindberg and Campbell, 1991 in Scharpf, 1994: 41). This is the basis of Jessop's theory of meta-heterarchy (Jessop, 2003) and has strong resonance with Foucauldian work on governmentality (discussed below). For Jessop, meta-heterarchy involves "the organisation of the conditions of self-organisation by redefining the framework for heterarchy or reflexive self-organisation (Jessop, 2003: 6). This conceptual framework is deployed by Whitehead in an analysis of the governance of the Single Regeneration Budget in the West Midlands in which he demonstrates the role of central government in the governance of local regeneration (Whitehead, 2003).

Governance is increasingly seen as a potential solution to both market and state failure. This is particularly the case in the context of regeneration where complex governance arrangements have been initiated by the state in response to the failure of market mechanisms and previous state-managed solutions. Failure, however, is the most likely outcome of governance itself (Malpas and Wickham, in Jessop, 2003). This is only to be expected, since "failure is a central feature of all social relations: 'governance is necessarily incomplete and as a necessary consequence must always fail.'" (*ibid*: 5). Jessop cites policy cycles and changes of government as evidence of

responses to the failure of particular modes of governance. He argues that governance success may be limited, partial and localised, and consequently governance needs to be approached with requisite irony, implemented with requisite variety and undertaken in a reflexive manner if it is to fulfil expectations.

The analytical framework described above has been widely used to examine a purported substantive shift from local government to local governance. Goodwin and Painter (1996) observed the diminishing power base of local government as spending powers and priorities were increasingly transferred to central government. Johnston and Pattie (1996: 672) identified a "wide range of other actors, institutional and individual, private and voluntary and public sector, which are involved in regulating a local economy and society." The shift from government to governance and the rupture with previous forms of organisation that this binary implies has not gone uncontested, however. Imrie and Raco (1999) argue that there are significant continuities between 'new' and 'old' forms of governance. This view was hotly contested by Ward (2000). The substantive concerns of governance theory are unsurprising given the nature of the majority of empirical work on local governance. Perhaps inspired by American work on growth coalitions and growth machines, much empirical research in the UK has focused on the economic development of large cities. Imrie and Raco (1999), for example, studied Urban Development Corporations in Cardiff and Sheffield. Ward (2000) used evidence from the 'contest' between Leeds, Manchester and Birmingham to become England's 'second city'.

Limits to governance

While these studies contribute to what Stoker identifies as "the value of the governance perspective in its capacity to provide a framework for understanding changing processes of governing" (Stoker, 1998: 18) they remain overwhelmingly institutionally focussed and can, therefore, only provide a partial understanding of the changes taking place in the local state and its relation to the national state. An alternative theoretical approach is required in order to move beyond this institutional impasse and to begin to understand *how* the substantive changes identified by the governance approach are related to changes in state power and the relationship between the central and local state. This is provided by the growing body of writing

on governmentality. Jessop (1995) makes a brief reference to the potential of Foucauldian writings on the intersection of technologies of power and technologies of the self to contribute to an understanding of governance. His writings of meta-heterarchy (Jessop, 2003), along with those of Scharpf (1994) are rich in governmental overtones. The following section examines the implications of Foucault's rejection of top-down analyses of state power for an understanding of central-local state relations and the restructuring of the local state.

Meta-governance

For Jessop, the need for structures of meta-governance is based on the inevitable failure of all modes of governance – markets, states and heterarchies. Failure is a routine and inevitable feature of everyday life, which is inevitably full of contingency and surprise. Furthermore, Kooiman (1993) observed that governance needs to be dynamic, complex and varied in order to respond to the contingency and complexity of social relations. As governance becomes increasingly complex, 'meta-structures' of interorganisational coordination become increasingly important. Jessop explores these meta-structures through his concept of meta-governance.

Jessop defines meta-governance as the governance of governance. It involves the organisation of the conditions for governance in its broadest sense (Jessop, 2003). Jessop identifies four different types of meta-governance broadly corresponding to three different types of governance (market, hierarchy and heterarchy) and one over-arching form of coordination. First, meta-exchange involves the reflexive redesign of individual markets and/or the reflexive reordering of relations among two or more markets by modifying their operation and articulation. Second, meta-organization involves the reflexive redesign of organisations, the creation of intermediating organisations, the reordering of inter-organisational relations and the management of organisational ecologies. Third, meta-heterarchy involves the organisation of the conditions of self-organisation by redefining the framework for heterarchy or reflexive self-organisation. Finally, true meta-governance involves re-articulating the different modes of governance themselves.

Elements of all four aspects of meta-governance are relevant in interpreting the changes taking place in East Durham. Whilst meta-exchange might appear to be the least relevant to the organisation of inter-organisational arrangements in the District it can nevertheless be observed in surprising places. This is particularly the case given the infusion of market logics into public services. The changes taking place in the management of public sector housing in the District, along with attempts to 'revitalise' the private housing market are one example of meta-exchange taking place. Examples of meta-organisation are more obvious. The creation of the LSP itself as an intermediating organisation, along with its plethora of sub-groups and associated partnerships, represents an attempt at the reordering of inter-organisational relations. The introduction of the LSP could be seen as no less than the "redesign, re-scaling and adaptation of the state apparatus... and the manner in which it is embedded in the wider political system." (Jessop, 2003: 6). The distinction between meta-organisation and meta-heterarchy is difficult to delimit. This distinction is perhaps best understood through the insights into advanced liberal rule presented by the governmentality approach. Indeed Jessop's description of meta-heterarchy as the "organisation of the conditions of self-organisation" has distinctly Foucauldian overtones and is reminiscent of Foucault's description of government as "the conduct of conduct" (Foucault, 1982). In the case of the LSPs, meta-organisation reflects the fact that local authorities effectively had no choice in the decision to introduce the new partnership structures, at least in the 88 areas receiving Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money, whereas meta-heterarchy reflects the structured freedom given to the new partnerships to shape their own organisations. This freedom has, nevertheless, been circumscribed by the requirements that the new partnerships meet certain criteria specified by the government and are subjected to a process of accreditation (see Figure 15 below), emphasising the role of the government in organising the conditions of self-organisation. Finally, taking a longer-term view, meta-governance has been central in shaping approaches to regeneration over the last two decades. This is reflected in the change in emphasis between market-led, property driven approaches to attempts at regeneration that are pursued through the public sector and, lately, through the community (see below).

Figure 15 Accreditation Criteria for LSPs

Accreditation will depend on LSPs demonstrating that they are:

1. Strategic

they are effective, representative and capable of playing a key strategic role

2. Inclusive

they actively involve all the key players, including the public, private, community and voluntary sectors

3. Action focussed

they have established genuine common local priorities and targets and agreed actions and milestones leading to demonstrable improvements against measurable milestones

4. Performance managed

members have aligned their performance management systems, criteria and processes to that of the LSP

5. Efficient

they reduce, not add to, the 'bureaucratic burden'

6. Learning and developmental

they build on best practice from successful partnerships by drawing on experiences of regional structures and national agencies

(Source: DETR, 2001: 19)

Jessop observed that "governments play a major and increasing role in all aspects of meta-governance: they get involved in redesigning markets, in constitutional change and in the juridical re-regulation of organisational forms and objectives, in organizing the conditions for self-organisation and, most importantly, in colliberation." (Jessop, 2003: 6). With central government playing such a pivotal role, it is reasonable to say that governance occurs "in the shadow of hierarchy" (Scharpf, 1994: 41). Jessop outlines a number of ways in which the centre fulfils its role in the process of meta-governance. These include "providing the ground rules for governance and the regulatory order in and through which governance partners can pursue their aims; they ensure the compatibility or coherence of different governance mechanisms and regimes; they act as the primary organizer of the dialogue among policy communities;

they deploy a relative monopoly of organisational intelligence and information with which to shape cognitive expectations; they serve as a 'court of appeal' for disputes arising within and over governance; they seek to re-balance power differentials by strengthening weaker forces or systems in the interests of system integration and/or social cohesion; they try to modify the self-understanding of identities, strategic capacities and interests of individual and collective actors in different strategic contexts and hence alter their implications for preferred strategies and tactics." (Jessop, 2003: 6) Of all the tactics of meta-governance deployed by the centre, the last is the most interesting since it challenges current conceptions of government. It is based on new ways of thinking about government and power which extend beyond the state. In particular, it uses Foucault's distinctive conceptualisation of power as something positive and technical, rather than more traditional definitions which see power as negative and juridical (Foucault, 1982). A renewed understanding of power as taking these forms is central to understanding the role of the contemporary state. This is explored below through the concept of governmentality.

Governmentality

Governmentality has become an increasingly popular theme in work which has engaged with the operation and restructuring of the state (eg MacKinnon, 2000, 2003; Painter, 2002; Raco, 2003). In addition, there is a wide body of literature in the social sciences which has deployed the governmentality approach to develop a distinctive understanding of government (eg Miller & Rose, 1990; Rose, 1996, 1999, 2000; Rose & Miller, 1992). Whilst this work can be characterised as sharing a broadly similar approach to the diverse range of problems with which it has engaged, it does not constitute a 'Foucauldian' stance (Dean, 1999). There is no Foucauldian governmental theory of the state. Rather, governmentality is a distinctive *method* for the study of power and government. Unlike work on governance, the governmentality approach is not a sociology of rule. It is not concerned with the actual relations of authority and domination existing between different groups or levels of government (Dean, 1999). The governmentality approach addresses questions of how we think about governing. In the sense in which the term was used by Foucault, governmentality refers to the "deliberations, strategies, tactics and devices employed

by authorities for making up and acting upon a population and its constituents to ensure good and avert ill." (Rose, 1996: 328). These themes will be developed below.

Foucault developed the concept of governmentality in a series of lectures delivered at the Collège de France in 1977 – 8 (Foucault, 1991). The concept reflects Foucault's desire to "cut off the king's head in political theory" and to develop a political philosophy that is not erected around the problems of sovereignty, nor therefore around problems of law and prohibition (Foucault, 1980, cited in Rabinow, ed, 1984). The approach, therefore, has provided a valuable starting point to develop new conceptualisations of power and rule (Dean, 1999) and for reframing political thought (Rose, 1999) which have profound implications for our understanding of the restructuring of the state. It is worth reiterating, however, that work on governmentality inspired by Foucault's writings shares a distinctive method rather than developing a coherent theory of the state. This method is characterised by its empirical approach to the subjects of study (Rose, 1999). Indeed, Rose argues that the concepts of governmentality are "more important for what they do than what they mean. Their value lies in the way in which they are able to provide a purchase for critical thought upon particular problems in the present." (*ibid*: 9).

The concept of governmentality is based on Foucault's distinctive work on the science of police which developed in various parts of Europe from the seventeenth century. The defining feature of his work was the centrality of thought and knowledge in informing the activity of governing. Foucault examined the ways in which knowledge, expertise, strategies, means of calculation and rationalities were transformed through thought and subsequently operationalised by governments in order to govern. Through his genealogical research, he showed how the practices of government, shaped by thought and deliberation, ultimately gave rise to particular forms of truth. The term 'governmentality' which Foucault used to describe these processes reflects the fusion of 'government' and 'mentality' (Dean, 1999: 16).

Foucault's understanding of government is central to his concept of governmentality. Foucault described government as "the conduct of conduct" (Foucault, 1982 in Dean, 1999: 10). It is the attempt to shape human conduct for specific ends based on a particular rationality. This could, of course, take many different forms. Liberal

modes of government are distinguished by trying to work through the freedom or capacities of the governed. Liberal ways of governing thus often conceive the freedom of the governed as a technical means of securing the ends of government (Dean, 1999). Government, therefore, requires the deployment of knowledge and expertise to structure the field of possible action. Studies of governmentality are interested in thought as it is embedded within programmes for the direction and reform of conduct, as it becomes linked to and is embodied in technical means for the shaping and reshaping of conduct in practices and institutions. To analyse mentalities of government is to analyse thought made practical and technical (*ibid*). An analytics of government assumes that discourses on government are an integral part of the workings of government rather than simply a means of its legitimation and that government is accomplished through multiple actors and agencies rather than a centralised set of state apparatuses. Regimes of practices, the organised practices through which we are governed and through which we govern ourselves, give rise to and are informed and reshaped by various forms of knowledge and expertise, such as medicine, criminology, social work, therapy, pedagogy and so on. Such forms of knowledge define the objects of such practices (the criminal, the unemployed, the mentally ill etc), codify appropriate ways of dealing with them, set the aims and objectives of practice, and define the professional and institutional locus of authoritative agents of expertise (*ibid*). Regimes of practices are associated with programmes of government - deliberate and relatively systematic forms of thought that endeavour to transform those practices in order to achieve the ends of government. Studies of governmentality seek to understand how the processes of thought involved in the operation of government interact with, shape and deploy regimes of practices. This reflects Foucault's concern with the overvaluation of the notion of the state in modern politics. He suggested that the state possesses neither the unity nor the functionality ascribed to it, rather the state is but a 'composite reality' and a 'mythicized abstraction'. For Foucault, "perhaps what is important is not the étatisation (state domination) of society, but the governmentalisation of the state" (Foucault, 1991: 103).

The governmentality approach is concerned with the technical aspects of government – the means, mechanisms, procedures, instruments, tactics, techniques, technologies and vocabularies by which authority is constituted and rule accomplished. These

technologies of government seek to translate thought into the domain of reality and establish devices for acting upon the world. 'Knowing' an object in such a way that it can be governed is more than a purely speculative activity: it requires the invention of procedures of notation, ways of collecting and presenting statistics, the transportation of these to centres where calculations and judgements can be made and so forth. It is through such procedures of inscription that the domains of 'governmentality' are made up, that objects such as the economy, the enterprise, the social field and the family are rendered in a particular conceptual form and made amenable to intervention and regulation (Miller and Rose, 1990). Furthermore language is an intellectual technology – it provides a mechanism for rendering reality amenable to certain kinds of action. Describing a world such that it is amenable to having certain things done to it involves inscribing reality into the calculations of government through a range of material and rather mundane techniques. The events and phenomena to which government is to be applied must be rendered into information – written reports, drawings, pictures, numbers, charts, graphs, statistics. This information must be of a particular form – stable, mobile, combinable and comparable. This enables pertinent features of the domain to be literally re-presented in the place where decisions are to be made about them (*ibid*). Information in this sense is not the outcome of a neutral recording function. It is itself a way of acting upon the real, a way of devising techniques for inscribing it in such a way as to make the domain in question susceptible to evaluation, calculation and intervention (*ibid*).

The links with work on governance are clear when we consider another aspect of governmentality – the mechanisms which link the conduct of individuals and organisations to political action. In advanced liberal democracies, indirect mechanisms of rule, or what can be termed, after Latour (1987), "government at a distance", are particularly important. The self-regulating capacities of subjects, shaped and normalized in large part through the powers of expertise, have become key resources for modern forms of government (Miller and Rose, 1990). The process of government becomes one of trying to shape, sculpt, mobilise and work through the choices, desires, aspirations, needs, wants and lifestyles of individuals and groups (Dean, 1999). Government is an activity that shapes the field of action and therefore attempts to shape (but does not constitute) freedom (*ibid*). The links with Jessop's concept of 'meta-heterarchy' and Scharpf's 'shadow of hierarchy' are clear and

should provide evidence to further understandings of both governance and governmentality debates.

A wide range of work has been undertaken in the field of political economy using the governmentality approach. One of the most significant contributions was that by Rose (1996) on community. Rose argued that "the social, as a plane of thought and action, has been central to political thought and political programmes since the mid-nineteenth century [and]... that while themes of society and concerns with social cohesion and social justice are still significant in political argument, the social is no longer a key zone, target and objective of strategies of government... 'The social' may be giving way to 'the community' as a new territory for the administration of individual and collective existence...[This] is indicative of a mutation... in the ways of thinking and acting that used to be conducted in a 'social' language. These new political languages are embodied in the ways in which a whole series of issues are problematized – made amenable to authoritative action *in terms of* features of communities and their strengths, cultures, pathologies." (Rose, 1996: 327). This shows the centrality of thought in the processes of government. Rose goes on to demonstrate how a whole range of problems which were previously conceptualised in terms of 'the social' are now understood in terms of community. Community becomes governmental when it is made technical (Rose, 1996), and the implications of this can be seen in a whole range of programmes from welfare to urban regeneration.

MacKinnon (2000, 2002) has also used the governmentality approach to study local economic governance in Scotland. He demonstrated how governmental technologies, including budgetary management, audit and targeting, are instrumental in giving the central state the capacity to shape local institutional practice (MacKinnon, 2000). He also investigated the way in which community action and local involvement in economic governance is mediated by local and regional agencies as a result of the tensions created by centrally imposed managerial technologies, such as targeting and financial controls, designed to ensure that local agencies are accountable to (central) government (MacKinnon, 2002). Raco (2003) used the governmentality approach to study Scottish devolution and the ways in which the government sought to mobilize expertise and knowledge in the form of the business community in support of its

devolution objectives, and also the way in which elements of the business community used similar processes to shape the government's agenda.

Conclusions

This chapter has engaged with debates on governance, meta-governance and governmentality. It has presented an outline of the work which has been undertaken from these perspectives in the areas of economic development and regeneration. This final section sets out the approach to governance used in the remainder of this thesis to interpret the regeneration of the former East Durham coalfield. Then it sets out the way in which the governmentality approach adds to the analysis and extends earlier work on governance.

Governance was shown to be a broad term encompassing many different forms of inter-organisational interaction. Indeed some authors have questioned the continuing usefulness of the term given the wide range of circumstances in which it has been deployed. The approach taken here follows Jessop (2003) by adopting a relatively narrow definition of governance which focuses attention on how governance arrangements differ from more traditional forms of organisation which could be characterised as govern*ment*. Governance, then, is taken to be "the reflexive self-organization of independent actors involved in complex relations of reciprocal interdependence, with such self-organisation being based on continuing dialogue and resource-sharing to develop mutually beneficial joint projects and to manage the contradictions and dilemmas inevitably involved in such situations." (Jessop, 2003: 1) This approach has a number of benefits. First, its emphasis on reflexivity in inter-organisational relationships allows us to distinguish between partnership arrangements which have been imposed from above or adopted for pragmatic grant-related reasons and remain shallow or purely edifice and inter-organisational relationships which are deeper and involve some degree of change in the organisations involved. Secondly, the notion of continuing dialogue and managing contradictions stresses the long-term nature of the relationships of governance and again allows us to distinguish governance from temporary forms of collaboration around isolated projects (see chapter eight).

Metagovernance is an equally important concept for interpreting the changes taking place in East Durham. Metagovernance approaches acknowledge that the central state plays an important role in local governance. The central state's role in metagovernance stems from the inevitable failure of all modes of social and economic coordination – state, market and hierarchy – and the need for meta-structures of interorganisational coordination in order to secure the conditions for continued governance in its broadest sense. The state fulfils this role in a number of ways, for example by defining (or creating) the groups which participate in local governance and the structures through which they interact and, more fundamentally, through "the organisation of the conditions of self-organisation" (Jessop, 2003: 6) The governmentality approach was used to develop these ideas.

The governmentality approach offers new ways of thinking about power which provide insights into the role of the central state in local governance. Combining Foucault's oft-cited understanding of government as 'the conduct of conduct' and his rejection of top-down, negative, juridical concepts of power in favour of an approach which sees power as something positive and technical (Foucault, 1982 in Dean, 1999), the governmentality approach allows an investigation of *how* the central state influences local governance. In particular, the governmentality approach provides a de-centralised understanding of power which allows us to identify the ways in which the state engages in local governance through its attempts to "try to modify the self-understanding of identities, strategic capacities and interests of individual and collective actors in different strategic contexts and hence alter their implications for preferred strategies and tactics." (Jessop, 2003: 6). The governmentality approach, therefore, provides the tools to uncover the role of the central state in local governance, even when it is not formally engaged in local governance arrangements. In doing so, the governmentality approach furthers our understating of the role of the state by drawing attention to the tactics, techniques and practices by which it is able to cast its shadow over local governance.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology which informed the formulation of the research questions, the undertaking of the research and the analysis of the evidence gathered. The research was undertaken in the broad framework of critical realism (Sayer, 1992, 2000). Following Sayer (1992) the chapter begins with an outline of the central ontological and epistemological claims of critical realism and their implications for the conceptualisation and theorisation of the objects of the research. The chapter then addresses the critical realist approach to method in social research, and in particular the relationship between concrete and abstract research. This provides the basis to further develop the research questions introduced in chapter one, and to explore the implications of the CASE context of this particular research project. Finally the chapter presents the research methods used to collect and analyse the evidence which formed part of the empirical stages of the project.

Critical Realism

The methodology used for the research is one of critical realism (Sayer, 1992, 2000). This approach was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, the model of causation and mode of explanation characteristic of realism was considered particularly appropriate for the objects of the research. Secondly, the distinction between concrete and abstract research and the potential for subsequent recombination of these two elements in the development of understanding was considered particularly appropriate given the nature of the research questions and the CASE context of the project.

Ontology and epistemology

Critical realism's foundational ontological tenet concerns the independence of the world from our thoughts about it. This distinguishes critical realism from empirical realism, or empiricism, which identifies the real with the empirical. An important

implication of this is that critical realist knowledge is fallible. Furthermore, knowledge is unavoidably conceptually-mediated and theory-laden since it is embedded in social practices.

In addition to distinguishing between the world and our experience of it, critical realism also distinguishes between the real, the actual and the empirical. As will be shown below, this is central to the critical realist approach to the conceptualisation of objects. The real refers to whatever actually exists, regardless of whether it is an empirical object for us, or whether we have an adequate understanding of its nature. The real is the realm of objects, their structures and powers. Much critical realist conceptualisation involves attempts to identify the structures and causal powers of the objects identified in the research. Implicit in this is that there is both necessity and possibility, or potential, in the world – things which must happen and things which could happen given the nature of the objects involved. The actual refers to what happens when the powers of objects are activated. The empirical is the domain of experience and may refer to either the real or the actual. The relationship between the empirical and the real or the actual can be based on either the criteria of observability (the ability to observe directly that which exists) or causality (observable effects which can only be explained as the products of unobservable entities (Collier, 1994 in Sayer 2000)). Critical realism, therefore, has a stratified ontology. The nature of the objects present at a given time constrains and enables what could happen but does not pre-determine what will happen. The powers of objects in the real may be activated in the production of the actual, or they may remain dormant. In addition, critical realism argues that the world is characterised by emergence – the conjunction of two or more features of objects gives rise to phenomena which have properties which are irreducible to those of their constituents, even though the latter are necessary for their existence.

Causation

Critical realism is not a nomothetic approach to social science. Causation is not understood on the model of regular and repeated successions of events. What causes something to happen has nothing to do with the number of times it has been observed to happen before. Explanation depends instead on identifying causal mechanisms and

how they work, and discovering if they have been activated and under what conditions. The critical realist model of causation is based on the world having ontological depth: events arise from the workings of mechanisms which derive from the structures of objects, and they take place within geo-historical contexts.

Context plays a significant role in the critical realist view of causation. The same mechanism can produce different outcomes according to the context in which it operates. Context refers to the spatio-temporal relations of an object with other objects which have their own causal powers and liabilities and which may trigger, block or modify its action. Explanation must, therefore, take account of contingent necessity – the interaction of two objects which are contingently related.

Finally, it is necessary to note the interpretive or hermeneutic dimension of critical realism. Critical realism acknowledges that social phenomena are intrinsically meaningful, and that meaning is constitutive of phenomena and not simply externally descriptive of them. Interpretive understanding, therefore, is central to critical realism since meaning must be *understood* and cannot be measured or counted. Social science operates in a double hermeneutic in which the researcher must enter the hermeneutic circle of the researched. The distinguishing features of a critical realist approach to these issues are the ability of 'reasons' or understanding to act as causes (to have causal powers), the acknowledgement that communicative interaction is grounded in material settings and that social life also has a non-discursive dimension.

Critical realist method

Abstraction and structural analysis

The model of causation which characterises the realist approach views objects and social relations as having causal powers which may or may not produce regularities, and can be explained independently of them. In order to be practically-adequate, knowledge must grasp these differentiations in the world. It is necessary to individuate objects, and to characterise their attributes and relationships. Abstraction is the process of excluding those conditions which have no significant effect and focusing on those which do. Even when we are interested in wholes, we must abstract

their constituents in order to understand how they operate and interact. The emphasis, therefore, is on the qualitative nature of social objects and relations on which causal mechanisms depend.

Concrete and abstract research

Concrete research "studies actual events and objects as 'unities of diverse determinations'" (*ibid*: 88). Abstract theoretical research, on the other hand, "deals with the constitution and possible ways of acting of social objects, and actual events are only dealt with as possible outcomes." (*ibid*: 87). The relationship between concrete and abstract research is central to critical realist research methods. Understanding concrete objects involves a double movement – from concrete to abstract and back to concrete (*ibid*). The first stage involves intensive, in contrast to extensive, concrete research to identify the mechanisms, structures, events and objects which are significant for explanation. This is followed by a *process* of abstraction which isolates in thought a one-sided or partial aspect of an object for further analysis. This generates understanding of the object which can in turn be deployed to enhance understanding of the concrete. It is important to note that the distinction between concrete and abstract is not the same as that between empirical and theoretical. Whereas abstraction is a means of dividing the world into more manageable units for study, theory refers to a way of conceptualising the world. Theory, therefore, forms a central element of both the concrete and the abstract elements of research.

Causation and causal analysis

Causation concerns the explanation of what it is about an object which enables it to produce a particular change or effect. In the critical realist view, objects or relations have causal powers or liabilities. It is these ways of acting or 'mechanisms' which are implied by causation. Such mechanisms can exist whether or not they are being exercised. Causation, therefore, does not concern the relationship between two separate events, rather what an object is like and what it can do and only derivatively what it will do in any particular situation. Mechanisms exist in virtue of their object's nature – the nature of an object and its causal powers are internally related. In seeking explanation, therefore, critical realists attempt to understand what it is about an object

which enables it to produce a particular effect or change. Again, context is crucially important since whether a causal power or liability is actually activated on any occasion depends on conditions whose presence and configuration are contingent. Furthermore, when they are exercised, the actual effects of causal mechanisms will again depend on the conditions in which they work. In summary, the relationship between causal powers or mechanisms and their effects is not fixed but contingent. In addition, processes of change usually involve several causal mechanisms which may be only contingently related to one another. The effect of causal mechanisms is often unclear from empirical events, and the discovery of causal mechanisms often requires considerable effort (see below).

Explanation takes two forms. Firstly, explanation can proceed by a process of causal disaggregation whereby "events are causally explained by retroducing and confirming the existence of mechanisms, and in turn the existence of mechanisms is explained by reference to the structure and constitution of the objects which possess them." (Sayer, 1992: 236). It is important to note that this does not exclude the possibility of events being co-determined by several distinct causes. Secondly, where an event is the result of emergent powers arising from the combination of objects but irreducible to their respective powers, causal disaggregation will not work. In these circumstances explanation occurs through a process of description of the causes and enabling conditions which produce actions and may include reference to abstract theory where certain actions are relatively well understood (*ibid*). Indeed the role of abstract theory and its relationship to concrete research is particularly important for developing understanding.

Complexity Theory

Critical realism provides the conceptual and methodological tools to engage with recent debates in sociology on complexity theory (eg Byrne, 1998). Indeed complexity has "ontological and epistemological implications which make it essentially part of the realist programme of scientific understanding and enquiry." (*ibid*: 7). Critical realism's treatment of emergent properties and its sensitivity to context in particular have strong resonance with complexity theory's observation that "relationships between variables can be non-linear with abrupt switches, so the same

'cause' can produce qualitatively different kinds of effect in specific circumstances."
(Law and Urry, 2004: 401). Complexity theory makes two assumptions: first, that
there is no necessary proportionality between 'causes' and 'effects', and second, that
system effects do not result from the simple addition of individual components (*ibid*).
One consequence of this is that it is not possible to know in advance what the
outcome of actions will be. These observations seem to be particularly relevant for
the policy-related objects of this research project since they provide a framework for
investigating the interaction of the hermeneutic circles of policy makers and those
charged with implementing policy (which may or may not overlap) and the material
circumstances in which the policy is implemented which in turn may differ from the
circumstances envisaged by policy makers. The policy process rarely makes any
concessions to social complexity and complexity theory can, therefore, provide an
insight into the reasons for the failure of policy to achieve its intended outcomes.

The ontological and epistemological similarities between critical realism and
complexity theory make a detailed explanation of complexity theory unnecessary
here. The main point that I wish to draw from complexity theory is that the social
domain is characterized by complexity and this reinforces the value of the critical
realist approach in developing understanding of social phenomena.

The research questions

The main research questions were outlined at the end of chapter one. This section
specifies how the methodology of critical realism discussed above was used to
develop the research questions and shape the empirical work on which the thesis is
based. The primary research questions, which relate to the persistence of socio-
economic deprivation within the district, arise directly from the interests and practices
of the District Council. These form the basis of the concrete elements of the research.
In order to develop a better understanding of the issues raised in the concrete research
questions, they are subsequently developed through the process of abstraction into a
series of abstract research questions. This process is set out below.

In order to address the Council's question as to why deprivation remains so intense
despite the regeneration efforts of the last 15 years two further concrete research

questions were developed. First, do the organisations engaged in the regeneration of the District share an understanding of the problems faced by the District, and does their understanding enable them to develop practicable regeneration strategies? This in turn raises questions about the way in which the District's problems are identified and measured and about the conceptualisations of those problems which underpin the approach of policy makers at a range of different scales from local and regional to national and supranational. This question, therefore, lays the foundations for further concrete and abstract research questions by identifying the organisations and relationships which are significant and beginning to identify their causal powers and the mechanisms through which they may operate. The second concrete research question examines the strategies developed by a number of organisations to tackle deprivation in the District and asks whether they have the potential to have a significant impact on the District's problems. Note here that the emphasis is on the *potential* of regeneration strategies to tackle the District's problems. This is for two reasons. The first stems from the critical realist belief that objects can have potential regardless of whether or not this is activated and it should, therefore, be possible to investigate the extent of this potential independently of its activation. Secondly it allows the separate investigation of the conditions of implementation and the identification of factors and mechanisms which influence the delivery of regeneration strategy.

These concrete research questions are further developed through a number of abstract research questions which, in true critical realist fashion, isolate in thought a one-sided element of the concrete phenomena under investigation. The first abstract research question relates to the role of partnerships in securing regeneration in the District. This research question engages with debates on governance and the changing role of the state and seeks to identify the role of the different scales of state intervention in tackling deprivation. The second abstract research question investigates the role of the concept of community in regeneration and in the way in which technologies of government in general reflect the way in which the state thinks about the activity of governing. This research question draws on the governmentality debate.

An ESRC CASE Research Project

This project was undertaken in the context of the Economic and Social Research Council's CASE programme for collaborative research (Bell and Read, 1998). As outlined in chapter one, the collaborating partner was the District of Easington Council. The council's engagement stems from a longstanding relationship with the Geography Department at Durham University and a convergence of interests between key policy makers at the District Council charged with the social and economic regeneration of the District and academic researchers in the Geography Department. In line with the ESRC's guidelines, the District Council were involved in designing the original research proposal and on an ongoing basis throughout the research project in the capacity of an associate supervisor. The District Council also contributed financially to the project. The CASE context has significant implications for the design and undertaking of the research, and these are considered below.

The District Council played a central role in specifying the original research questions for the project. The Council's interests were largely policy related and addressed mainly concrete issues. All of the research questions stemmed from the Council's desire to understand why problems of deprivation remained so acute despite the considerable regeneration activity that had been undertaken in the District over the last 15 years. The methodology of critical realism presented above allowed a research project to be designed which addressed both the concrete interests of the Council and also some more abstract research questions which relate to debates in contemporary social science. Although the Council was central in shaping the initial project it has subsequently taken a 'back seat' role and allowed the project to develop without significant direction from its designated supervisor. In part this reflects changes in personnel as the individual responsible for setting up the project left the Council before the research began. The Council has, nevertheless, continued to fully support the project and has remained cooperative and helpful throughout.

One of the most beneficial aspects of the CASE context of the project has been the access to key informants, documents and meetings provided by the formal relationship with the District Council. Because the Council is internal to the research project it has not been necessary to negotiate access to these sources from scratch.

However, such a close relationship with the Council can prove to be a mixed blessing as Macmillan and Scott (2003) describe, particularly when it comes to engaging with individuals and organisations who are sceptical of, or even hostile towards, the Council. The nature of the access provided by the CASE collaborator also raises ethical questions about the relationship between researcher and researched, and these are addressed below.

Methods

Semi-structured interviews

The majority of the evidence collected to address both empirical and theoretical questions was obtained through semi-structured interviews with a range of practitioners and politicians operating within the District and beyond. A list of interviewees is included in appendix B. The model of the corporate interview proposed by Schoenberger (1991) is particularly useful in this context, since it is "more sensitive than other survey methods to historical, institutional and strategic complexity ... [and] is particularly appropriate in periods of economic and social change that challenge traditional analytical categories and theoretical principles." (Schoenberger, 1991: 180). Whilst there are obvious differences between a District Council and the type of corporation which formed the focus of Schoenberger's research, the corporate model is nevertheless appropriate for the investigation of the District of Easington Council. The corporate, semi-structured interview was a central part of my data collection since "the evidence it yields is the testimony of participants in complex, on-going processes whose material effects, but not necessarily the rationales underlying them, are captured in statistical data." (*ibid*: 181). Qualitative techniques are, therefore, the *only* way to access information which will help to understand the *why* questions behind the process which can be observed to be operating in the District and those which have shaped the District in the past. A further advantage of the corporate semi-structured interview is that it "recognises that firms [or organisations more generally] are embedded in a complex network of internal and external relationships. They are populated by individuals faced with a myriad of constraints and possibilities which are difficult... to disentangle." (*ibid*: 181). This was invaluable for the investigation of some of the more theoretical issues

addressed by the research, in particular those issues surrounding debates over governance and governmentality.

Questions exist about the validity and reliability of information obtained through semi-structured interviews. Concerns over the reliability of the information gathered stem from the scientific tradition in which the replicability of information by others is of key importance. The validity of the information produced concerns the extent to which it conforms to the 'true' reality. To a certain extent, the issue of reliability is not a problem in the District of Easington, since there are relatively few individuals involved who might 'contradict' one another. But this is to miss the point of the research. A central concern is to uncover the extent to which individuals in different organisations hold similar or competing interpretations of events, concepts, roles and responsibilities. Concerns over the validity and reliability of the data obtained from qualitative semi-structured interviews will be addressed by the rigorous techniques used in the interviews. The goal of the semi-structured interviews is a "collaborative dialogue that engages the respondent in working through the research problem" (*ibid*: 182). In this way, rather than simply proceeding mechanically through a series of question-answer pairs, the interviews will produce "a richness of detail and historical complexity ... [which] allows one to reconstruct a coherent representation of how and why particular phenomena came to be" (*ibid*: 182). They also produce a detailed understanding of the ways in which policies, problems and concepts are understood and operationalised by different actors.

A key advantage of semi-structured interviews is the opportunity they afford to investigate the meanings that interviewees attach to the questions asked and their responses. Whilst this is useful at the level of whether interviewees consider that particular questions are pertinent to the problems under discussion, or indeed whether the most significant problems have been identified, it offers more significant advantages. Central to my research questions is the problematization of a number of key terms and concepts which are often used uncritically in lay and academic discourses. The way in which terms such as 'community', 'regeneration' and 'partnership' are used by different individuals and organisations and the meanings that they attach to these terms is of central importance in addressing both the theoretical and applied research questions. A sample interview schedule is included in appendix

C. Interview schedules were written for each interviewee to reflect their particular experience and interests.

Documentary research

Documentary research also played a major role in gathering evidence to address the research questions. Documentary research and the semi-structured interviews are seen as complimentary research tools and not as a crude means of 'triangulation'. Indeed such a concept of triangulation suggests an empirical realism (Winchester, 1999 in Crang 2002) which is at odds with the critical realist approach outlined above. Documentary research will, therefore, fulfil two roles. First, documents are an important source of evidence in their own right. Documents record decisions that are taken, set out understandings of problems to be tackled and give details of the regulatory framework within which organisations operate, to name just a few examples. Secondly, document analysis played an important part in my preparation for the semi-structured interviews. As outlined above, the interviews offered the opportunity to explore the context in which documents were produced, the ways in which they were interpreted and their role in shaping the actions of organisations. Furthermore, Schoenberger points out that for the semi-structured corporate interview, "The most important interview strategy for minimizing the problems described is to be well informed about the firm and the business before the interview... Good preparation is also likely to make the interview interesting to the respondent, perhaps the key to a productive interview." (Schoenberger, 1991: 187).

The documents used in this research fall into three broad categories. Firstly there are a number of published documents, including county and district regeneration strategies, the Task Force's Programmes for Action, central government policy guidance and legislation, which form the context in which organisations are working. These were a significant source of information in themselves, but also formed the basis of interviews to investigate how they are interpreted, how they shape action and the priorities they embody. Secondly, all council meetings, Local Strategic Partnership and County Strategic Partnership meetings and the meetings of their sub-groups are minuted. Comparison of the official minutes and my own notes from meetings that I have attended show the District Council's minutes to be an accurate, if

somewhat brief, record of the discussions which took place. In addition, minutes produced by the District Council contain a wide range supporting documents, reports and correspondence, making them a valuable research resource. Minutes, therefore, contain a wealth of primary evidence and are also useful as a source of questions for semi-structured interviews where they raise significant issues which need further exploration. The final type of documentary evidence to which I have had access is correspondence and internal memos produced by the District and County councils. It is unlikely that much of this primary material could be used ethically as empirical evidence, but it nevertheless represents an invaluable insight into the processes and attitudes which lie behind significant events and policies. Correspondence has been used, therefore, to direct questions in the semi-structured interviews thereby allowing interviewees the opportunity to decide whether they wished to discuss the issues raised and to allow them the opportunity to respond to the points made.

(Participant) observation

The final method of evidence gathering used in this research is (participant) observation. This has been closely linked to the collaborative CASE context of the research. (Participant) observation has been used on two levels throughout the project. First, I spent approximately one day each week working from the offices of the District of Easington Council during the first 24 months of the project and less frequently during the final 12 months. Whilst at the Council I worked on a combination of my own research project and small projects for the council's staff. This involved me working amongst the staff in the Economic Development Directorate in an open-plan office. Working with the council's staff gave me access to their library which contained a substantial grey literature. It also gave me the opportunity to interact with the council's officers and to share their experience of the day-to-day business of regeneration in the District. Through working alongside the council's regeneration staff I gained invaluable insight into the pressures, and frustrations, they face in balancing the often competing demands of the wide range of organisations and individuals with which their work engages. In addition, the long-term nature of my presence in their office went some way to dispelling the initial novelty of having a 'researcher' in their midst, and once I eventually became relatively inconspicuous I was able to gain an insight into the more mundane,

everyday operation of the team. This offered considerable advantages in terms of addressing the research questions, since, like most professionals, the council's officers were initially keen to present a positive image of the high-points and successes of their work.

The second level on which I gathered evidence as a (participant) observer was through attendance at a range of meetings. These included meetings of the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership, the LSP's Chairs' Group, the SRB and European Funding Partnership, the County Durham Economic Partnership and the County Durham Strategic Partnership Officers' Group. Access to these meetings was granted by the chair of the meeting in question and on the basis of my association with the District Council. Whilst I was by virtue of being present in these meetings a 'participant' my primary purpose for attending was to observe the meeting and the exchanges which took place without taking part in them. This is somewhat of a false distinction, however, since a second and equally important benefit of attending meetings was the opportunity it afforded to meet and chat with the participants informally at the end of the official business. This was particularly valuable at the LSP and LSP Chairs' meetings which provided the opportunity to meet with representatives of a wide range of organisations on a regular and on-going basis. This had similar benefits to my regular visits to the council in terms of gaining a degree of familiarity and acceptance amongst a wide range of organisations. The effect varied from individual to individual and ranged from an active interest in my work to my acceptance as 'just another council officer' and the willingness of people to carry on with their business uninhibited in my presence. This raises a number of ethical and methodological questions, as well as questions relating to positionality (Macmillan and Scott, 2003).

Throughout my time as a (participant) observer I kept a field notebook in which I recorded my observations. An extract from my field notebook is included in appendix D.

Ethical considerations

Working alongside people and attending meetings inevitably raises ethical dilemmas. These largely relate to confidentiality and the uses to which evidence is put.

Questions of confidentiality are relatively straightforward to resolve. Only once was I declined access to a meeting that I wanted to attend on the grounds of confidentiality, and this turned out to be largely the result of a misunderstanding. Indeed the Council's officers were often willing to share confidential information on the understanding that it was treated as such. Although this is a pragmatic approach when working closely together, it also reflects the relationships of trust which were developed during the early stages of the project.

More complex ethical considerations arise when using material which is not specifically identified as confidential but which is either overheard or obtained without the explicit consent of the individual concerned. For example, I began all of my interviews with an outline of my ethical position and what I intended to do with the material once the interview was over. I made it clear to interviewees that I would only use the material with their consent, and that they could request that I treat anything they said as confidential at any time during or after the interview. It was not possible to give such undertakings in the context of less formal engagements. In the case of meetings, I have chosen to regard things said during the course of the official business which were not explicitly declared 'off the record', and which one could reasonably expect to be recorded in the minutes as effectively in the public domain. In the case of overheard conversations, i.e. comments which were not addressed to me, I have chosen to regard evidence gathered as confidential. Such evidence does not form part of this thesis. It has, however, influenced my understanding of the issues with which I have engaged and has without doubt directed my lines of enquiry in the documentary and interview stages of my work. This has required sensitivity on my part, and an awareness that the subjects of my research will have to continue to work together long after my project has ended. Consequently, a guiding principle in the ethical conduct of my research has been to be particularly careful never to undermine any individual or organisation in the eyes of another either through reported speech or the nature of my questioning. Finally, my research has been guided by the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice (BSA, 2001).

Analysing the evidence gathered

Rigorous empirical research requires not only carefully selected evidence and carefully chosen interviewees to ensure a balanced approach to the research questions, and thorough preparation to get the most out of interviews, but also a planned and structured approach to the analysis of the evidence gathered. There are a limited number of techniques for the analysis of qualitative evidence of the type gathered for this project, and this heightens the importance of a careful and consistent approach to the analysis of the evidence. Firstly, all evidence was analysed in its written form. All interviews were recorded and transcribed, and I took detailed notes at, or immediately after, all the meetings I attended. Whilst this should not preclude the inclusion of evidence from the more subtle nuances of interpersonal interaction which are one of the strengths of the interview approach, it ensured that maximum benefit was gained from the interviews and that the analysis was rigorous. Transcribing interviews allows the interviewer to gain a certain distance from the action of the interview itself, and past experience has shown this to be helpful in terms of formally analysing the evidence gathered. A sample interview transcript is given in appendix E. Once transcribed, interviews were subject to the same processes of content and theme analysis which was used to analyse the documentary evidence and the notes taken during observed meetings.

The first stage in analysing the evidence was to establish a transparent and systematic mechanism for identifying themes which were significant in the context of the research questions. This was done through a process of emergent coding whereby categories are established following the preliminary examination of the evidence. As this project did not benefit from a co-worker it was not possible to follow normal means of comparing the categories identified by two independent reviews of the material to ensure reliability. Instead, emergent coding was combined with *a priori* coding, whereby categories are established independently of the evidence gathered based on theory, supporting documents and other work in similar fields. The categories identified by these two means were revised and 'tightened up' to maximise their mutual exclusivity and exhaustiveness. The evidence gathered was coded in three groups. Evidence relating to the Task Force and the LSP was coded separately and subsequently the evidence was combined and re-analysed in order to theorize the

transition between the two institutions. An example of the analytical categories established by the processes of coding described above is included in appendix F This index formed the basis of a critical, interpretive analysis of the evidence gathered which enabled me to compare the opinions, understandings and approaches of different individuals and organisations involved in the regeneration of Easington District. The coding of the transcripts was done by hand using a highlighting pen and is not shown in appendix E.

Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the methodology which informed the research project, namely critical realism. In true critical realist fashion, and following Sayer (1992), methodology has been shown to encompasses not only the methods used to gather evidence to address the research questions, but also the processes by which the objects of the research are conceptualised and the way in which the research questions are framed. Critical realism was selected as the most appropriate methodology because its model of causation, based on the world having ontological depth, resonated with the objects of the research. In particular, the critical realist belief that events arise from the workings of mechanisms which derive from the structure of objects and take place within geo-historical contexts offers insight into the research questions. A note of caution was introduced, however, with reference to complexity theory whereby it was noted that there is no necessary proportionality between 'causes' and 'effects' and that system effects do not result from the simple addition of individual components.

A series of research questions was developed using the critical realist distinction between concrete and abstract research. This enabled a programme of research to be developed which simultaneously addresses the practical interests of the CASE partner and also contributes to a number of contemporary academic debates in the social sciences. The sources consulted and the methods used to gather and analyse evidence to answer the research questions were outlined. Quantitative research methods were identified as the only way to address the research questions, and semi-structured interviews, (participant) observation, documentary research and content analysis were explored as the most appropriate techniques.

Chapter 5

The governance of regeneration in Easington District

Introduction

This chapter analyses the structure and functioning of the organisations responsible for developing and implementing regeneration strategy in the District since the early 1990s. The organisations are analysed in light of the debates on the shift from government to governance presented in chapter three. The evidence presented here suggests that, in Easington at least, this transition is not as clear-cut or complete as some models would suggest. The analysis begins with the East Durham Task Force and then examines the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership. The transition between these two institutional arrangements is key since, although superficially similar in terms of their structure and membership, these two institutional structures are fundamentally different. As will be shown below, the East Durham Task Force was essentially a local initiative driven by the County and District Councils, whereas the LSP is part of a much broader central government project. This has significant consequences for the governance of regeneration in the District and has important implications for our understanding of governance beyond the District. This chapter will interpret evidence collected in East Durham in the context of the literature on governance presented in chapter three. Following the approach proposed in chapter three, subsequent chapters will examine the mechanisms of the processes of governance described here in greater detail and use the insights of the governmentality approach to explain how the changes in governance described here are articulated in the practices of the organisations involved in the regeneration of East Durham.

The East Durham Task Force

The East Durham Task Force is an early example of what was to become a popular mechanism for co-ordinating economic development activity (Pike, 2000). It shares a number of features in common with the Merseyside Task Force established by

Michael Heseltine in 1985, in particular its conception as a vehicle capable of fostering a proactive approach and working as a catalyst in initiating projects to secure economic development. However, whereas the Merseyside Task Force was created by central government to replace ineffective local bureaucratic structures, the East Durham Task Force was a local government initiative which sought to secure the continued involvement of central government in tackling local problems (EDTF, 1991). The comparison with Merseyside is particularly germane, since a number of interviewees who had been involved with the East Durham Task Force contrasted the situation in East Durham with that in Merseyside and the absence of direct government action in Easington as a result of the absence of urban unrest here.

Conceptualising the East Durham Task Force: government or governance?

The debates on the shift from government to governance presented in chapter three identify two main features of new modes of governance. The first is the involvement of a complex set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government to tackle social and economic issues (Stoker, 1998). The second feature of emerging modes of governance is a qualitative shift in the way organisations work together. The key features of the relationships between organisations involved in governance rather than government are self-organisation and reciprocal interdependence (Jessop, 2003). These themes are used to structure the analysis of the East Durham Task Force.

Actors and institutions.

Table 11 shows the membership of the East Durham Task Force. It was clearly dominated by public sector organisations and in particular by local government departments and local government agencies. (The County Durham and the East Durham Development Agencies were created by the County and District Councils respectively.) Furthermore, the membership of the Task Force is dominated by institutions engaged in 'traditional' economic development. Nevertheless, as will be shown below, the substantive work of the Task Force was dominated by the County Council. What is remarkable, however, is the apparent involvement of so many central government departments and agencies, particularly in the early years.

Table 11 Membership of the East Durham Task Force

	1991	1993	1997
County / District			
Durham County Council	2	4	4
District of Easington Council	2	2	4
Peterlee College (East Durham Community College)	0	1	1
East Durham Business Leaders Forum	0	0	1
NSK Bearings Europe Ltd	0	1	0
East Durham Development Agency	1	1	1
County Durham Training and Enterprise Council	1	1	1
County Durham Development Company	1	1	0
SUBTOTAL	**7**	**11**	**12**
Regional			
Northern Development Company	1	1	1
Recharge North East	0	1	0
Government Office NE	0	0	1
SUBTOTAL	**1**	**2**	**2**
National			
Employment Department	1	1	0
Rural Development Commission	1	1	1
English Estates (later Partnerships)	1	1	1
Employment Service	1	0	1
Department of Trade & Industry	1	1	0
Department of Environment & Transport	1	1	0
British Coal	2	2	0
British Coal Enterprise Ltd	1	1	0
British Coal Property	0	0	1
Business in the community	1	1	0
SUBTOTAL	**10**	**9**	**4**
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	**18**	**22**	**18**

The Task Force did not engage a significant number of organisations beyond the local state. In this sense, it does not match models of governance which stress the involvement of non-state actors, such as those described by Stoker (1998).

Organisational relationships

Although the range of organisations participating in the Task Force does not suggest that it represented a shift from government to governance as a mode of organisation, the way in which those organisations which did participate interacted with one another does show some signs of evolution. These are examined below.

The operation of the East Durham Task Force did display many of the characteristic features of governance as a mode of organisation. Jessop's description of governance as "the reflexive self-organisation of independent actors involved in complex relations of reciprocal interdependence, with such self organisation being based on continuing dialogue and resources-sharing to develop mutually beneficial joint projects and to manage the contradictions and dilemmas inevitably involved in such situations." (Jessop, 2003: 1) succinctly describes many of the Task Force's activities. Analysing Jessop's description, the Task Force was reflexive insofar as it produced the three Programmes for Action (EDTF, 1991, 1993 and 1997) which set out its understanding of the problems it faced and the solutions it considered necessary to tackle those problems. These strategy documents are analysed further in chapter seven. The Task Force also practiced the self-organisation of independent actors, perhaps more so than subsequent governance structures. In fact, self-organisation is one of the distinguishing features of the Task Force. It was essentially a local initiative which, although approved by government ministers, was set up by the County and District councils. The notion of 'mutually beneficial joint projects' is slightly more problematic in the context of public sector organisations, and especially so in the case of East Durham where relations between County and District were sometimes strained (see below), but nevertheless the Task Force's overarching aim of securing the regeneration of the District certainly fits this description. The final element of Jessop's description, managing the inevitable contradictions and dilemmas which come with these activities, was certainly true of the Task Force. It is worth noting that whilst Jessop's description emphasises interdependence and managing

contradictions, it says nothing of the balance of power in these relationships. This is important because, as will be shown below, although governance is often understood in terms of heterarchy, hierarchy (whether internal or external to the structures of governance) is a significant feature of governance structures.

Although the East Durham Task Force displays many of the features identified in Jessop's description of governance it requires some qualification. As shown in Table 11 above, the Task Force was composed largely of public sector organisations from local, county, regional and central government. Whilst these organisations conform to the paradox of governance that Jessop observed whereby "organisations, institutions and systems are both operationally autonomous from each other and structurally coupled through various forms of reciprocal interdependence" (Jessop, 1999a: 1), that interdependence was in fact relatively loose, unequal and context-specific. For example, whereas the District Council relied heavily on the County Council to divert resources away from other parts of the County to fund projects within the District, the County was much less dependent on the District to pursue its goals. The County and the District were also dependent on partners such as the Department of the Environment to deliver resources for major projects. This illustrates the asymmetric relations of power and dependence within governance structures which might lead us to question where the distinction between government and governance should be drawn.

Asymmetric relations of power and dependence within the Task Force

Governance is often used to refer to the theorization of partnership structures as forms of organisation. This section questions whether the East Durham Task Force can be regarded as a partnership and whether it is reasonable to analyse its operation in terms of governance. It is misleading to describe the Task Force as a partnership. This is a label which has been retrospectively applied to the Task Force as partnership has gained credibility in governance and regeneration debates. Whilst the Task Force displayed many of the features of a partnership, the balance of power within the Task Force and the approach of those individuals and organisations who led it make this description problematic. The Task Force's Chairman describes the aims and objectives of the first Programme for Action as being "corporately supported by the

Task Force" (EDTF, 1991: 1). The language of partnership is absent from the programme. Furthermore, the interviews suggested that the Task Force was effectively run by the County Council. "The idea came from us here at the County Council…This particular partnership was clearly driven and funded by the County Council, the government and Europe really." (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03). This opinion was mirrored at the District Council: " I honestly don't think that, as a District Council, we understood what the Task Force was doing, and what it was trying to do…it was seen as a County driven organisation, and I think to a certain extent we didn't understand the implications of it, and we just didn't really know what it was about as such." (Smith, interview 14.03.03).

It is clear from the evidence collected in the interviews that the County Council led the Task Force. The reasons for the asymmetric power relations are also interesting. The District Council was a small authority which essentially dealt with housing and did not have any personnel working on economic development until 1996 (Smith, interview, 14.03.03). Even once an economic development unit was established, the District's files show that its operation was hampered by understaffing and strained relations between senior officers at the council (Scorer, correspondence 1997). This situation is in stark contrast to the County Council which had a large budget and a well established economic development directorate with significant experience of major projects including those following the closures of the steel plant at Consett and Shildon Wagon Works (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03). The County Council's size and budget also strengthened its position in relation to other organisations. "The District Council is a small District Council. It spends £10 million a year. The County Council spends £500 million a year, and we punch our weight *hard* with government, and in the region and we have the resources base to do it. And that will always be the case. I mean, the Districts might not like me to say that, but it is true. It is true." (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03).

Although the County Council clearly led the Task Force it did not appear to actively exclude the District Council from participation. In terms of representatives at least, there was equal representation on the board of the Task Force from both County and District Councils. The capacity of those participating in the work of the Task Force seems to have been the deciding factor in sidelining the District Council. John Smith

recalled: "I think the people who attended really almost went through the motions from the District's point of view. I sat in meetings where some of my colleagues, and I'll obviously not mention names, just sat and said nothing when there were some very, very important issues being talked about like future road networks. And then what you would find was that they would come back to the office and say, 'oh, we were browbeaten into this' when they were actually sitting and saying nothing." (Smith, interview 14.03.04).

The role of the other members of the East Durham Task Force is more difficult to interpret. Whilst the presence of regional directors of government departments no doubt gave the Task Force a high profile, it is not clear how these organisations contributed to the work of the partnership. It is likely that their most important contribution was related to the Task Force's lobbying role "in order to maximise the money that would be available from Europe, from Government and so on." (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03). Involving representatives from major funding organisations in the work of the Task Force ensured that they were aware of the scale of the problems facing the District and the resources that were needed and was effective in securing a considerable amount of funding from organisations such as English Partnerships who were a member of the board throughout the decade of its operation.

To describe the operation of the Task Force as governance would seem to be an over-specification of the relationships that existed. Throughout much of its operation, the County Council led the Task Force because it was the only organisation capable of doing so. In many cases, the projects it pursued were in any case the County Council's statutory responsibility (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03; Lloyd, interview 25.04.03). It involved other organisations in a strategic manner in order to pursue its goals of regenerating the district as set out in its Programme for Action. This suggests that the Task Force was more government than governance. Furthermore, the nature of the relationship between the Task Force's two main organisations, the District and County Councils, was at times strained and does not correspond to the "meeting of minds" (Peck and Tickell, 1994a: 251) which partnership and governance would imply. This is explored below.

The relationship between the County and District Councils

The relationship between the County and District Councils is complex. It appears that the relationship was significantly undermined by the Local Government Review which was initiated as the Task Force was established in 1991. The tensions created by the Review remain significant today, and it was clear from the interviews that people still feel there are old scores to be settled as the structure of local government is once more placed under the spotlight. Whilst the animosity created by the Review is barely disguised, it is more difficult to find evidence of the impact this had had on the work of the Task Force and the regeneration of the District. Nevertheless an understanding of the relationship between County and District does, however, enable a more subtle and nuanced understanding of the inter-organisational relationships on which governance through the Task Force was founded.

Initially, the District did not welcome the attention of the County Council. John Smith described the feelings in the District Council at the time the Task Force was set up: "There was a lot of suspicion. Who are these people telling us what to do? They're not telling us what to do! Who the hell are they? This is our District, not their District. I think it was mistrust really." (Smith, interview 14.03.03). Although the Task Force was described as a partnership, almost all interviewees were clear that it had been the County Council's idea to set up the Task Force, and that the County Council were the leading organisation driving the Task Force. Given these feelings and the lack of capacity in the District to tackle its own problems, it is not surprising that the District should perceive the County's approach as "paternal" (Wilding, interview 04.04.03). The attitude of the County Council was perceived as "yes, we hear what you are saying, but we are the big boys, we'll look after this." (*ibid*). Two factors served to aggravate this relationship. The first was the local government review and the second was the difference in professional culture of the two organisations.

The Local Government Review "created huge bad feeling between all of the Districts in Durham and the County Council. The eventual outcome was status quo, but there had been so many arguments prosecuted for the demise of the County Council, the County Council putting alternative view points back that would have led to the demise

of the Districts, it all became very personal. I should say that it became regarded personally. It never did actually descent to the personal level." (Wilding, interview 04.04.03). As far as Kingsley Smith was concerned, however, "we tried hard, and I think succeeded, to ensure that, you know..., sort of... old wounds of local government reorganisations and so on didn't get in the way of this. That was definitely put aside." (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03). There is an interesting political dimension to the local government review in which both District and County appear to have lost out to wider political concerns. Ken Frankish explained, "If you remember, in the local government review, the first solution that the commission gave was a County Unitary Authority. That's what they wanted. Oh yes! That was the Local Government Commission's first choice. And then that wasn't delivered, politically. Because it would have, as they say, torn the Labour Party to pieces and therefore they went for the second best which was the continuation of the two-tier system." (Frankish, interview 08.04.03).

The relationship between the County and District councils was further strained by the different organisational cultures of the two bodies. The District Council was perceived to be a very 'political' authority, with close relations between the elected councillors and the council's officers, whereas the County was seen as more 'professional' with a greater separation between its politicians and officers (Smith, interview 14.03.03; Frankish, interview 04.04.03). The Task Force itself was a professional organisation which did not have any political representation among its membership.

The animosity between District and County appears to live on, and the feelings are, apparently, mutual. This is particularly interesting since the culture of distrust seems to have been 'inherited' by newer members of staff who have not worked under the arrangements of the Task Force. Perhaps this reflects the persistence of the attitudes that led to the creation of such inter-organisational tensions in the first place. Whether these too have been inherited or reflect something deeper of the divisions between District and County is harder to say. What seems more certain, however, is that older members of staff who have worked for each organisation for many years have long memories and remain significant influences on organisational culture (compare with Schoenberger, 1997). Looking to the future, Paul Wilding explained "I think that the

challenge continues to be the two-tier system whereby... there are some under-currents... something approaching resentment that the County Council has lost control of this [the LSP] and they are not comfortable about that." (Wilding, interview 04.04.03) Another local informant described a conversation with a County Council representative: "He tried to absolutely flay me alive on a personal basis with the most ludicrous stuff he was coming out with... '89% of what this LSP is going to achieve is going to come through County Council funding, and if you think we are going to do it with one f*cking representative, then you've got another...' and it was along those sort of lines." (local informant, interview). This highlights the significant questions that the creation of the LSP raises in terms of power and the nature of the partnership.

Political representation and the Task Force

Although the Task Force was dominated by public sector organisations and led by local government it was characterised by the absence of any local political representation. It was entirely a professional body. For the County Council this was the strength of the Task Force. Kingsley Smith observed, "What happened in this case, and I admired the members for this... I mean, this was being run through an era of Conservative government... the members at the County, and I think it would be fair to say at the District, recognised that if politics got in the way of this then we were going to have some real serious difficulties. So, they took the view that... they would accept that this Task Force was, if you like, a professional Task Force." (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03). The exclusion of elected members was more contentious for the District Council, however, where councillors and officers worked much more closely together and there was not the same 'professionalism' as existed at the County Council (Smith, interview 14.03.03). Wilding recalled: "It became a huge bone of contention. And I have to say there was considerable resistance to the involvement of elected members in the work of the Task Force from the County Council. And in fact the resistance to it was then an unhelpful feature because it tended to... it started to give the Task Force a bad name." (Wilding, interview 04.04.03). Whilst the District Councillors felt excluded from the Task Force, their indignation served to earn them a bad name in the eyes of the County Council. "I think there was a professional relationship at officer level. I think it [the animosity] was maybe from the District Council members if anything. It was that sort of level. You would get outrageous

statements and outrageous claims from some of the District Councillors which sometimes caused trouble." (Frankish, interview 08.04.03).

The Task Force did not directly involve local residents or their elected representatives. It is probably best understood as an executive function of the County Council. Given the District Council's limited capacity for engagement, the Task Force can be characterised as expression of local government by the County Council. The next section considers the extent to which the Task Force's achievements were influenced by central government.

The Task Force's relation to central government

The government had a significant impact on what the Task Force was able to achieve. This influence operated through mechanisms such as the funding regimes through which the government provided resources to the Task Force to achieve its aims, as outlined in chapter two. This will have exerted a certain influence on the Task Force's approach to its problems.

The East Durham Task Force did not have a budget of its own. It relied on influencing the way in which its member organisations spent their own budgets and on attracting funding from the government and from Europe for the specific projects it developed. This funding came from a number of programmes. Some of these were relatively straightforward, such as the funding from English Estates (subsequently English Partnerships) to remove the dereliction left by the closure of the mining industry. Other programmes, such as the Single Regeneration Budget, required the Task Force to adjust its priorities more to match those of the government and to obtain 'match funding' from other budgets to supplement the grant. The Single Regeneration Budget provides a good example of the influence of central government on the Task Force's strategy and governance of regeneration. The Task Force launched an unsuccessful bid in round three of the SRB for the comprehensive redevelopment of Seaham town centre. The project placed too great an emphasis on physical regeneration to satisfy government funding requirements. The Task Force, and the District Council, have nevertheless pursued their desire to redevelop the town centre in Seaham through a series of smaller, integrated projects for which they have

been able to secure funding from various sources. The Task Force did, however, submit a successful bid for SRB funding in round 5, demonstrating that it was capable of responding to steering from the centre without being dominated by central government initiatives.

The main argument presented here is that, unlike the LSP, the Task Force did not operate in the shadow of hierarchy. This is not to say, however, that the Task Force was free from government influence. The point that will be made below, however, is that this influence is significantly less than the influence of central government on LSPs. In this way, therefore, the Task Force was less a part of a central government programme. This allows us to contrast *local* governance structures with those developed 'in the shadow of hierarchy' and assess the impact of meta-governance on the governance of regeneration.

The Task Force: governance or government?

To describe the Task Force as an emerging governance structure is probably to over specify the relationships which existed between the organisations which took part. Firstly, participation was largely limited to government departments and government agencies at the local, regional and national level. Furthermore the public sector bodies involved were largely from the fields of economic development and regeneration. The Task Force can hardly be said to have been widening participation in the regeneration of the District. It is more the case that it was 'courting' those agencies which controlled access to the funds the County Council needed to implement its reclamation and economic development plans (EDTF, 1991 and K. Smith, interview; see also chapter seven). Secondly, the nature of the relationships between the organisations participating in the Task Force bore only superficial similarities to the reciprocal interdependence which Jessop identified as a key feature of governance. The Task Force was, however, a good example of reflexive self-organisation, notwithstanding the asymmetries of power identified above. If we accept that the Task Force was successful in achieving its aims (although see chapter seven for a critique of the Task Force's aims) then the evidence presented above suggests that leadership and, implicitly, hierarchy were significant elements of the Task Force's approach to governance. The patterns of governance which developed

under the Task Force were, then, little different from more traditional forms of government.

The next section examines the governance of neighbourhood renewal through the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership. In setting out its proposals for LSPs the government has placed great emphasis on partnership and inclusivity. The involvement of the central government, however, has significant implications for the patterns of governance which emerge, and these are explored below.

The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership

The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership bears a number of superficial similarities to the Task Force. Perhaps the most obvious of these is the similarity in the structure of the two organisations. This is not surprising, however, since organisational structure was one of the few features not prescribed by central government when LSPs were initially established. Furthermore, the LSP followed directly on from the Task Force, and indeed many of the individuals who had been involved in the Task Force were instrumental in setting up the LSP. In particular, John Smith, who had been the Task Force co-ordinator, was Head of Regeneration at the District Council when the LSP was established and played a central role in shaping the partnership. Secondly, the membership of the LSP is very similar to the Task Force in its later years and pre-existing relationships had a significant influence on the emerging LSP structure. Finally, as will be shown in chapter seven, the LSP's approach to the District's problems is very similar to that of the Task Force in its final Programme for Action and this necessitated a broadly similar structure.

Governance in the shadow of hierarchy

There are, however, a number of significant differences between the LSP and the Task Force. The first is that whilst the Task Force was established with the approval of government ministers, it was essentially a local initiative driven by the County Council. The LSP, in contrast, was established as a direct response to central government policy initiatives from the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. Arguably the District had no choice in establishing a LSP since the government made the release of

Neighbourhood Renewal Funds conditional on the existence of partnership structures. Furthermore, LSPs were subject to a process of accreditation to ensure they met certain criteria laid down by the centre. This illustrates Lindberg and Campbell's observation that "the state will often have defined (or even created) the groups... whose agreement will be required, and the procedures through which it is to be obtained." (Lindberg and Campbell 1991 in Scharpf, 1994: 41). Although the government has left considerable freedom for the LSPs in the structures they adopt and ways they operate they are nevertheless part of a central government programme. This has significant implications for understanding their role in processes of governance. The LSP operates "in the shadow of hierarchy" (Scharpf, 1994: 41) and this has implications for the form of governance which it pursues. The way in which the 'shadow of hierarchy' influences local patterns of governance is explored in chapter six.

Conceptualising the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership: emerging local governance?

This section analyses the East Durham LSP in order to show the extent to which it can be understood as an emerging local governance structure. As with the analysis of the Task Force presented above, the analysis is structured first using Stoker's observations on the nature of the organisations which participate in the Partnership and second using Jessop's observations on the nature of the relationships which characterise governance.

Actors and institutions

The membership of the East Durham LSP is shown in Table 12 below. The East Durham LSP is similar to the Task Force insofar as it is dominated by organisations from the public sector. The LSP, however, brings together a wider range of organisations, including the police, the health service and the local education authority in addition to representatives of the County and District councils. A preliminary investigation of the participating organisations suggests that the LSP conforms more closely than the Task Force to Jessop's description of governance theories as working with the paradox of organisations, institutions and systems which are both operationally autonomous from each other and structurally coupled through various

forms of reciprocal interdependence (Jessop, 1999a: 1). Indeed it is this concept which is at the core of the LSP's drive to tackle 'cross-cutting issues'. The belief that greater local co-ordination between service providers will tackle the deep-rooted problems of deprivation and disadvantage can be traced back through the Social Exclusion Unit and the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (SEU, 1998) to the report of Policy Action Team (PAT) 17 – 'Joining it up locally' which initially proposed the idea of Local Strategic Partnerships in April 2000 (DETR, 2000).

The membership of the LSP reflects the shift in emphasis from economic development and job creation under the Task Force to a more general and less well specified concept of neighbourhood renewal under the LSP. This shift in emphasis has been driven by central government and highlights the role of the centre in shaping local governance. The mechanisms behind this shift and the role of the centre in meta-governance are analysed in chapter six.

Organisational relationships

Furthermore, the East Durham LSP corresponds to Jessop's (2003) definition of governance insofar as it is reflexive, self-organised and based on continuing dialogue. The Community Strategy document embodies the LSP's understanding of the problems it seeks to tackle and the meetings of the LSP and its executive group at which I have been a (participant)-observer are the fora through which joint projects are developed and the contradictions and dilemmas of reciprocal interdependence are managed through continuing dialogue. In addition, the LSP involves the local community and is currently establishing representation from the private sector. In this way it represents a response to the growing dissatisfaction in political economy with a rigid public-private distinction in state-centred analyses of politics and its associated top-down account of the exercise of state power (Jessop, 1995). This initial outline suggests that the LSP displays many of the essential characteristics of governance. These practices have, however, largely been imposed on the LSP by central government (see chapter six). The next section analyses the way in which the processes of governance imposed by the centre have worked out in East Durham and their implication for the ability of organisations to deliver regeneration in the District.

Table 12 The Membership of the East Durham LSP

Region

Government Office for the North East	1
One North East	1
SUBTOTAL	**2**

County

Learning & Skills Council	2
Business Link County Durham	1
County Durham Business & Learning Partnership	1
Durham County Councillors	4
Durham County Council Officers	4
SUBTOTAL	**12**

District

Easington District Councillors	4
Easington District Council Officers	10
Groundwork East Durham	1
Durham Constabulary	1
Primary Care Trust	1
East Durham & Houghall Community College	1
Easington Action Team for Jobs	1
Age Concern (Easington)	1
Connexions	1
SUBTOTAL	**21**

Community

Community Network	8
Resident / tenant associations	6
Town & Parish Councils	4
Council for Voluntary Services	1
Community Worker	1
SUBTOTAL	**20**

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	**55**

Self organisation and reciprocal interdependence: the East Durham LSP's experience of governance

The principal ways in which the LSP has practiced self organisation have been through the formation of the partnership itself and the development of its regeneration strategy for the District. The partnership's structures are examined below. The LSP's strategy is examined in chapter seven.

A key finding of this research which is central to a critical understanding of the operation of the East Durham LSP and of its implications for local governance and the regeneration of the district is that the LSP is a complex and highly differentiated organisation. This is in stark contrast to much of the early writing on LSPs, and indeed to much government guidance on the role and operation of LSPs, which tended to view the LSP as a monolithic and relatively simple organisation. The East Durham LSP consists of three distinct elements. The Local Strategic Partnership itself, which has a membership of 55 and meets quarterly is the partnership accredited by Government Office for the North East. The LSP has created six thematic sub-groups, known as Implementation Groups, which bring together organisations with shared interests and expertise around the themes of education, health, housing, environment, community safety and economy. These sub-groups operate independently of the LSP and have their own separate agendas and priorities. The third element of the LSP, and potentially the most significant, is the Chairs' Group. The Chairs' Group, which also meets quarterly, brings together the chairs of the six implementation groups, the chair of the Community Network, the Chair of the LSP, the Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator, an officer post funded by Neighbourhood Renewal Funds and line-managed by the District Council, a chief officer from the County Council and a small number of District Council officers. These three elements of the LSP operate in different ways, fulfilling different roles which are not always apparent from the explicit structure of the LSP. They will be considered in more detail below.

Although the LSP faces a number of significant external constraints, many of the problems faced by the East Durham LSP in formulating and delivering regeneration strategy in the District are rooted in the weakness of the structure and operation of the various elements of the partnership itself which in turn reflect the difficulties

organisations face in self-organisation. The influence of these limitations on the process of strategy formulation and implementation are considered in chapter seven.

The main LSP

During its first three years the main LSP has struggled to make any significant impact on the regeneration of the District. One interviewee stated "I don't think the LSP knows what it wants. It doesn't have a sense of itself." (IG Chair, interview). Despite having a charismatic and committed leader, there is little sense in which the members of the LSP, other than the Chairs of the Implementation Groups, act as a unified body capable of fulfilling the role envisaged for them. There are three possible reasons for this. First, it is unclear at partnership meetings just who is and who is not a member of the partnership. The District Council's lead officer on the LSP, for example, was uncertain whether certain Implementation Group Chairs were actually members of the LSP entitled to vote in its decision making (Johnson, interview, 11.09.03). LSP meetings regularly attract a number of invited speakers and observers, and inevitably it becomes unclear exactly who the partnership is. Although members may be aware that they belong to *a* partnership, there is little sense in which they act as a partnership during meetings. Secondly, the structure of the partnership's meetings militates against the active engagement of the members with the issues on the agenda. Meetings are dominated by reports from the Chairs of the Implementation Groups and presentations from organisations on subjects which are often only tangentially relevant to the work of the LSP. The agendas are usually so full that there is little time for discussion and little opportunity for members of the LSP to actually engage with the issues presented to them. One of the most frequent actions recorded in the minutes of the meetings is "the information provided was noted." Third, the LSP's method of decision making also militates against informed debate and engagement with issues. "Whilst there is provision for votes, the working mechanisms of the partnership is in fact to try and have exhaustive discussion and at least in fact have a sort of consensus on the direction that we are taking. And so far in the... I suppose it is three and a half years now, I can't actually recall where a vote has been taken." (Conway, interview 17.07.03). The reality of this system, however, is different. Exhaustive discussion is rare and decisions appear to be taken in caucus and "nodded through" giving the appearance of involvement whereas the reality is quite different (Bolas, interview 01.07.03). Decisions are usually taken by a few old men muttering

"agreed" and there is usually no shortage of people willing to agree simply to move through the long agenda. 'Progress', therefore, is achieved at the expense of engagement.

These weaknesses in the operation of the LSP undermine its ability to fulfil the strategic role envisaged for it when the partnership was established. Patrick Conway, the County Council's lead officer on the LSP, spoke for most of the Chairs when he observed, "I think that at the present time the local strategic partnership is probably not giving sufficient strategic direction overall as to the relative priorities in relation to the implementation group areas. So, the LSP hasn't actually got to the stage yet of debating everything and saying... what are the three most important things, we haven't got to that stage in the local strategic partnership." (Conway, interview 17.07.03). Although such discussions are beginning to take place within the Chairs' Group, Alan Caygill, Director of Housing at the District Council and Chair of the Action for Housing and Communities Implementation Group, believed, "The problem is that the conversation should have taken place at the LSP, and there should have been a direction that 'these are our priorities, this is what we want to deliver', and then the [implementation] groups could have come together and said, well, look, how can we do that collectively?" (Caygill, interview 08.07.03).

It is clear that the main LSP has failed to provide the direction and drive for the partnership. "The quarterly meeting is about having our badges on our sleeves... it is about being seen to be working together and in a sense... it is largely ceremonial." (Bolas, interview 01.07.03). The impact of this failure on the partnership's strategy is considered in chapter seven.

The Chairs' Group
The Chairs' Group brings together the most powerful people involved in the regeneration of the District. The group was established to provide "a mechanism by which urgent items... business could be progressed, agenda issues could be looked at and also that certain matters could be looked at in possibly greater detail or depth than could happen at a full Local Strategic Partnership." (Conway, interview, 17.07.03). Its business quickly came to be dominated by the administration of the NRF, however. The LSP faced such severe problems in actually spending its allocation of NRF that

the work of the Chairs' Group centred almost entirely on managing the £1 million underspend so that the District would not lose the money. Lynch observed, "Certainly in the very first year it was NRF, NRF and NRF and that was it, because allocations came down later in the year and Easington got quite a lot for a small area and there was panic to get the money spent. The slippage in the first year was quite enormous and Government Office allowed it to be rolled over, but you just create an ongoing problem for yourself in the second year." (Lynch, interview, 27.06.03). Conway agreed that the work of the Chairs' Group had been dominated by the NRF (interview 17.07.03). Caygill was pessimistic in his assessment: "Well if you want the truth [sigh], I think that it [the Chairs' Group] hasn't done much more than administer NRF at the moment, but mind that's because of the need to spend quite a bit of money in a short space of time...I think it has just been 'how can we spend NRF, and that's why I'm cynical about what happens when NFR goes." (Caygill, interview 08.07.03). Others, however, were more optimistic, seeing "shoots of growth in them moving more towards what it should be doing, which is really addressing some issues from a truly cross-functional way." (Arkley, interview, 02.07.03).

Analysis of the minutes and observation at Chairs' Group meetings has confirmed this perception that the group's business is dominated by the administration of the NRF. This has left little time for any critical engagement with the issues facing the District and any attempts at new ways of tackling them. This is not to say, however, that such efforts have not been made, but rather there has been no systematic attempt to tackle these issues within what is arguably the most powerful unit of the LSP. There is some evidence that some of the implementation groups are beginning to work together and attempt new approaches to old problems. These are examined in chapter eight.

Despite acting as a de facto executive for the partnership, the Chairs' Group has maintained a deference to the authority of the main LSP. As described above, the main LSP is ill equipped to exercise this authority, and consequently opportunities for progress have been lost. Chairs regularly propose original and creative solutions to the problems faced by the partnership, but because there is a tacit assumption that leadership and direction are provided by the main LSP these ideas are rarely taken any further. This situation reflects the politics of partnership formation and the legacy of the East Durham Task Force in the District. The Task Force was vociferously

criticised by elements within local government for its failure to engage local politicians, and since the main LSP is the body with local political representation there is perhaps a reluctance from the District Council and its closest partners to usurp this level of the organisation despite its lack of impact.

The main constraint on the ability of the Chairs' Group to contribute to the regeneration strategy for the District has been a lack of time. The constraints of managing the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, discussed in detail in chapter eight, combined with the LSP's difficulties in spending its allocation and the resultant burden of managing the underspend have left little time for a systematic re-examination of the partnership's approach to the District's problems. Furthermore, the LSP's struggle to spend the resources allocated to it raise interesting questions about both the structure of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the viability of local solutions to the problems of neighbourhood renewal. These issues are addressed in chapter eight.

The implementation groups

The six implementation groups of the LSP are essentially the "revamped" sub-groups of the East Durham Task Force (Lynch, interview 27.06.03) and represent another element of continuity in the approach to the regeneration of the District both through their membership and through the conceptual framework within which the regeneration of the District is undertaken. Norman Mackie, Chair of the Community Network, believed that "it is at the implementation groups that the decisions are made, and it is at the LSP level that the rubber-stamping takes place." (Mackie, interview, 25.06.03) Whilst this appears to be essentially the case the interviews have shown that the implementation groups operate in significantly different ways and that it is difficult to generalise. Three of the implementation groups are considered in turn below, but first I examine some of the implications of this method of organising the work of the LSP.

In an era of 'joined up working' and 'cross-cutting issues' the implementation group structure of the LSP is open to the criticism that it reinforces a 'silo mentality' in the way the LSP addresses the District's problems. This certainly seems to be the case: "There is not one big thing that everybody is working towards. There is still a lot of

insular thinking around health, environment... although we can make links with the service improvements, but they go on in isolation and they are not all... somehow they are not quite gelled together." (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). As this quote suggests, it is not the case that the implementation groups are working completely independently from each other, but rather the nature of their cooperation which is problematic. For Charlton, "The implementation groups are for organisational purposes only. The fact that the chairs meet together, the fact that you bid for additional money jointly and the fact that I can understand the strategy of the Health Improvement Group and Anna Lynch and her colleagues can understand the strategy for the Learning and Skills Group, that belies the rather cheap jibe about people working in silos." (Charlton, interview, 03.07.03).

The implementation groups are far more deeply implicated in the structure and operation of the LSP as a whole than this image of shared understanding might suggest. There appears to be a circular [dialectical?] process in operation through which the presence of the implementation groups influences the way in which NRF is spent and the spending of NRF in turn reinforces the presence of the implementation groups. One Implementation Group chair, observed: "at the moment I think we're all still in our little silos. I think unfortunately the processes of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund have probably exacerbated that rather than made it better because they have forced different policy groups together, they've said, 'you guys go and look after that bit' and they've gone 'oh God, we've got some money, we better look after that really carefully and do our own little programmes' rather than 'oh, housing, we need your help to do this.' So, it has concentrated policy rather than broaden it out." (LSP Implementation Group Chair, interview). This has been reinforced by the government's monitoring forms for the NRF which require spending and outcomes to be recorded against government floor targets (see chapter six) which are themselves divided between functionally separate government departments. Analysis has shown that the service improvements implemented in the first three years of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund were overwhelmingly focussed on a single thematic area. A list of the District's service improvements funded through the NRF is given in appendix G.

The process of allocation of NRF by the LSP is not, however, static. The implementation groups, under pressure from certain forward-thinking chairs and the general thrust of government policy have begun to look at ways in which their activity could be made complementary. This has taken a number of forms which has seen a rapid evolution through co-ordinated projects, 'problem sharing', joint programmes and finally an emergent spatial targeting. Whilst there has undoubtedly been a change in the way the implementation groups, and in particular their chairs, think about their approach to the District's problems, there remain questions as to the extent to which this has fed back into their practice. Alan Napier, Chair of the LSP and Leader of the District Council, described the obstacles to change: "The hardest thing was getting chief execs, mind, of... was getting people to think outside the box. Getting them to think outside this silo and understand that housing, health, education, environment, community safety, the economy is all inextricably linked and that you cannot just say 'we'll deal with them two and leave them four', because you'll fail, you know, you will fail. But they find it... although it has come on from strength to strength. But I think initially, not only were they finding it difficult to work outside the box, but it just stopped at the LSP and it wasn't linking back to their day job, and that was one of the difficulties we had." (Napier, interview, 30.06.03).

The structure of the implementation groups has clearly influenced the way in which the LSP has approached the process of neighbourhood renewal. Initially the divisions between traditional policy domains reflected in the structure of the implementation groups resulted in a rigid organisation-centred approach to the problems of the District. The shift towards closer engagement between different organisations and different 'sectors' which is beginning to emerge, particularly in delivering regeneration projects, has significant implications for the governance of regeneration. These processes are analysed further in chapter eight using Grabher's concept of project ecology (Grabher, 2002a; 2002b).

The East Durham LSP: government or governance?

Although the LSP has clearly adopted governance-style structures under pressure from the centre it has struggled to adopt governance-style practices. This reflects the difficulties in changing the way organisations work and the extent to which ways of

working become embedded in organisational culture (Schoenberger, 1997). In addition, there are a number of factors which work to limit the ability of local organisations to work together in new ways, such as audit and accountability to central government departments. These are explored further in chapter six. Furthermore, the limited success which the LSP has had in adopting governance-style practices has implications for its ability to deliver regeneration strategy. This is taken up in chapter eight. Although the LSP is beginning to move in the direction of governance, it remains closer to more traditional forms of government.

Conclusions

The evidence presented in this chapter has highlighted the similarities and the differences between the structure and operation of the East Durham Task Force and the East Durham LSP, both of which have been implicated in the purported shift from government to governance. In broad terms, the evidence has shown that whilst the structures of the East Durham Task Force may have closely resembled governance, detailed analysis of its operation suggests that the relationships involved had more in common with government than governance. As far as the LSP is concerned, the evidence has once again called into question the extent to which the relationships between participating organisations have changed from previous government arrangements and can legitimately be described as governance. In addition, it would appear that central government had a significant role in shaping the emerging patterns of governance represented by the LSP. This is examined further in chapter six.

The research presented in this chapter has also shown that whilst the East Durham Task Force was essentially a local initiative, the formation and operation of East Durham LSP was driven by central government. This allows us, therefore, to compare governance developing from the reciprocal interdependence between organisations with governance instigated 'in the shadow of hierarchy'. The implications are profound, both for governance theory and for government policy which seeks to harness the benefits of governance to tackle other problems. In the case of the Task Force, although governance arrangements were initiated without the involvement of the central state and between interdependent organisations, hierarchy remained important. The Task Force was driven by the County Council which used

its authority in terms of its size, budget and experience to control the work of the partnership. In addition, the Task Force relied on its ability to engage with the hierarchy of central state and European Union – outside the immediate governance structures – to secure the resources it needed to implement its regeneration strategy.

The LSP, in contrast, does not have the same internal hierarchy as the Task Force. The internal divisions which characterised the Task Force have been papered over by a central government rhetoric of partnership and equality, although tensions clearly remain. These were demonstrated by the County Council's insistence that 85% of the LSP's achievements will be driven by the County based on its spending in the District (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03), and indeed the establishment of a County Strategic Partnership as a counterweight to the Local Strategic Partnerships in an attempt to tip the balance of power back in favour of the County Council (Johnson, interview 11.09.03). The East Durham LSP does, however, operate in the 'shadow of hierarchy' and is subject to close regulation and scrutiny by central government. Furthermore, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the actual operation of the East Durham LSP displays few of the characteristics of governance described by Jessop (2003), Stoker (1998) and others. Although central government has created governance structures, it has failed to create governance processes. This has important policy implications. It suggests that organisational cultures are resistant to change and need time to adopt new ways of working (Schoenberger, 1997) and that local public sector agencies are no exception in this regard. It also suggests that although different structures may be imposed these will not necessarily bring about an immediate change the way in which organisations operate. This echoes the cautions of complexity theory outlined in chapter four which emphasised the importance of context in shaping the outcome of (policy) actions.

Governance theories do not adequately describe the organisational structures which have been deployed in East Durham to tackle the problems caused by the decline of the mining industry, either when left to its own devices through the East Durham Task Force or when incorporated into a larger central government programme through the East Durham LSP. This research has shown that although these structures and processes may give the appearance of governance the reality of their operation is some way from the ideal of successfully managing the contradictions and dilemmas

which governance entails. This reflects the widespread normative use of governance as a concept to structure the relationships between organisations.

Chapter 6

Meta-governance and technologies of government

Introduction

Chapter five examined the governance of regeneration in East Durham and concluded that central government played a significant role in shaping the actions of actors involved in local governance. This chapter uses the insights of the governmentality approach to explore Jessop's (2003) concept of meta-governance as embodied in the operation of the East Durham LSP. The chapter presents an analysis of the technologies of government deployed by the centre in order to influence the nature of regeneration at the local level. In doing so, it provides evidence for the ways in which the "shadow of hierarchy" (Scharpf, 1994: 41) influences local governance and the processes through which the centre is able to shape the conduct of local actors.

Meta-governance

Jessop's (2003) concept of meta-governance was outlined in chapter three. Although elements of all four forms of meta-governance (meta-exchange, meta-organisation, meta-heterarchy and true meta-governance) were shown to be useful for interpreting the changes taking place in the regeneration of East Durham, meta-heterarchy offers the greatest potential for understanding the relationship between central and local government. The following sections develop this idea by examining the way in which meta-heterarchy operates and how the technologies of advanced liberal government enable the centre to practice meta-organisation without direct involvement in local affairs.

Metaheterarchy and Neighbourhood Renewal

The concept of metaheterarchy is central to understanding the way in which the East Durham LSP has developed its regeneration strategy. Neighbourhood Renewal is part of a central government programme, and the centre has had considerable influence in shaping the actions of local actors. It has done this in a number of ways. First, the

government has devised an indicator of deprivation to identify the areas which are in need of regeneration and the particular problems of those areas which need to be addressed. Second, the government has produced a National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (SEU, 1998) and an Action Plan (SEU, 2001) which outline the government's understanding of the causes of deprivation and set out a list of national policies to tackle deprivation. It has also specified the improvements it wants to see in deprived neighbourhoods by setting a series of 'floor targets' (minimum standards for service delivery) in key policy areas. It has charged LSPs in the 88 areas eligible for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding with the responsibility of producing local neighbourhood renewal strategies to translate the centre's vision into local actions. It has allocated substantial amounts of unhypothecated Neighbourhood Renewal funding to LSPs to deliver their local neighbourhood renewal strategies.

In addition, the Local Government Act 2000 has also introduced an obligation on all local authorities to produce a community strategy. Community strategies cover much of the same ground as local neighbourhood renewal strategies, although they place much greater emphasis on the engagement of the local community in designing and delivering the strategy. The government issued detailed guidance on what was expected of Community Strategies, including suggestions as to which organisations should participate and the issues with which they should engage (ODPM, 2000). Although the guidance for the community strategies did not set a deadline for their completion, the government made the production of a community strategy a requirement for the payment of neighbourhood renewal funds in 2003. The centre has, therefore, shaped local strategy by producing its own framework strategy documents, by requiring local actors to produce strategies and by setting guidelines for the way in which they are to be produced, their form and content, and finally by making their completion a requirement for the payment of neighbourhood renewal funds.

Nevertheless, there remains considerable flexibility in the way local strategic partnerships produce their local neighbourhood renewal strategies and community strategies. Whilst the government has specified the direction in which LSPs should progress and has documented examples of good practice (for example on its dedicated website – http://www.renewal.net), it has not specified how LSPs should go about

tackling the problems they face. The development of local regeneration strategy in East Durham is examined in chapter seven.

In addition to the measures outlined above, central government also exerts a considerable influence on the delivery of regeneration programmes by local actors, and a whole range of other public services, through processes for monitoring, audit and accountability for public money. Local actors are required to produce (largely quantitative) measures of the performance of the programmes they implement to tackle deprivation which are monitored by central government. As will be described below, the need to monitor shapes the way in which programmes are designed and implemented.

The influence of the centre on local regeneration is, therefore, twofold. First, the centre influences local regeneration strategy through the production of its own over-arching strategy and by setting floor targets. This influences the problems which local actors identify and select for action. It does not, however, influence the way in which local actors address the problems they face. This has led a number of commentators to observe that the centre is devolving the responsibility for tackling local problems to local actors without necessarily ensuring that local actors have the resources to tackle those problems (see for example Bennett *et al*, 2000 for a study of regeneration in the former coalfields). Second, the centre influences the way in which local actors deliver regeneration programmes by imposing monitoring requirements and requiring that outputs be measured and reported to the centre.

The latest tool to be deployed by central government to influence local actions is performance management. Performance management brings together strategy formation and the monitoring of service delivery into a single integrated process. This is perhaps the ultimate advanced liberal tool for shaping the conduct of local actors and will be examined further below.

Meta-heterarchy and the technologies of advanced liberal government

Having outlined the ways in which central government remains important in shaping local regeneration this section presents a more abstract account of the technologies of

advanced liberal government which lie behind these measures (Rose, 1999). The understanding that this enables is then deployed in subsequent chapters in a more concrete analysis of the formation and implementation of regeneration strategy in East Durham.

Numbers

Numbers play a central role in modern forms of government. Numbers of all sorts are collected, computed, compared, used in the identification of problems, the allocation of resources, the measurement of performance and the planning of services to name but a few examples. The governmentality approach shows the centrality of numbers in liberal political reason (Rose, 1999). Numbers operate as diagnostic instruments and help to make up the object domains upon which government is required to operate. The problems of government, such as deprivation, disadvantage and economic decline are made intelligible, calculable and practicable through representations that are, at least in part, numerical. Numbers which claim to represent states of affairs are indispensable to the complex technologies through which government is exercised. In this sense, numbers play a central role in making problems visible: "our images... are shaped by the realities of our society that numerical technologies appear to disclose" (*ibid*: 198). Numbers are so seamlessly integrated into liberal political reason and technologies of government that numbers come to actually constitute the domains they appear to represent. This is reflected in the vocabularies of political actors who now seek to reduce claimant counts, cut waiting lists and increase the number of pupils staying in education. Numbers are integral to the problematisations that shape what is to be governed, to the programmes that seek to give effect to government and to the unrelenting evaluation of the performance of government that characterises modern political culture (*ibid*). The organisation of political life in the form of the modern 'governmental' state has been intrinsically linked to the composition of networks of numbers connecting those exercising political power with the persons, processes and problems that they seek to govern.

Numbers and the East Durham Task Force

Numbers have played a central role in the efforts to regenerate East Durham since the closure of the mining industry there. As the collieries were closed through the 1980s and into the 1990s the most important numbers were the numbers of jobs lost in the pits. The number of jobs lost defined the objectives for early regeneration strategies, including the Task Force's Programmes for Action. The first Programme for Action details the need to create 8,000 jobs to replace those lost in the mines (EDTF, 1991). Numbers had also previously been central to the District's attempts to prevent the closure of its collieries. The District had commissioned research to demonstrate the cost to the Treasury and impact of job loses in the mining industry and their associated multiplier effects on the local economy (Hudson, Peck and Sadler, 1984) and this formed the basis of the District's submission to the Trade and Industry Select Committee on the future of British energy policy (EDC, 1992).

There are, however, remarkably few other numbers in the Task Force's first Programme for Action. The District's falling population is highlighted as an area of concern, as is the small proportion of people employed in professional activities in the District compared to the rest of the country. The District's poor health in relation to the rest of the Northern Region as recorded by the 1986 Townsend Report is noted, and passing reference is made to "a traditionally low rate of staying on at school after 16" (EDTF, 1991: 3). The Programme also details the area of derelict colliery land to "tidy up" and the quantities of waste being deposited on the District's coastline. In the case of the Task Force's Programme for Action, numbers are clearly diagnostic instruments and play a central role in making up the object domains upon which government is required to operate. The work of the Task Force was dominated by efforts to create new jobs which operated to a significant degree through the redevelopment of derelict former colliery sites.

It is also worth noting that the numbers the Task Force was using were essentially local numbers. This is in stark contrast to the numbers used by the LSP, as discussed below. Even the numbers of jobs lost in the pits were local numbers. The Programmes for Action rarely mention unemployment *rates* which would allow a comparison with the rest of the UK. Instead, the Task Force uses the absolute number of jobs required which, although striking, is not readily transportable (see below).

Whilst it is certainly the case that unemployment rates were unreliable indicators of the need for jobs (Beatty and Fothergill, 1996) they do at least allow distant policy makers to grasp the magnitude of the problem. Knowing that an area needs 8000 jobs only has impact if you know that the total working age population is only 48,000.

Numbers and the East Durham LSP

Numbers have assumed an even more significant role in the government of regeneration under the East Durham LSP. The numbers used here are qualitatively different and the context in which they are used changes their operation. Like the LSP itself, the numbers used are part of a central government programme. Under this new regime, numbers are combined to form indicators. Indicators do not just measure something, they allow it to be compared with a normative scale. The principal indicator is the Index of Multiple Deprivation which combines measures from a wide variety of sources on a number of different themes. The effect of the Index of Multiple Deprivation is explored below through the 'political sociology' (Rose, 1999) of numbers.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation

"Numbers appear to depoliticise whole areas of political judgement... by purporting to act as automatic technical mechanisms for making judgements, prioritising problems and allocating scarce resources" (Rose, 1999: 198). Such appearances, however, can be deceptive. Although numbers appear to offer a reduction in complexity, this is neither ideologically nor theoretically innocent: the social enters the statistical through the interests of those who produce the numbers. Theories will either implicitly or explicitly shape what is to be measured and how it is to be counted, the systems of classification which are adopted, how measurement is done and how often. This is widely recognised, however, and in order to counter the negative effect that this might have on an indicator, the government commissioned academic researchers at Oxford University to compile the IMD2000. By doing this, the government attempted to displace political disputes about the content of the indicator into technical disputes about methods. In the case of Easington, there were neither political nor technical disputes since the indicator proved highly satisfactory for the District – it showed it to be the most deprived outside London. This had significance for the District in terms of the allocation of resources. There were,

nevertheless, concerns at the time at which the index was compiled. Correspondence between the District's Head of Regeneration and the local MP detailed the District's concerns that the District's needs should be reflected in the revised index. Such concerns were revisited when the Index was revised again in early 2004.

Furthermore, the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 has raised a number of political questions which the East Durham LSP has had to deal with. Part of the LSP's role has been the prioritisation of spending on regeneration initiatives in the District. The LSP has faced opposition to its spending plans from a number of community representatives from wards ranked as more deprived by the IMD than those wards which were seen as the beneficiaries of the regeneration. Therefore, whilst numbers may have depoliticised whole areas of political judgement they can be problematic when actors wish to take political decisions about resources which appear to go against the purported needs revealed by the indicators. The IMD has served to depoliticise decision making for central government, which commissioned the indicator, but at the same time has added an extra dimension of contestation and politicisation to decision making at the local level.

Numbers have two functions as far as the government of regeneration is concerned. First, as described above, they are used in targeting limited resources and subduing the political nature of the decisions which have to be taken. Their second function is more governmental and is founded on the intrinsic qualities of numbers. The power of numbers arises from their ordering capacity (Cline-Cohen 1982 in Rose 1999: 205). Enumeration creates a bond of uniformity around the objects counted. It is possible, therefore, using numbers to add unemployment to poor health and educational underachievement to produce an indicator of deprivation. In this way, numbers can sort out the combined effects of several components and hence stabilise a process that is in flux (*ibid*). The power of a single figure is a rhetorical technique for 'black boxing', that is to say rendering invisible and hence incontestable the complex array of judgements and decisions that go into a measurement or a scale.

Furthermore, the numbers used in the government of regeneration in East Durham do not merely inscribe a pre-existing reality. They constitute it (Rose, 1999). Techniques of inscription and accumulation of facts about poverty render visible a

domain with a certain internal homogeneity and external boundaries. The collection and aggregation of numbers participate in the fabrication of a 'clearing' within which thought and action can occur. Numbers here help to delineate 'irreal spaces' for the operation of government, and to mark them out by a grid of norms allowing evaluation and judgement (*ibid*).

Used in this way, numbers have enabled policy makers and politicians to designate the District of Easington as deprived. Deprivation as a category and a problem to be tackled by the Local Strategic Partnership has been created through the Index of Multiple Deprivation. There was considerable debate amongst members of the East Durham LSP at one of its early meetings as to whether the partnership should adopt the official terminology of 'deprivation'. Local public servants questioned whether this was a stigmatising label for the local community, but the members of the Community Network took the more pragmatic view that if being labelled deprived attracted the resources necessary to tackle their problems, they were 'happy' to be deprived. Now that deprivation has been officially identified and quantified by incontrovertible numbers, it has become the legitimate object domain of policy. It is at this point that the 'black boxing' of the indicator begins to work in reverse, and what it means to be deprived comes to be understood in terms of the measures that were included in the construction of the indicator. Policy is directed at changing the numbers which make up the indicator, since according to the technological rationale of government through numbers these *are* the problems which need to be tackled. This is examined in greater detail below in the context of regeneration strategy where we will see that strategy is shaped first and foremost to tackle indicators. This was particularly clear, for example, in the LSP's deliberations on its priorities for the allocation of the second round of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund monies. Following a visit from the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit in October 2003 the East Durham LSP was shown to be one of 26 which were furthest from the government's floor targets in health, education, employment and VAT registrations for businesses. The partnership has re-shaped its priorities to reflect these demands (LSP, 30.01.04). The partnership's new priorities are:

- Increasing employment and enterprise
- Reducing social exclusion and health inequalities

- Investing in young people

- Restoring reassurance

- Developing sustainable communities for the future

This is a good example of the 'conduct of conduct' by central government. It is, however, more complex than the government using its floor targets to direct the work of local strategic partnerships. Members of the LSP are aware that the future of the NRU within government depends on its success in delivering the neighbourhood renewal agenda and that in order to secure future funding for East Durham it must co-operate with the NRU to ensure that its priorities are delivered.

Numbers and the centralisation of power

In addition to their role in the formation of the object domains upon which government operates, numbers are crucial in the formation of centres of government. The work of Bruno Latour shows how it is possible to extend government over events and things that are distant through 'action at a distance' (Latour, 1987). Numbers play a central role as 'immutable mobiles' – they allow distant places to be literally re-presented in a form amenable to deliberation and decision at the centre. In the process, numbers function in these governmental relays as 'fidelity techniques', as means for ensuring the allegiance of those who are distant to decisions taken at the centre. The use of numbers by government in this way has been a defining feature of regeneration, although the nature of the techniques used has changed. The nature of these changes is explored below.

Numbers were extensively used in the operation of the Single Regeneration Budget. In the early rounds, the emphasis was on quantitatively measured outputs. Bidders were required to provide details of the expected outputs of their proposals in terms of jobs created, qualifications achieved, numbers of homes improved and so on. They were then required to submit quarterly monitoring returns to the Government Office for the region providing details of the progress achieved against the targets set. In Easington, as in many other districts, the monitoring requirements of SRB and other Europe-funded regeneration programmes which had similar, but not compatible, monitoring requirements were so great that the council employed two dedicated

Monitoring Officers to fulfil its obligations. As the SRB evolved, and its emphasis shifted towards 'softer' regeneration measures, so the monitoring requirements changed from recording outputs to outcomes.

The monitoring of the SRB by the centre, through the regional offices, represents a rather crude attempt to shape the nature of local regeneration. Whilst local areas were given the freedom to design and implement their own regeneration programmes, notwithstanding the constraints of the bidding guidance described earlier, they were nevertheless subject to a crude form of performance management by the centre. Having selected the proposals which it considered suitable to receive public money, the government then used the threat of withholding payment to ensure that, on paper at least, those programmes were delivered as promised.

Government Floor Targets

Following the introduction of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the government's use of numbers was reconfigured along more advanced liberal lines. The constellations of numbers involved in managing regeneration became increasingly complex, and the whole process was closely tied in with the modernisation of central and local government. Quantification and new managerialist technologies spread to all government departments under the influence of the Treasury following the Public Spending Review 2000. The government's concern with the quality of public services, particularly in the poorest neighbourhoods, highlighted through the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, led to the establishment of 'floor targets' across all government departments. These floor targets set the minimum standards which the government expected public services to meet in all areas. They included a diverse range of factors including crime rates, educational attainment and access to services. Government departments were committed to achieving these floor targets through Public Service Agreements. Through the floor targets and the Public Service Agreements, central government effectively defined the problems which local government, and other public services, had to tackle. These problems were defined in terms of numbers. Whilst the government specified the direction and magnitude of change required, it left the means to bring that change about to the discretion and imagination of the local level.

Central government numbers in the form of the floor targets and PSAs have shaped local neighbourhood renewal strategies. The government made it explicitly clear that this is what was expected of local authorities. Subsequently, these same numbers have been used by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit to assess the progress made by local renewal strategies. Unlike the SRB, the government is now assessing the progress of renewal against its own numbers. Whether this leads to improved renewal programmes will be assessed below.

The processes by which the NRF has been monitored have evolved as the programme has unfolded. Local authorities have been given a significant degree of freedom in the ways in which they have managed their allocation. Their actions have nevertheless been shaped by the need to be accountable for the spending of public money and the ever-present threat of audit. It is unsurprising, therefore, that Easington decided to implement a system based closely on the SRB to administer its NRF allocation. The District not only based its accounting and monitoring systems on the SRB, it also established its own SRB-style competition to allocate the funding to projects within the District. The impact of this is considered in chapter eight.

Performance management

Performance management is a systems based approach to developing and delivering programmes. It is highly quantitative in nature and places great emphasis on the identification of baseline positions and setting targets for improvements in indicators of performance and outcomes. It is based on a structured approach to programme design, evaluation and review. Documentation of these procedures is central to effective performance management in order to allow the regular assessment of delivery against the targets set.

The adoption of a performance management system has been made a condition of the receipt of NRF by the NRU which imposed a deadline of 31 March 2004 for LSPs to adopt an outline performance management system. Performance management does, however, pose significant problems for the LSP as there are many unresolved issues relating to the roles and responsibilities of the different organisations involved in the governance of regeneration through the partnership. This further highlights the ambiguous role of LSPs in delivering regeneration. How, for example, should the

performance of the LSP in improving educational attainment be managed when this is largely carried out by the local education authority? Partnership is too abstract a quality to be subject to performance management.

The East Durham LSP has nevertheless enthusiastically embraced performance management and was already exploring the use of its tools when it was first announced that LSPs would also be subject to performance management. This reflects the enthusiastic engagement of the District Council, and particularly its leader, in the local government modernisation agenda (Napier, interview 30.06.03). It also provides an excellent example of metaheterarchy insofar as the centre plays a role in "modify[ing] the self-understanding of identities, strategic capacities and interests of individual and collective actors in different strategic contexts and hence alter[ing] their implications for preferred strategies and tactics." (Jessop, 2003: 6). The Council transferred its experience of performance management and its understanding of what was required by central government to secure continued financial support to the LSP before the centre had imposed the requirements from above.

Performance management is perhaps the ultimate advanced liberal tool for shaping the conduct of local actors in regeneration. Its emphasis on self-regulation under the guidance of expertise, and of shaping patterns of inscription echoes Miller and Rose's (1990) study of the emergence of processes for constituting and governing a national economy. Performance management makes the work of LSPs technical and thereby governmental.

Community

A number of authors have interpreted the increasing involvement of the community in regeneration as an expression of the changes in patterns of governance which were explored in chapter three. At one level, and in some instances, the involvement of local communities in regeneration has broadened the range of actors and extended participation beyond the traditional boundaries of local government. But as a number of these studies have also shown, the participation of the local community is rarely on an equal footing with the more traditional local government actors. This raises questions about the rationale of community participation in regeneration. The

governmentality approach, and in particular the writings of Rose (1996, 1999) offer an alternative explanation for the trend towards community involvement which provides an insight into the reasons for the experience of community participation. Community participation in Easington has been beset by numerous difficulties and tensions which shed light on the governmental function of the drive for greater community engagement. These difficulties are explored below.

Community engagement: the East Durham Task Force

The impetus for the engagement of the local community in the regeneration of East Durham has come largely from central government. The Task Force was not geared towards community participation. It viewed its work as technical and specialised and this left no room for community involvement. The Task Force's meetings were not public meetings and there was no community representation on any of the Task Force's committees. Public participation was limited to a 'road show' which toured the District in a converted double-decker bus (J Smith, interview, 14.03.03). Although the community were not engaged in the Task Force's processes for tackling the District's problems, the Task Force did recognise the need to work with the community to begin to address their problems. One of the Task Force's earliest, and one of its most controversial, projects was the East Durham Community Development Initiative. This project, which was managed by Durham Rural Community Council, received over £2 million from the RECHAR I programme and from the County Council to employ community development workers across the District. According to John Smith, this caused a great deal of tension and resentment between the District and the County Councils, since the District saw community development as its role and it viewed the involvement of the County Council, and in particular the nature of the project, as inappropriate. Even the community were reported to resent the initiative: "the first thing that we got back from the community was that they were a bunch of loony lefties who used to just sit around drinking coffee and smoking roll-your-own fags." (*ibid*).

The Task Force's Programmes for Action viewed community development largely in terms of developing physical infrastructure such as community centres and swimming pools (EDTF, 1991; 1993). The community were not seen as active participants in the regeneration of the District. Insofar as the community featured at all in the Task

Force's programmes, they were the location of a series of poorly understood problems which needed to be tackled, and this was done by imposing solutions on them. Although the role of the community was gradually expanded through programmes such as the Single Regeneration Budget (see chapter two) the Task Force's early approach to community engagement has had a profound impact on subsequent regeneration activity despite the shift in emphasis in central government policy.

Community Engagement: the East Durham LSP

As outlined in chapter two, community has been an increasingly important theme in central government regeneration policy since the mid 1990s. The evidence presented in this section will show that, although individual regeneration projects in the District responded to this shift in emphasis by engaging more with the local community, the attitude of key regeneration players in the District towards community engagement remained largely unchanged from the early days of the Task Force, so that by the time the LSP was developing its Community Strategy there was considerable divergence between central government and local actors.

Chapter three outlined Nikolas Rose's arguments that a shift had taken place whereby many of the problems which were previously understood in terms of society were now understood through reference to community (Rose, 1996). Rose argued that "many programmes of government now operate upon the presupposition of such communities, even where the allegiances presupposed do not immediately appear to exist." (*ibid*: 336). This appears to be the case in East Durham. Rose continues, "Programmes of urban renewal, for example, imagine the plight of the inner city in terms of the loss of a 'spirit of community' with all the capacities of self-reliance, entrepreneurship and communal pride which such a spirit evokes. They attempt to 'empower' the inhabitants of particular inner-city locales by constituting those who reside in a certain locality *as* 'a' community, by seeking out 'community groups' who can claim to speak 'in the name of the community' and linking them in new ways into the political apparatus in order to enact programmes which seek to regenerate the economic and human fabric of an area by re-activating in 'the community' these 'natural' virtues which it has temporarily lost." (ibid: 336, emphasis in original).

The logic of community is central to the government's programme of neighbourhood renewal, notwithstanding the government's conflation of neighbourhood and community. In addition, there is a whole constellation of peripheral initiatives which seek to foster the creation of a community and enable the residents of a locality to participate. These include the Community Chests and the Community Empowerment Fund. Furthermore, government guidelines state that community participation is central to the success of neighbourhood renewal and is a prerequisite for the accreditation of local strategic partnerships. Although community representatives have one third of the voting places on the East Durham LSP observation at meetings has shown that their engagement in the work of the LSP has been minimal. There are a number of factors which explain this. First, although the community has a significant voting power on the LSP, the partnership has never actually *voted* on anything (Conway, interview, 17.07.03). Instead, decisions are taken 'on consensus' and although the community do occasionally seek to hold the executive to account they are ultimately powerless to act. Secondly, as Rose has suggested, the 'community' with which the LSP engages is constituted through those individuals which are willing to take part. Although the community has one 'full time' representative who works closely with the partnership community representation is otherwise somewhat erratic which raises further barriers to the engagement of the community. Finally, the 'community' with which the LSP engages has been largely created for the purpose of engagement with the partnership. The District's main district-wide community organisation, the Council for Voluntary Services, went into liquidation shortly after the LSP was formed for reasons which are not altogether clear but appear to be as much political as financial (local informant, interview). Faced with the need to engage with the community, the LSP was central in shaping the Community Network which was developed to replace the CVS. The Community Network has at least one representative from each of the 26 wards in the District (Mackie, interview, 25.06.03). These members then represent the Network and the entire District on the LSP and its subgroups. This raises problems for the Network and for the partnership as a whole because, as previous studies have shown, the District is made up of a large number of communities with their own strong identities and, in some cases, significant antagonism exists between communities which increasingly view each other as rivals in the quest for regeneration funding.

The evidence presented above suggests that there is a significant mismatch between the advanced liberal logic which underlies the government's emphasis on community and reality of experience in the District. Central government's reliance on community as a governmental technology to secure regeneration has failed despite the considerable influence it has had over the governance of regeneration at the local level. This demonstrates that although a particular governmental technology may successfully shape the way that local actors work it will not necessarily be successful in itself in delivering the government's objectives. The success of meta-heterarchy can, therefore, be judged on two levels. On one level, the centre has influenced the conduct of local actors and meta-heterarchy can be judged to have been successful. However, in terms of delivering the centre's aims, namely neighbourhood renewal, meta-heterarchy could be said to have ultimately failed.

Conclusions

This chapter has presented evidence of the continuing role of the central state in the organisation of local regeneration. The evidence presented here counters those arguments that suggest that the central state is losing power to a range of local actors. Instead, the evidence shows that the central state remains powerful, although the nature of its power is changing. This insight is based on Foucault's distinctive conceptualisation of power as something positive and technical, rather than more traditional definitions which see power as negative and juridical (Foucault, 1982). In particular, the centre has been shown to influence local regeneration through the processes of meta-heterarchy. This chapter has analysed the technologies through which central government has been able to "modify the self-understanding of identities, strategic capacities and interests of individual and collective actors in different strategic contexts and hence alter their implications for preferred strategies and tactics" (Jessop, 2003: 6). The evidence presented above suggests that the centre has achieved considerable success through the use of numbers, but that its reliance on the community as a technology of government has met with considerable resistance and faces significant challenges in shaping local regeneration. Although metaheterarchy may shape the way in which local actors work, by involving the community as members of the LSP for example, it does not necessarily shape the motivation behind their actions. This has implications for the outcome of

metaheterarchy and echoes the warnings of complexity theory presented in chapter four that mechanisms will not always produce the expected outcomes.

Chapter 7

Formulating regeneration strategy

Introduction

This chapter analyses the formulation of regeneration strategy in the District in order to understand why the problems faced by the District remain so acute despite the concerted efforts of the Task Force and the Local Strategic Partnership over the last 15 years. The two principal regeneration strategies on which the analysis is based are the East Durham Task Force's Programmes for Action (EDTF, 1991; 1993; 1997) and the East Durham LSP's Community Strategy (EDLSP, 2003). Other strategies will be examined in terms of their relationship to these documents.

Developing a conceptual approach to strategy

Strategy remains an under-theorised concept in the regeneration literature. The interviews with members of the LSP, for example, showed that although most were relatively senior members of organisations which produced strategies and claimed to act strategically, relatively few had given much, if any, consideration to the process of strategy formulation, at least in terms of the work of the partnership. This was reflected in the LSP's Community Strategy which, in large parts, reads more like a vision statement or a 'wish-list' of desirable outcomes than a strategy to influence the activity of a wide range of organisations.

The concept of strategy which I deploy in this chapter is based on an understanding of strategy as a process, the goal of which is to shape the action of individuals and organisations in particular ways to produce specific desirable outcomes. Strategy as process, then, involves three key stages:

1. the identification of problems which the strategy is to address and the preferred state of affairs which the implementation of the strategy is to create

2. the devising of solutions, programmes or actions to move from the current undesirable situation to the desired state of affairs

3. the implementation of the strategy to deliver the solutions

Each stage will potentially involve a range of stakeholders and actors representing different interests and organisations at different scales. Governance and metagovernance are essential concepts in understanding how these scales and interests relate to one another.

The regeneration literature contains numerous examples of studies which have investigated whose needs and aspirations are addressed by particular regeneration strategies. There is also a rich body of evidence on who devises and who implements regeneration strategy (for example Raco and Flint, 2001 in Scotland, Raco 2000 in Cardiff, McCulloch, 2000 in Newcastle, Meegan and Mitchell, 2001 in Merseyside). Much of this literature is concerned with the (potential) conflict between professionals and local residents, or between different local interest groups in the identification of whose problems should be tackled and which groups are seen to be the beneficiaries of regeneration strategy. These debates are particularly pertinent in the District of Easington where deprivation is widespread and needs far exceed the limited resources available. Competition between villages for scarce regeneration resources is intense. This 'parochialism', as it is known amongst regeneration professionals in the District, has been a feature of numerous early LSP meetings where members of the community have objected to the allocation of resources to one village rather than their own.

Relatively little attention has been paid, however, to the way in which problems are identified and the way in which policy makers devise solutions to those problems. This chapter seeks to uncover the ways in which regeneration policy makers devise solutions to the problems they have identified in order to move towards the desired outcome. This is done here in a critical-realist informed manner by seeking to identify the mechanisms which underlie particular policy prescriptions designed to tackle the problems identified. These mechanisms are identified through a process of retroduction from the policy documents themselves, and from interviews with the individuals involved in producing the policies.

Although the District experiences many different problems strategy formulation inevitably involves a process of abstraction. This involves policy makers adopting

simplifying models of causation of the complex phenomena with which they want their strategy to engage. These processes are examined below for the Task Force's Programmes for Action and the LSP's Community Strategy. Identifying the organisational level at which these process of abstraction are undertaken has significant implications for understanding the governance of regeneration.

The East Durham Task Force's Programmes for Action

Identifying problems

The Task Force was established in response to the closure of the coal mining industry in the District (EDTF, 1991). Although it recognised that the District faced "a complex mix of economic, social and environmental problems" (*ibid*: 1) its primary concern was to create jobs to replace those lost following the closure of the mines. Kingsley Smith, chair of the Task Force throughout the decade of its operation was unequivocal: "to be perfectly honest, what we wanted the partnership to do was to be focussed on achieving something significant, and we started off by saying 'we are creating this East Durham Task Force with the objective of creating 8000 jobs by the millennium'. We subsequently revised that to 10000. And if you are asking what made the Task Force successful, it is that clarity of focus on what it is that you are trying to achieve." (K Smith, 25.04.03) The Task Force defined the problems it sought to tackle first and foremost in terms of unemployment statistics and job losses from the mines. Almost everything the Task Force did, particularly in the first seven years of its operation, was directly linked to creating employment opportunities for local people.

Devising solutions

The Task Force's first programme stated that "the closure of collieries effectively requires the transfer of industrial jobs from underground to the surface. Hence the need to create sufficient factory floorspace to accommodate the number of jobs required to offset those that have been or will be lost." (EDTF, 1991: 9). The powerful imagery and simple logic of this approach make it instinctively appealing, but this appeal conceals a number of significant weaknesses which are considered below.

The Task Force's approach had two main elements. First, the Task Force sought to provide the space and premises for manufacturing employment on serviced industrial estates. This necessitated the construction of a number of major new east-west road links to address the problems of inaccessibility in the District, the reclamation of derelict former colliery sites and the development of industrial land and premises. Secondly, the Task Force sought to remove the dereliction associated with the former mining industry in order to "make the District a more attractive place to live" (*ibid*: 6), both for existing residents and the managers of the branch plants the Task Force hoped to attract. This included a major programme of environmental improvements for the District's coast and a rolling programme of settlement renewal. A number of subsidiary and less well developed proposals were also outlined for developing tourism, business support, training for the unemployed and 'community development'. These proposals take the form of assertions of what needs to be achieved rather than what needs to be done to achieve the desired goals.

Implicit mechanisms

The mainstay of the Task Force's approach to tackling the problems caused by the decline of mining in the District was to create new jobs for redundant miners as quickly as possible. The mechanism by which those jobs were to be created was through inward investment in the District by footloose manufacturing branch plants. The Task Force was clear that "the greatest potential for new investment and jobs must come from outside the region." (EDTF, 1991: 9). John Smith recalled, "I think it was hoped in those days that you would get a large manufacturing company coming into the North East... and we would accelerate and be fairly relaxed on the planning side to allow those big developments to establish themselves, look to the sort of funding they would require to set themselves up. Bearing in mind that the Task Force was also a lobbying organisation... there was talk about Toyota coming to the North East. There was talk about one or two major industries, maybe a Bosch, some major international blue chip companies coming to the North East." (J. Smith, interview 14.03.04). The Task Force's strategy centred on "getting the area's economic infrastructure right for revitalisation" (EDTF, 1991: 4). In other words, the Task

Force sought to develop the District's infrastructure in order to make it an attractive location for this type of investment.

Reasons for the failure of the Task Force's Strategy

Inappropriate mechanisms

Where the strategy fails is in its understanding or appreciation of the economic circumstances of the contemporary world in 1991. First, although many miners were highly skilled men, many of their skills were specific to the mining industry and could not easily be transferred to modern manufacturing jobs of the type that the Programme sought to attract. In addition, many of the new jobs which were created preferred female labour. Pride Valley Foods, which located on the Enterprise Zone in Seaham, is typical in this regard. Mr Hossain Rezaei, founder and managing director of Pride Valley Foods, told the Financial Times, "Females are more reliable, more punctual, more loyal, neater and easier to train in repetitive jobs. Males are usually not so tolerant of boredom." (Financial Times, 26 September 1995). Second, whilst 8,000 new industrial jobs on the surface, either in the District or, as the strategy acknowledges, "outside the area", would indeed go a long way towards solve the problems caused by the run down of the collieries, the likelihood of the District attracting those jobs was extremely small. Indeed the likelihood of the District attracting any net manufacturing employment growth was very small. Evidence for this is not hard to find. Indeed just six pages earlier in the same document, the Task Force outlined the bleak unemployment situation across the whole of the North East Coast region. The Task Force was aware of the challenge it faced in attracting inward investment on this scale. The first Programme states that "the competition for such projects is fierce and in order to compete there must be large advance factories available or the OPPORTUNITY to bid is lost" (*ibid*: 9, emphasis in original). Clearly the Task Force was aware that it was pursuing a high risk strategy. The following sections attempt to explain why the Task Force adopted this strategy and why, when it was clearly failing to work, the Task Force failed to change its approach and continued to pursue manufacturing inward investment.

The origins of the Task Force's approach

Although the Task Force was heralded as a new initiative to tackle the District's problems, the solutions it proposed were not new and were incorporated from a number of existing sources to form the Task Force's Programme for Action. The Programme states that "Durham County Council and Easington District Council have worked together in partnership since 1985 to actively lobby both the European Commission and the UK Government for additional support for the area. As part of this process an ERDF supported study was commissioned in 1988 to examine the problems and opportunities of the area and its potential for new investment. The resulting report highlighted the initiatives needed to effect regeneration of the area – "A NEW FUTURE FOR EAST DURHAM"." (EDTF, 1991: 2, emphasis in original). This report, produced by Ecotec Research and Consulting Ltd, strongly influenced the District and County Councils and has clearly shaped the Task Force's Programme for Action.

Although the Task Force's Programme for Action is based on the report produced by the Ecotec consultants, large parts of the consultants' report were themselves based on documents produced by the District and County Councils themselves in the early 1980s. This is clearly acknowledged in the report which states that "[T]he study follows the Programme for Action jointly prepared by Durham County Council, Easington District Council and Sunderland Borough Council in response to accelerating colliery closures and employment loss in the East Durham Coalfield." (Ecotec, 1988: 1). Indeed the Ecotec report reproduces the councils' own 1985 programme in an appendix. In this sense, what the consultants were working with were the already expressed understandings and preferences of the local authorities in the District. Although they clearly earned their fee by producing a wide range of imaginative proposals, even if some look over-ambitious with hindsight, they were nevertheless developing and reproducing the local authorities' existing understanding of the problems. Once their findings had been published as an independent consultant's report, however, the ideas were able to re-enter local authority thinking bearing the added status and authority of having been produced by consultants. Therefore, rather than serving to open up a wider and deeper level of understanding, the use of consultants merely cemented the councils' thinking in a position it occupied in 1985. The lineage from the ECOTEC report through to the Programmes for Action

can be seen in a summary of the report produced by the County Council in 1988 which is not only pictured in the first Programme for Action, but has a very similar structure and, on a more trivial level, bears striking similarities in its layout and illustration. The use of consultants by the District and County Councils in 1988 and the consultant's use of the councils' own documents from 1985 goes a long way towards explaining how a particular understanding of and approach to the District's problems became embedded in the Task Force's first Programme for Action.

The 1985 "Communities in the East Durham Coalfield: a Programme for Action", produced by the county and district councils, sets out both the councils' understanding of the problems they face and the programmes that they were pursuing to tackle them. Much of the analysis is based on 1981 census data and other statistics from the late 1970s. The Programme outlines plans for road building, the provision of industrial units, settlement renewal and environmental improvements. Although these plans have been elaborated and further developed by the Ecotec consultants in their 1988 report, the solutions adopted by the Task Force in 1991 and re-stated in 1997 are grounded in an understanding of the problems and the solutions designed to tackle them which are rooted in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The use of consultants and the independent status of their report goes a long way towards explaining how these proposals could be incorporated largely unchanged in the Task Force's Programme for Action. Other explanations are needed, however, to understand why, once incorporated in the Programme for Action, this approach remained largely unchanged throughout the 1990s despite significant changes in the political and economic context in which the Task Force operated which rendered its programme largely ineffective.

Failure to change

The Task Force's second Programme produced only two years after the first Programme states "In terms of future job prospects, it is not expected that new industrial development (either inward investment or local business) will fully bridge the unemployment gap. The wider experience of the Region suggests that the manufacturing sector is unlikely to be a major net contributor to employment up to the end of this decade." The Programme continues, "whilst welcoming new industrial development, there must also be an emphasis on non-industrial employment, tourism being a particular case in point." (EDTF, 1993: 7). The 1997 Programme opens with

a report of the closure of the Mattel factory in Peterlee and the growing "competition from other locations world-wide" for this type of inward investment (EDTF, 1997: ii). There is, however, little change in the Task Force's Programme, and the provision of industrial land and premises remain central in both the 1993 and 1997 revisions of the Programme. This raises interesting questions about why the Task Force failed to respond to these changing circumstances.

Stability at the top

Although the Task Force's Programme 'softened' to some extent by 1997, its central focus remained the attraction of inward investment into the district through the provision of infrastructure in order to create jobs to replace those lost in the mining industry. As outlined above, the Task Force was aware that this strategy was becoming less credible as inward investment in the North East as a whole fell throughout the 1990s, but it failed to respond with changes in its approach. One possible explanation for this comes from the culture and, in particular, the personalities which dominated regeneration at the County Council, and consequently the work of the Task Force, throughout a large part of the 1980s and 1990s. Interviewees observed that the Task Force was virtually single-handedly driven by two men – Kingsley Smith, the Chief Executive of the County Council, and Ken Frankish, the County's Director of Economic Development (Figure 16 below). The commitment, energy and enthusiasm which these two men devoted to the Task Force and the District is beyond question. Their level of involvement and dedication was widely admired from both the county and the district councils. Their strong leadership from the front did, however, leave its mark on the operation of the Task Force and could perhaps be one of the reasons why it was slow to respond to the changing political and economic circumstances of the 1990s. This echoes research conducted by Schoenberger (1997) into the leadership of some of America's largest companies which also failed to respond to changing circumstances as a result of the domination of their management structures by individuals who had been in post for a long time.

The direction taken by the Task Force closely reflected the interests and experience of its two main leaders. Kingsley Smith was, and still is, the Chief Executive of the County Council and had a background in finance, whereas Ken Frankish had a

background in planning (J Smith, interview, 14.03.03). Both men had considerable experience of implementing regeneration programmes to deal with the consequences of economic decline. These included the closure of Consett steelworks and Shildon wagon works, as well as the closure of a large number of mines across the county. Both men also brought qualities to the Task Force which were instrumental in its successes but also militated against the adaptation of the Task Force's strategy. For the chairman, this was "an absolute clarity of focus on what you are trying to achieve" (Kingsley Smith, interview 25.04.03), namely 8000 new jobs. One member of the Task Force observed that "Ken Frankish, he was bullish. But we wouldn't have a link road down to Seaham if it wasn't for Ken. He would take on the world and still come back for another fight. A tremendous powerhouse. He wouldn't be fobbed off by politicians… he wouldn't be fobbed off by arguments from individuals." (J Smith, interview, 14.03.03).

Figure 16 Ken Frankish and Kingsley Smith launch the Task Force's first Programme for Action, September 1991

(Source: The Newcastle Journal, 17 September 1991)

It is not my intention to suggest that Ken Frankish and Kingsley Smith were in any way autocratic leaders. It appears to be more the case that they had vision and determination and that there were few other people in the District at the time who were able to exercise such authority or influence. For example, the District Council did not have an economic development team until 1996 and even today it is limited by its small size in its ability to commit the resources it would wish to policy development (Wilding, interview 04.04.03).

The District was ill-prepared for colliery closure

The inability of the District of Easington to deal with the problems created by colliery closure was not, however, a simple lack of capacity or resources, although both these were significant elements. The politics of pit closure also influenced the District Council's ability to plan for the run-down of mining in the District before the Task Force was established. By the late 1980s the future of mining in the District was in the balance and the national political context was hostile. Relationships with British Coal in the late 1980s were delicate, so that in their attempts to end the tipping of colliery waste on the District's beaches, for example, "local politicians were faced with the dilemma of 'do we put pressure on British Coal at the risk of closing the collieries down?'" (Smith, interview 14.03.03).

The District Council was also heavily involved in campaigns to save the local mining industry from closure. This political activity had repercussions for the Council's ability to plan for the consequences of colliery closure. Paul Wilding, who was District Planning Officer in Easington in the early 1990s and a member of the Task Force, described the colliery review procedure whereby Trades Unions and local politicians would attempt to argue the case for the continuation of mining in the District's pits against the National Coal Board, supported by expert mining engineers, who sough to prove that the collieries were already unproductive, unprofitable and ready for closure: "Now, in that context, it was anathema locally to accept that the case for the continuation of the pit wasn't sustainable. So, I think it is fair to say that the local politicians had to work on the basis that their arguments were going to be successful through the colliery review procedure." (Wilding, interview 04.04.03). Planning for colliery closure was not totally neglected, however. "I can remember working on a reclamation scheme for Horden Colliery, and it was practically done

under the table because the review process was still going on. We didn't have confidence that it was going to be won, and we knew that we had to start work, had to start doing something." (*ibid*). Nevertheless, the way in which collieries were closed and the implication of local politicians in efforts to save mining jobs placed the local authority in a difficult position. The District of Easington found it difficult to reconcile the contradictory tasks of campaigning to save coalmining jobs whilst at the same time planning for their demise. This difficulty is thrown into sharp relief when considered alongside the close relationship between local politics and the mining industry in the District, with several prominent local politicians also serving Trades Union representatives and numerous others former miners (including the District's Member of Parliament, John Cummings). Consequently, "that led to the fact that the local authorities couldn't officially turn their minds to 'what are we going to do when these pits are gone' because that would... you couldn't believe that they weren't going to be there. That wasn't allowed!" (*ibid*).

The problems of planning locally for the impact of colliery closure, according to Ken Greenfield, former Chief Environmental Services Officer at the District Council, were compounded by the absence of planning and preparation by central government. He drew comparisons with the District's twin town in Germany where government initiatives had been put in place and colliery closures announced up to a decade in advance and consequently much had been done to mitigate the negative impact of colliery closure (Greenfield, interview 01.04.03). This was corroborated by Paul Wilding: "... there was no concept of planning for closure as there was in Germany... That is something I believe was a failure of national government at the time." (Wilding, interview 04.04.03) This underlines the significance of the national political context in Britain and the tensions between the conservative central government and a labour local authority dominated by unionised mining interests.

The County Council was in a much stronger position to respond to the demise of coalmining in the District. The County had the advantage of being one step removed from the political struggle between the District and the government over the future of the mines. Furthermore, the County Council had four decades of experience of mine closure. The County Council's approach, therefore, was "to say, look, the coalmines have gone. If they don't go this year, they'll go next year or the year after. They've

gone, lets focus our attention on East Durham whilst central government might be focussing their attention on East Durham because in five years time it will have all closed and everybody will have forgotten about East Durham." (Frankish, interview 08.04.03). The creation of the East Durham Task Force, which was unanimously acknowledged to have been driven by the County Council, can be seen as both politically astute and a pragmatic response to the threat to the closure of the collieries, but one which was made significantly easier by the County's distance from the immediacy of the threat of closure. To say that the "County Council took the broader view... the more strategic view" (*ibid*) should not distract attention from the constrictions placed on the District Council by the national political context in which the mines were closed.

Turmoil in the District Council
The District Council's ability to engage with the Task Force was further undermined by political turmoil in the District. The 1990s was a turbulent decade for the District Council, and this had a number of impacts on efforts to regenerate the District. Perhaps the most dramatic impact was the failure of the SRB round 3 bid for the regeneration of Seaham which was widely attributed to the influence of one man – Bill Scorer. The District's capacity to engage with regeneration was further undermined by a series of disputes, personal rivalries and tense professional relationships within the council.

Trouble for the District Council started early in the life of the Task Force. Ken Frankish observed from the County: "you get a small authority where members and officers, you know, their roles become blurred, and you are heading for disaster if you do that. And I think that is what happened. And, obviously, there was lots of trouble, lots of turmoil. There was Peter Innes going, who was Chief Executive. He was brought in, actually, he was brought in to sort things out and then he went as well! And there was all sorts of in-fighting, some chief officers getting on with some members, and others getting on with other members and rivalry within the District Council. A right mess! A right mess!" (Frankish, interview 08.04.03). Another local informant explained Peter Innes' departure: "at the time, within the District Council, a split developed politically within the Labour Party, and that was largely on the basis that Peter Innes, the General Manager in the early 1990s had essentially fallen out

with the political leadership and was subjected to attempts to oust him and that took a long time to resolve." (local informant, interview).

Paul Wilding related the failure of the District's SRB round 3 bid to the turmoil in the District: "these things didn't go unnoticed at regional level. The disharmony between the District Council and the County Council was noted, the internal strife within this council was noted … they couldn't see the stability that was necessary, the political stability to make that a success. And I could well understand that they got the jitters about that. And it took us a year or so to get over that, to regain that stability and to get the funding streams coming through to make that [the regeneration of Seaham] a reality." (Wilding, interview 04.04.03). Another local informant specifically named Bill Scorer as the reason that the District's SRB round 3 bid was rejected. This is in stark contrast to the bids for European RECHAR funding which were made through the Task Force mechanisms and "found a load of favour with Government Office" (Smith, interview 14.03.03).

Within the District Council rivalries were apparently commonplace and there appears to have been little common purpose or team spirit. This clearly influenced the District's engagement with the Task Force. "I always got the feeling that it [the Task Force] was seen as Ken [Greenfield]'s baby by certain other chief officers… I felt Ken [Greenfield] was often maligned, as was Paul [Wilding], by some fairly powerful officers who have influence and maybe fed that message back to councillors." (Smith, interview 14.03.03). The scale of the problems at the council were such that the Local Government Ombudsman, in an investigation of the way the council handled a planning application by Bill Scorer[1], was reported as saying that "in all her experience she had never encountered 'such feuding and ill-feeling within a council'" (Northern Echo, 03.10.01)

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[1] Bill Scorer, an executive director of the council and head of economic development, was granted planning permission to extend a cottage he owned despite it being in a conservation area and running counter to the council's local development plan. When the council's legal officer advised members of the planning committee to declare a non-pecuniary interest in the application, Mr Scorer made a formal complaint and the officer was suspended. Neighbours lodged a complaint of mal-administration with the Local Government Ombudsman and the fraud squad were called in (*ibid*). Bill Scorer subsequently took early retirement.

The work of the economic development directorate of the Council was also made more difficult by the high rate of staff turnover it experienced throughout the late 1990s and during the period I was a (participant) observer. During a five year period, the directorate lost 10 members of staff, including two directors, a head of unit and six officers. This was particularly significant given the small size of the directorate. Of the staff who left, Bill Scorer 'retired' (see footnote above), another took early retirement on health grounds, one was dismissed for misconduct, and the remainder moved on to better paid jobs elsewhere. Although it is not possible to say why turnover was so high one informant referred to the poor working environment and a lack of support from senior colleagues as factors in their decision to leave, and the fact that the council had advertised a vacancy before the informant had formally resigned.

The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership

The East Durham Task Force had a clearly defined purpose. It was a *force* assembled to perform a specific *task*. The role of the East Durham LSP, in contrast, is much less clear-cut. It was established as part of a government programme designed to improve the coordination between local public sector service providers which in turn was supposed to address the intractable problems of deprived neighbourhoods. The East Durham LSP is not, therefore, a local initiative, but forms part of a central government programme to tackle deprivation. LSPs have subsequently become entangled in the margins of the government's local government modernisation agenda.

The East Durham LSP has produced two strategy documents, both at the direction of central government. The first, the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was published in 2002. This was followed less than 12 months later by the LSP's Community Strategy. These documents are considered in turn below.

The Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

The East Durham LSP produced its Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for the District in July 2002. The strategy "seek[s] to improve services in six key areas... closely linked to the Government's national floor target areas." (EDLSP, 2002: 1). The Strategy has chapters which address crime and community safety, employment, environment, health, housing and lifelong learning. Each chapter begins with a statement of the national floor target set by central government. The strategy then presents summary statistics for each thematic area which compare Easington with the rest of England. The local neighbourhood renewal strategy largely translates the national strategy into local language rather than developing a local approach to local problems. This is true for all areas except crime and disorder, where recorded crime in the District is actually substantially lower than the national average, and the environment. In relation to crime and disorder, the LNRS outlines the existing District of Easington Crime and Disorder Strategy 2002-2005, a statutory strategy produced by the District's Community Safety Partnership. In relation to the environment, the government's floor targets relate to air quality and the recycling of household waste whereas the District's environmental concerns relate to derelict land and buildings and settlement renewal and the LNRS sets out its proposals for these areas.

The Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy has been largely sidelined by the Community Strategy. The guidelines for the production of community strategies stated that where deprivation was a local issue it should be addressed through the community strategy even though it acknowledged that this would involve significant overlap with the LNRS (ODPM, 2000). The analysis presented here focuses on the Community Strategy as the primary strategy of the Local Strategic Partnership, although it must be acknowledged that some of the detail is contained in the LNRS.

The Community Strategy

The East Durham LSP published its Community Strategy in summer 2003 in order to comply with a deadline imposed by the government. The District Council, as the body with the statutory responsibility for the production of the community strategy (Local Government Act, 2000), took the lead in producing the strategy. The strategy

contains contributions from each of the six Implementation Groups of the LSP and was formally approved by the partnership at a meeting on 16 April 2003.

Identifying problems

The broad terms of the LSP's remit and the issues it should address through the Community Strategy are set out by central government in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. The need to improve coordination between public services, to "tackle the root problems of unemployment, crime and poor services" and "new ideas to empower communities" (SEU, 2001: 24) are all outlined in the National Strategy. The issues that LSPs should address are further specified in the government's floor targets (see chapter six). The role of the LSPs is to devise a strategy to tackle these issues that is sensitive to the local context and responds to the needs and wishes of local people.

The East Durham LSP's Community Strategy addresses a complex range of problems which relate to the responsibilities of its six thematic sub-groups. The Community Strategy is in fact a hurriedly 'cut and pasted' amalgam of six separate strategies which have somewhat confusingly been reduced to four thematic areas. The six strategies which form the basis of the Community Strategy were produced by the six Implementation Groups of the LSP. Many of the inadequacies of the Community Strategy can be explained in large measure by the tight timescale for its production imposed on the LSP by the government which made the production of a strategy a requirement for the payment of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money in 2003.

In broad terms, therefore, the LSP's approach to the District's problems is shaped by the partnership's structure. The six implementation groups have shaped the way in which the partnership has approached regeneration. The divisions between traditional policy domains reflected in the structure of the implementation groups resulted in a rigid organisation-centred approach to the problems of the District. The shift towards closer engagement between different organisations and different 'sectors' which is beginning to emerge has significant implications for the governance of regeneration, and these are considered in chapter eight. The problems identified by the LSP which its Community Strategy is designed to tackle are listed in Table 13 below.

Table 13 The problems identified in the LSP's Community Strategy

Economy

Business sites across the district are of varying ages and quality.

Many businesses are in manufacturing with a small number of high-technology employers, a high proportion of small businesses and low business start up rates.

There continues to be a steady loss of jobs from manufacturing and textiles, in addition to those lost from mining.

The majority of the communities within the district need support to improve their local economies.

Communities and businesses in the district are disadvantaged because they are unable to access Broadband technology.

There is a current mismatch between employer skill requirements and resident skill levels.

Childcare and transport provision are poor, and there are high levels of poverty which limit opportunity and access to jobs.

Environment

There are high levels of derelict land and property, presenting a poor image, some land may also be contaminated through industrial usage.

There is an oversupply of houses and properties in poor condition in both the public and private sector.

The district is restricted in the size and type of land available for housing developments that people want.

There is a need to reduce energy consumption and save resources to provide a cleaner and healthier quality of life for now and the future.

There are a lack of open spaces and leisure opportunities.

The district has low levels of car ownership and some communities are isolated making it difficult for people to get to work, go shopping or access leisure facilities.

Lifelong Learning Culture

There are significant numbers of parents / carers of young children within our community who are unable to take up learning, training, development and employment opportunities.

There is still a big difference between the achievement in our schools and those in the region and nationally.

There are low levels of interest throughout our communities to engage in educational, vocational and learning for fun.

There is no co-ordinated approach to the provision of information, advice and guidance for those wishing to take up learning opportunities.

Levels of literacy and numeracy skills are low when compared with other parts of the region and national levels and this affects the quality of life of residents.

Strong, safe and healthy community

Many people in the district do not actively take part in community life.

At present young people are excluded from involvement in decision making, and are powerless in influencing the future of the district.

Crime, drugs and disorder and the fear of crime, drugs and disorder impact on the quality of visitors, residents, employers and employees within the district.

There are some serious health problems within the district, death rates due to coronary heart disease are 40% higher than the rest of the country and mental ill health is 33% higher than the national average.

The quality of life of many children in the district is poor.

(Source: EDLSP, 2003)

The LSP's Community Strategy identifies a wide range of problems faced by the District. These range in their specificity from very general, such as the low levels of aspiration of the District's residents, to the very specific, such as the quality of business premises available in the District. The nature of the problems which have been identified reflect both the broad remit set for the LSP by the government and the way in which the LSP went about identifying local issues. The way in which the LSP identified these problems is addressed below.

Community participation

The statutory guidance issued alongside the Local Government Act 2000 governing the production of community strategies sets out the requirement for local authorities to involve the local community in the production of community strategies (ODPM, 2000). The East Durham Community Strategy was nominally drawn up on the basis of a series of community appraisals (EDLSP, 2003). This is, however, slightly misleading since, although community appraisals were undertaken across the District, they were carried out in 2001, two years before the Community Strategy was produced, and in connection with a European Social Fund project (EDC, 2002). It was, however, politically expedient for the LSP to harness the connotations of consultation associated with the community appraisals when it came to produce the Community Strategy. In reality, the community consultations bear little relation to the Community Strategy. Indeed the Community Strategy has little to do with community at all.

Furthermore, community 'appraisal' is not without problems, as Mackie observed, "They did community appraisals through Roger Tym and Partners [consultants], and I think that sort of directed them to where they were going to allocate NRF. The only trouble with the community appraisals was, depending on who you talk to in the community... and I had conversations with people who said 'when did they do them, like, nobody asked me?' That kind of thing. I'm not saying that Roger Tym did a bad job..." (Mackie, interview, 25.06.03). Napier, however, considered the consultants sample of between 8 and 10% of the District's population to be more than adequate (Napier, interview, 30.06.03). The problem here is not the size of the sample or the quality of the consultants work, both of which appear adequate, but the way in which community consultation informed the work of the LSP. The selection and use of consultants through competitive tender by the council will have undoubtedly influenced the nature of the feedback it received from the community consultation. Furthermore, the process of consultation will have influenced the community's perception and articulation of their 'needs' which will have been fed back to the council.

Influence of the partnership's structure

The Community Strategy was produced whilst I was a (participant) observer at the District Council. The Chairs of each of the LSP's six implementation groups each contributed a separate section which the Council then synthesised to produce the strategy. The structure of the partnership was, therefore, reproduced in the structure of the strategy. Since the strategy was not produced as a complete document in its own right by the LSP acting as a single organisation, it is necessary to consider how each of the implementation groups identified the problems which they sought to address through their contribution to the strategy. This question is addressed below.

Partners' existing priorities and strategies

Member organisations of the LSP have simply brought their existing strategies to the partnership to be incorporated into the Community Strategy. Public sector organisations such as the District Council, the Primary Care Trust, the Local Education Authority and voluntary sector organisations such as Groundwork East Durham have each brought their existing strategies and corporate plans to the LSP and elements of them all can be seen in the Community Strategy. So, for example, the Community Strategy contains the distilled essence of the Housing Directorate's Housing Strategy (Caygill, interview 08.07.03) and reflects Groundwork's longstanding commitment to environmental improvements in the District (Richards, interview, 27.06.03). The Community Safety Partnership's Crime and Disorder Strategy has also been integrated into the Community Strategy (Arkley, interview 02.07.03).

Indeed the logic behind the government's proposals for local strategic partnerships and community strategies was that they should integrate the strategies of a wide range of organisations in order to secure better coordination. What this logic doesn't allow for, and what the hype surrounding the introduction of LSPs masks, is that the strategies which individual organisations bring to the table for incorporation in the umbrella community strategy may in themselves be flawed and inappropriate. Furthermore, rather than taking the opportunity to develop a new and holistic understanding of the District's problems and the potential solutions, the production of the community strategy has simply been an exercise in fitting together existing strategies. Whilst this has served to raise awareness amongst partner organisations of

the joint challenges they face it has produced very little that is new in terms of tackling the District's problems.

The working of the partnership has done little to break down the barriers between sectors and organisation in terms of understanding the problems faced by the LSP. These barriers have been reinforced by the structure of the implementation groups. In the first three years of its operation at least, although the formal institutional arrangements put in place by the LSP suggested that inter-organisational arrangements were being re-configured along the lines of governance, the reality in terms of the way in which the new organisation identified the problems its strategy was to target was little different from more traditional forms of organisation.

Furthermore, many of the priorities of the organisations which contributed to the LSP are driven by central government and are not even local. These are addressed below.

Influence of the East Durham Task Force

Many of the problems identified in the Community Strategy are familiar from the Task Force's Programmes for Action. This is significant for a number of reasons. First, it draws attention to the fact that many of the problems the Task Force set out to tackle remain. This could reflect the scale and intractability of the problems, but it could also point to the inadequacy of the Task Force's approach to tackling these problems. Second, the continued emphasis on projects such as road building, industrial land and settlement renewal suggests that the same conceptual approach to the District's problems that structured the work of the Task Force remains in the LSP. Given the failure of the Task Force's overall approach, this raises concerns about the ability of the LSP to tackle these issues.

The main reason that many of the Task Force's priorities have re-appeared in the LSP's community strategy is that the same organisations were involved in devising and implementing both strategies. In a number of cases, the same *people* were involved in both the Task Force and the LSP. This is particularly the case in relation to the District and County Council's economic development directorates and the District Council's housing directorate.

The LSP's approach to developing a "thriving economy in 2010" in particular identifies a number of problems which are familiar from the Task Force's Programmes for Action. The first problem raised, although without any explicit prioritisation, is the varying age and quality of business sites and premises across the district (EDLSP, 2003) and the need to "ensure a good choice of industrial and commercial land and premises are available" (*ibid*: 12) (Figure 17). Similarly, unemployment remains a significant concern, especially given the continuing loss of jobs from manufacturing and clothing and textiles in addition to those lost from mining in the 1980s and early 1990s. Although greater prominence is given to the mismatch between employer skill requirements and residents' skill levels in the Community Strategy than in the Task Force's Programmes the LSP's emphasis remains on job-related skills. The LSP also reiterates the Task Force's emphasis on developing the tourism sector within the District, in particular in relation to the coastline.

Figure 17 New premises to let, Whitehouse Point, Peterlee

The section of the Community Strategy which deals with the environment also contains a number of familiar themes from the Task Force's Programmes for Action. The first problem raised, again without any explicit prioritisation, is the "high levels of derelict land and property presenting a poor image" (EDLSP, 2003: 13) echoing the concerns of the Task Force (EDTF, 1991). The poor condition of the District's housing stock, both public and private, and the oversupply of poor quality houses was an issue faced by the Task Force and remains a challenge for the LSP. The Community Strategy also outlines the need to build new roads in order to improve access to the District and counts among its future measures of success the completion of road building projects first outlined in the 1985 "Communities in the East Durham Coalfield" programme. The fact that these issues are still being addressed in the LSP's community strategy reflects the scale of the problems and the resources needed to tackle them.

The Community Strategy also outlines measures relating to community safety in its proposals to secure "a strong, safe and healthy community in 2010." Although the strategy provides virtually no details, community safety was an element of the Task Force's final Programme for Action (EDTF, 1997).

The influence of the centre

The role of central government in shaping the neighbourhood renewal agenda through its National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and in further directing the work of local public services through its floor targets for service improvements in the most deprived areas has already been clearly spelled out above and in chapter six. The influence of the centre has been particularly significant in defining new fronts on which LSPs are to tackle deprivation. The lifelong learning agenda is one example. As a result of the government's lifelong learning agenda, the East Durham LSP now employs a full time Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator, funded through the NFR, and has produced a Lifelong Learning Strategy (EDLSP, 2003). The engagement of 'the community' in service planning and the development of the Community Strategy is another central government agenda. The East Durham LSP has struggled to meet the requirements placed on it by the Local Government Act 2000 and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

The influence of central government in local public services extends far beyond neighbourhood renewal. Central government targets, monitoring and policy heavily influence the work of the police, health service and local education authority as well as the District Council. This in turn feeds back into neighbourhood renewal and the Community Strategy. The Community Safety Partnership's Crime and Disorder Strategy is a prime example. Government policy requires the local authority and the police to work together in partnership and produce a strategy to reduce crime and disorder. In East Durham, this Crime and Disorder Strategy feeds directly into the Community Strategy (Arkley, interview 02.07.03). The inclusion of the District Council's Housing Improvement Plan similarly reflects the incorporation of central government policy into local regeneration strategy (Caygill, interview 08.07.03)

The role of central government in shaping the contents and approach of the community strategy to the problems of the District highlights the importance of the central state in the project of neighbourhood renewal. There is no suggestion that the issues raised by the central state are not significant or should not be included in the Community Strategy, but they serve as a reminder that a serious reading of local governance should at least consider the national political environment.

Devising solutions

Turning to the measures proposed in the Community Strategy, there is a distinct lack of detail in the actions outlined to tackle the District's problems. This could reflect the fact that the Community Strategy was written as a summary document with the intention of producing a number of subsidiary action plans where the details are worked out. This is not the case however, and no action plans have been produced to date (with the exception of the Community Safety Implementation Group whose contribution was based on the pre-existing statutory plans of the Community Safety Partnership, and the Action for Housing and Communities Implementation Group which is taking forward the District Council's Housing Strategy). The lack of detail in the Community Strategy reflects the fact that the Strategy was produced to meet a requirement imposed by the centre and in a short timescale to comply with the government's requirements for the payment of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds. The

LSP had spent the first three years allocation of its Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money before it had produced the strategy. The strategy was not, therefore, part of the LSP's own processes of tackling the District's problems. It is not surprising, therefore, that the strategy does not contain the logical working through of problems and solutions that might be expected. Although the Community Strategy has subsequently been 'adopted' as the LSP's guiding document, its significance is more symbolic than material. This leaves the question of the origin of the LSP's solutions to the District's problems, and especially those implemented before the strategy was produced, unanswered. Evidence from observation at the LSP's meetings is presented below to address this question.

An outline of the LSP's solutions to the District's problems

Although the LSP's strategy has significant weaknesses as outlined above, and the partnership relies on rather arbitrary processes for the identification of solutions to implement its strategy (see below), it is nevertheless possible to deduce its general approach to tackling the problems it has identified in the District from the strategy. The Community Strategy outlines four priority areas: the economy, the environment, the lifelong learning culture, and strong, safe and healthy communities. In order to create a "thriving economy in 2010", the LSP proposes a strategy based on creating the physical infrastructure to attract inward investment, measures to diversify the economy, providing training for employees, business support and measures to tackle barriers to employment for the unemployed. The strategy's proposals for the environment include reducing the amount of derelict land and buildings, improvements to social housing, improved transport links, improved public spaces, and some generic improvements in air, water and wildlife. The partnership's strategy to create a "lifelong learning culture" by 2010 includes measures to address the basic skills needs of the District's adult population, provide learning opportunities for pre-school children and their parents, improve the performance of the District's schools and provide educational and vocational training for 16 – 19 year olds which will meet the needs of local employers.

The LSP's proposals for "a strong, safe and healthy community in 2010" are so general as to be almost meaningless. The strategy proposes "improving crime and disorder preventative measures" and "promoting healthier lifestyles" and "improving

the quality of local health services". These proposals are based on the plans of the local Primary Care Trust and the Community Safety Partnership, but their inclusion unaltered in the Community Strategy raises questions about the role of the Local Strategic Partnership in the process.

Taking an overall view, therefore, the approach of the Local Strategic Partnership to tackling deprivation in the District appears to be based on improving public services, remedial work to tackle the dereliction which is a legacy of mining in the District and a number of questionable (and fashionable) economic development ideas.

How the LSP identified solutions

Initially, the LSP did not advance any solutions of its own to the problems faced by the District. Indeed the idea that the partnership as a whole should devise solutions and seek appropriately qualified organisations to implement them is one that the LSP is still trying to work through in mid 2004. Even the general approach outlined above was not formalised until the Community Strategy was written in 2003. Upon receiving its allocation of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds from the government, the LSP instigated a Single Regeneration Budget style competition for projects to receive funding in the District. Applications were invited from organisations in the District who could 'bid' for funds to carry out their projects. Before inviting bids, the LSP divided its total NRF allocation between the six thematic implementation groups. After much discussion, the LSP divided the money equally between the six groups and thereby avoided any form of prioritisation. Bids were received from a wide range of organisations, including statutory service providers such as the local authority, the primary care trust and the local education authority, private sector training providers and charitable organisations. In most cases these bids were made by organisations which had considerable experience in sourcing funding for projects to pursue their own strategies. There was, therefore, very little change in approach under the early LSP from the way in which regeneration was carried out under the SRB and the Task Force. The bids were evaluated by the individual implementation groups, further reinforcing the sectoral divisions in the LSP's approach to tackling problems. Preferred bids were then recommended to the LSP which awarded them funding.

The allocation of funding through a competition meant that in the first three years the LSP was not so much pursuing its own strategy as responding to the strategies of the wide range of organisations which submitted bids for funding. This is not to suggest that the LSP was totally without control over the way in which its money was spent because, as with the SRB before it, the neighbourhood renewal agenda of which the LSP was a part was well known among the potential recipients of funding who were able to tailor their bids accordingly. It does mean, however, that the LSP was at the mercy of the organisations in the District to provide solutions to the District's problems. As will be shown in chapter 8, this raises issues about the ability of local public services to tackle the District's problems. By relying on local public services and organisations to devise solutions to the District's problems, the LSP focussed its efforts on managing the competition it had created and monitoring the processes by which the money was distributed. This proved to be a significant challenge in itself for the LSP. The business of the Chairs Group of the LSP was dominated by the administration of the NRF during the first three years, and in particular by the failure of a number of projects to spend the money allocated to them. The LSP was so preoccupied with these monitoring arrangements that it simply did not have time to develop its own solutions to the District's problems. However, following criticism of the way in which the partnership was operating by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, the LSP is now moving towards new ways of allocating its NRF based on commissioning work to tackle the problems it has identified. Whether the LSP will identify the solutions it wants to be implemented, or whether it will continue to leave this to potential tenderers remains to be seen.

The implications of the LSP's approach, both past and present, to formulating strategy to tackle the District's problems are profound. In many ways the LSP could be said to be working without a strategy at all. The Community Strategy is effectively a vision document which sets out the LSP's goals. The LSP itself does not have a plan as to how those goals are to be achieved. This reflects one of the profound problems that the LSP faces. The resources which the LSP has directly at its disposal are relatively modest. The LSP itself is an additional layer of organisation which is added to participating organisations existing roles and responsibilities. The scope of neighbourhood renewal is so wide that practically nothing can be ruled out of the remit of the LSP. When all of these factors come together, it is easy to see the

problems that the LSP faces in developing a strategy. The role of the partnership becomes indistinct from the role of the organisations which the partners represent, and far from furthering the work of the partnership, it undermines its ability to act by denying the partnership a distinctive role.

Implicit mechanisms

The mechanisms by which the East Durham Community Strategy seeks to tackle the District's problems of deprivation and disadvantage are determined by central government and set out in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. Two of the mechanisms, improving public services and bending mainstream programmes, are typically new managerialist and have nothing to do with measures that might actually tackle problems of deprivation. Instead, they simply devolve the responsibility for tackling problems to local actors. The third mechanism, which can be broadly termed 'workfare', involves the now dominant Schumpeterian approach to economic development. The final mechanism involves measures to diversify the local economy. These mechanisms are considered in turn below.

Improving public services

The central mechanism of the government's programme of neighbourhood renewal is the improvement of mainstream public services in deprived areas by providing a small amount of additional funding to harness the benefits of a joined up approach to tackling problems (SEU, 2001). There is an implicit criticism in this approach that public services are somehow under-performing and in need of modernisation and reform. Such an evaluation is beyond the scope of this study. What this research has shown, however, is that public services in the District have been operating in a 'fire-fighting' mode for many years. The housing directorate of the District Council, for example, faces a backlog of repairs to bring the council's extensive housing stock up to acceptable standards which exceeds £300 million. The Primary Care Trust has a £10 million shortfall in funding every year. Whilst there is no doubt scope for improvements in public services, and local public service providers accept this, it seems unlikely that public sector reform alone will solve the problems of the district which stem from years of under-funding and the problems caused by massive industrial decline and its associated social consequences.

Bending mainstream programmes

The second core mechanism of the government's programme of neighbourhood renewal is 'bending' mainstream programme spending to target particular problems and particularly disadvantaged areas. This poses obvious difficulties in a district such as Easington where deprivation is so widespread. Indeed bending mainstream spending makes little sense in East Durham where 20 out of 26 wards fall in the 10% most deprived wards in the country and many mainstream services are themselves chronically under funded. It is not surprising in this context that the LSP has used its NRF allocation to fund projects rather than to attempt programme bending. This highlights the key weakness of the government's approach to neighbourhood renewal. The resources allocated through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund were supposed to provide a small amount of additional 'pump priming' to bring about significant changes in the ways a number of public sector organisations spend their (considerably larger) budgets in deprived areas. This mechanism failed to take into consideration the fact that public services in poor areas are often under funded and overstretched and do not have the option of bending their spending to focus on particular areas. In addition, bending mainstream funding in response to the demands of a local strategic partnership raises numerous problems of legitimacy and accountability which remain to be addressed if, and when, LSPs adopt this approach.

Workfare

The other core elements of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal – tackling unemployment and crime – are addressed by characteristically advanced liberal and Schumpeterian workfare mechanisms. The Community Strategy contains measures to help prepare the unemployed for work, but it is not clear exactly what that work will be. Improved education and training along with a range of measures to facilitate the transition of the unemployed into work are central to the LSP's efforts to tackle unemployment. The implicit mechanism of 'job-readiness' is by no means unique to East Durham. Criticism is particularly pertinent in this case, however, given the scale of the regional unemployment problem, especially in manufacturing and low-skilled jobs, to which the strategy makes no concessions. The strategy could be criticised, therefore, for seeking to make people ready for jobs which simply do not exist. Whilst the presence of an educated and highly skilled workforce might, on the

other hand, attract inward investment and jobs, the strategy pays no attention to how such mechanisms themselves might work. In the meantime, the community strategy seeks to encourage local pupils and residents to train and acquire skills for jobs which don't exist. The strategy has to deal with problems of low aspiration, disengagement and apathy. The District is then left in a position where those who do succeed and gain skills and qualifications leave the District to find work elsewhere creating further problems of 'residualisation' (Coe, interview, 11.06.03).

Diversifying the economy

The strategy recognises that the district is over-reliant on manufacturing employment and proposes the diversification of the economy, although there is no explicit mechanism by which this is to be achieved. The strategy advocates developing a thriving retail, leisure and tourism sector and attracting high technology business such as nano-technology and bio-sciences. This echoes the approach to economic development set out in the County Durham Economic Development Strategy (CDEDP, 1995; CDEP, 2002) and the North East Regional Economic Strategy (ONE, 1999, 2002). The LSP's emphasis, however, continues to be on industrial land and premises.

The District, if not the LSP, has had a limited amount of success in diversifying the local economy. The retail outlet development at Dalton Park, for example, is the only example of planning guidelines being set aside in order to secure economic development as recommended by the Coalfields Task Force Report (1998). The District has also attracted a number of call centres, including Orange and the Department for Work and Pensions. The LSP has funded a number of ad hoc programmes to provide tailored training for retail and call centre workers, but there has been little systematic attempt to develop a 'service' economy. Furthermore, many of the speculatively built call centres and modern industrial units remain empty (Figure 18).

Figure 18 Modern industrial units awaiting tenants, Whitehouse Point, Peterlee

The Community Strategy – not a strategy at all

The LSP, through its community strategy and through its use of NRF money, is trying to tackle all of the Districts problems at once. Napier observed candidly, "It's like they say, 'what is your priority?' Everything's a priority, just some things are more important than others." (Napier, interview, 30.06.03). This approach is perfectly understandable in light of the scale and extent of the problems facing the District. It creates problems, however, for the design and implementation of a strategy to overcome those problems in the context of scarce resources. As Napier observed, the NRF money available to the LSP is "a drop in the ocean" (*ibid*) when compared to the scale of the problems facing the District. "The only way really for us to make strides as a council is for mainstream funding, so that is why this has got to be worked in partnership with all of the other partners that we work with." (*ibid*). This is the logic that underlies the policy of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. Although this may be a valid approach, notwithstanding the chronic underfunding of mainstream services in the District, the way in which the LSP has used its NRF allocation has undermined the

partnership's ability to bend mainstream spending in this way. The impact of NRF was limited by the LSP's inadequate strategy which in turn was weakened by the LSP's failure to agree priorities. The result has been in effect complete paralysis. Although the LSP has appeared busily engaged in supporting a wide range of projects the result, for the early years at least, has been more heat than light (see chapter eight).

The LSP claims that its priorities are directed by the community. "The first thing that we did was to carry out community appraisals and see exactly what the community wanted." (Napier, interview, 30.06.03). This approach poses a number of problems which potentially undermine the strategy. The first concerns whether or not the community can be expected to know and articulate the problems that it faces in a way which makes them amenable to solution. This is in no way to suggest that the residents of the community are not the best placed people to know the problems they face on a day-to-day basis. A strategy, on the other hand, needs to be based on an understanding of the causes of those problems and their likely solutions. A strategy also needs to operate in domains outside those in which most people live their lives. There needs, therefore, to be an additional step between consulting the community and formulating the strategy and priorities whereby a coherent programme is formed to tackle the problems identified. It is not clear whether this has been successfully undertaken in the case of East Durham.

Charlton illustrated these tensions with an example from the Horden Community Appraisal: "Horden is one of the most deprived areas in East Durham, and the community appraisals majored on the needs of local people in terms of poor local environment, physical environment, and there was a huge wish for fairly low level environmental improvements – tidying up waste ground, demolishing a building that had been vandalised, putting in grass, flower beds and a play area for the kids, re-furbishing shop fronts. Yet Horden has one of the highest levels of unemployment, and nobody mentioned jobs, and nobody mentioned training, but if you asked the professionals, the youth workers, the social workers, the teachers, the economic development officers and so on what were the two key things to make a difference in Horden – jobs, training and education. You've got that stark contrast between the community view and the professionals' view. The danger is that a professional such as myself... will say, actually, we know best, we're the professionals, you're actually

wrong to say you want these low level environmental improvements. Now of course you don't say that. Ideally what you want is both, but to actually get that, we're not there yet in the Easington LSP. We don't have that shared understanding and the comfort of both of those agendas coming together." (Charlton, interview 03.07.03). If the views of the community solicited through the community appraisals informed the strategy and priorities of the LSP they did so through a process of interpretation and translation by the chairs of the implementation groups.

Ultimately the chairs side-stepped the issue of setting priorities. "How do you separate issues of, well, health is underfunded by £26 million in any given year, the housing stock needs £100 million spending on it to bring it up to reasonable living standards, community safety, a statutory responsibility, needs lots of money in to it. So, all of those are priorities and there was no agreement... it was never discussed that we should focus on one of the floor targets, but that the NFR would be spread across all. And as an indicative amount to get things moving, then I think that there was an agreement that it would be roughly split." (Lynch, interview, 27.06.03). The result of this is central to an understanding of why the LSP has failed to make a significant impact on the problems faced by the District. "There haven't been any priorities established. There haven't been any hard decisions made by the LSP. What they'll do is they'll listen to reports from each of the implementation groups and they'll say yes, we agree with that and then move on, but there is nothing coming down to say, look, we've taken that information on board... these are our top priorities for this year. We want to deliver on that. What can the partners do to help us deliver?" (Caygill, interview, 08.07.03).

The result of the LSP's failure to establish priorities is that "the implementation groups are coming up with ideas and putting them to the LSP for approval." (*ibid*). It is not surprising that some service providers appear to be participating in the LSP solely for what they can get out for their own organisations, leading one chair to conclude "I don't think the commitment will be there when the money goes." A combination of the lack of a strategy and priorities and the way in which the LSP has chosen to allocate its NRF through a process of competitive bidding have resulted in a series of largely small-scale disjointed projects with only a modest impact on the regeneration of the district (chapter eight).

Conclusion

Whereas the East Durham Task Force's strategy was clearly focussed on creating jobs and there were clear implicit mechanisms linking all of its actions to this goal, the aims of the LSP are much less clearly defined. The LSP's aims are summed up neatly in its 'tag line' which proclaims "East Durham 2010 – a great place for everyone". The LSP's emphasis on settlement renewal, for example, is now justified by the community appraisals which found that most people wanted improvements in the appearance of their local environment. Whilst this may be perfectly reasonable, it does undermine the 'strategic' aspect of the local strategic partnership. It is difficult to see how the partnership will be able to tackle the complex problems it faces if its approach is driven by a desire to make things better according to the wishes of the local population. This places the LSP in a difficult position, trying to reconcile the needs of the district's residents, often caricatured as 'dog mess and grass cutting' (unemployment features low in local priorities) with the council's statutory responsibilities to secure economic development. These difficulties are exaggerated by the status of the LSP as supplementary to the partners' 'day jobs' and the comparatively modest levels of resources it has at its disposal.

In addition, the extensive influence of central government in the operation of local public services and in the formulation of regeneration strategy outlined in this and previous chapters undermines the Local Strategic Partnership's claim to be local. Furthermore, the difficulties which the partnership has experienced in fulfilling its requirements to engage with the local community and the dominance of its business by public sector service providers raise questions about what the community strategy has to do with the community.

The analysis presented above has shown that the regeneration strategies of both the Task Force and the LSP are seriously undermined both by their failure to adequately specify the problems they seek to tackle and in their conceptualisation of the mechanisms by which the solutions they propose will address those problems they have identified. Furthermore, governance structures amplify the problems that organisations face in designing regeneration strategy. Under the Task Force, governance structures were relatively simple. As will be shown in the next chapter,

the Task Force was relatively successful in achieving the core projects of its programme. This reflects the fact that in devising the strategy, the Task Force only had to have regard to a small number of organisations, namely the County and District Council and the government departments and programmes from which it sought funding. It was relatively straightforward for the Task Force to integrate the priorities of these organisations into a seemingly coherent strategy, albeit that the strategy was undermined by its inadequate theoretical foundations. The LSP, in contrast, brings together a much wider range of organisations and faces significant challenges in integrating their numerous approaches and priorities into a coherent strategy. Indeed the LSP has largely avoided any systematic attempt to integrate the strategies of its partner organisations, instead pasting together those strategies which already existed. The result has been that the LSP effectively has no overall strategy, and certainly not one that identifies problems, solutions and the mechanisms through which they operate in any systematic way.

In conclusion, the East Durham Task Force's Programme for Action had an overall coherence and focus which the LSP's Community Strategy lacks. This reflects the fact that the Task Force's Programme was effectively written by one man – Ken Frankish (Newcastle Journal, 17 September 1991). It reflects one man's ideas about how economic development on a large scale should be undertaken. The LSP's Community Strategy, in contrast, was produced by the six implementation groups of the LSP. Each of these groups is a 'partnership' of at least half a dozen organisations each with their own priorities and agendas to pursue. These have been 'integrated' through the imperfect processes of partnership which have developed over the previous two years. In addition they are mediated by the influence of the dark shadow of central government. It is not surprising, therefore, that the LSP's Community Strategy does not have the same coherence of the Task Force's Programme for Action. The Task Force's Programme ultimately failed to have a significant impact on the District's problems perhaps because its clarity and the resulting coherence was simply too far abstracted from reality. The LSP's complex and chaotic strategy, on the other hand, reflects the 'messy' reality of the inter-connected problems which make the District deprived, but it remains to be seen whether it has abstracted sufficiently from reality to identify workable concepts to enable the partnership to deliver regeneration.

Chapter 8

From regeneration strategy to regeneration projects

Introduction

This chapter analyses the processes through which regeneration strategy is translated into regeneration projects. Regeneration projects are undertaken by a wide range of organisations from the public, voluntary and community sectors, with grant funding from a government programme, to deliver the improvements identified in regeneration strategies, although, as will become apparent below, the link between regeneration strategy and regeneration projects is not always straightforward. This chapter examines the way in which governance and strategy interact to produce regeneration projects designed to tackle the problems identified in the strategy. The analysis begins with the East Durham Task Force and the implementation of its Programmes for Action and then turns to the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy.

The East Durham Task Force

Unlike the LSP, the East Durham Task Force did not have a budget of its own to fund the implementation of its regeneration strategy. Instead, it relied on influencing the spending plans of its partner organisations and attracting funding from outside organisations to fund the implementation of projects designed to fulfil its strategy. The ways in which these projects were devised and funded are the focus of the first half of this chapter. Some of the Task Force's regeneration projects were specified in detail in the strategy itself. This corresponds to the ideal model of strategy formulation proposed at the beginning of chapter seven in which strategies set out proposals to achieve the strategies' aims. This is particularly the case of the Task Force's major 'flagship' physical development projects, especially the road building, colliery reclamation and industrial land development projects. The Programmes for Action also contain a second tier of measures to tackle the District's problems which are outlined in much less detail. These measures, which are most prominent in the 1997 Road to Success, are generally the 'softer' measures to address training and education, community development, and the engagement of the business community.

These two tiers of measures are implemented in different ways, and they are considered in turn below.

Implementing major physical development projects

The major physical development projects formed the core of the Task Force's programmes to tackle the District's problems. They were predominantly funded by the County Council and English Partnerships with additional funding from the Department of Transport (for road building) and British Coal (for colliery reclamation). As the previous chapter has shown, many of these projects were already at the planning stage in 1985 when the District and County Councils prepared their first strategy to tackle the problems of the declining coalfield. These major physical development projects are set out in considerable detail in the Task Force's strategy. This reflects the fact that they were devised by the County Council, the same organisation that produced the strategy. The major physical development projects undertaken by the Task Force were driven by the County Council. The County Council took the lead on these projects because, according to its Chief Executive, it benefited from connections and influence in Whitehall which enabled it to secure resources on the scale necessary for such major projects (K Smith, interview, 25.04.03). Furthermore, many of these projects were in any case the statutory responsibility of the County Council.

Implementing second tier regeneration projects

In addition to the large scale physical development projects, the Task Force's strategy was also implemented through a large number of smaller projects which were not specified in any detail in the Programmes for Action. These projects were funded through a range of European and government programmes, including RECHAR, the ERDF / ESF and the Single Regeneration Budget. The processes by which these projects were elaborated are analysed below. Although these smaller, second tier projects are overshadowed by the Task Force's major flagship projects they are arguably more important since the processes which led from the regeneration strategy to the regeneration projects have been central to the way in which the LSP has developed its own regeneration projects.

The delivery of regeneration projects through programmes such as the SRB and ERDF / ESF is a two stage process. In the first stage strategic bodies, such as the Task Force, outline a general package of measures to tackle a clearly defined set of problems in a bidding document. The bidding document typically describes the problems which the measures are designed to tackle, proposes measures to address the problems and describes plans for the monitoring and evaluation of the outcome. As was shown in chapter two, these bidding documents are usually written with the bidding guidelines issued by the funding body in mind so they are a hybrid of local priorities and government, or European, preferences. If the bid is successful, funding will be paid to an accountable body which can then begin the second stage of the process.

The second stage involves the accountable body identifying specific projects, along with organisations capable of delivering them, to implement the measures outlined in the bidding document. It is unusual to find specific projects outlined in the bidding document. It is this process of identifying projects to deliver regeneration strategy which is the focus of attention in this chapter. The funding procedures for programmes such as the SRB reproduced the weaknesses outlined in chapter seven in regeneration strategy whereby strategy identifies outcomes but not the mechanism or projects to deliver them.

Single Regeneration Budget Round 1

The District secured £4.6 million in the first round of the SRB in December 1994. The money was used to fund 26 separate projects which "feed directly into the aims and objectives of the overarching Task Force Strategy rather than constituting a coherent programme in their own right." (DEC, undated c. 2001). Given the weaknesses in the Task Force's strategy outlined in chapter seven, this raises questions about the ability of regeneration projects based on it to deliver significant improvements in the District. Indeed an evaluation of the SRB round 1 schemes found the results to have been mixed with few of the projects achieving even the majority of their original objectives (*ibid*).

Single Regeneration Budget Round 3

The Task Force's next bid for SRB funding was in round three in September 1996 when it submitted a proposal for the comprehensive redevelopment of Seaham town centre. This was one of the Task Force's flagship projects, but the bid was rejected. Although this has delayed the redevelopment of Seaham it has not prevented the District Council and its partners from undertaking much of the work outlined in the round three bid. Many of the projects have subsequently been undertaken on an ad hoc basis when funding has been available. This shows that regeneration is not solely driven by funding programmes, although the regeneration of Seaham, as one of the Task Force's flagship projects, may be the exception rather than the rule.

Single Regeneration Budget round 5

The District secured further funding in round five of the SRB as part of a county-wide bid, *Integrated Regeneration in County Durham and Darlington*, which "provid[ed], for the first time, integration between strategic and local approaches to regeneration, together with effective community participation." (DCC, 1999: 2). In Easington, the projects funded included the selective demolition and refurbishment of public and private sector housing in Dawdon and Parkside and large-scale environmental improvements around the town of Seaham. These projects were led by the District Council's housing department and Groundwork East Durham respectively. Two other projects, a credit union and an intermediate labour market scheme, were also funded but these experienced considerable difficulties.

The striking feature of the SRB round five regeneration projects is the continued overwhelming emphasis on physical regeneration and the dominance of the two local organisations. Furthermore, despite being produced by the County Council, the East Durham Task Force is not even mentioned in the SRB round five bid, and there are clear indications in the bid of the County's impending shift in emphasis to the rural west of the County. This reflects the fact that by 1999 the Task Force was beginning to run out of steam.

Although improving housing conditions was a strategic objective of the Task Force's 1997 Programme for Action the only measures proposed in the strategy were the production of a comprehensive housing strategy and a detailed assessment of housing

need. This reflects the distinction drawn above between first and second tier regeneration projects. Although the Task Force recognised the scale of the problem it did not put forward any solutions. Housing is a statutory responsibility of the District Council and did not form part of the Task Force's county council-led approach to the economic regeneration of the district. Rather, the Dawdon and Parkside projects reflect a convergence of interests between the District's housing directorate and its regeneration unit. What this shows is that, beyond the core of major economic development projects pursued by the County Council, the Task Force relied on other organisations to devise projects to implement its strategy. In the late 1990s, the District Council and Groundwork East Durham were the main organisations in the District with the resources and ability to bid for regeneration funds. Both these organisations had been involved in the work of the Task Force. The convergence of interests between the Task Force's strategy and the corporate priorities of the participating organisations underline the role of those organisations in shaping the strategy and suggest that strategy is not only related to needs but is also shaped by the abilities, interests and priorities of the organisations taking part. This theme is explored further below in the context of SRB round six and subsequent regeneration programmes.

Single Regeneration Budget round 6

The District received further funding in round six of the SRB, again as part of a county-wide bid. This bid, submitted in May 2000, clearly shows a transition that was taking place in regeneration at that time. For the first time, the bid is couched in the language of neighbourhood renewal and makes extensive reference to the recently published National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. Although the LSP had not yet been established, the government's new localism agenda was clear. Furthermore, the East Durham Task Force was effectively defunct, its future sealed in a dispute between the County and the District over the secondment of staff. Although the measures outlined in the bid lack detail, their origins can be traced to three sources. First, the bid outlines plans to tackle the District's housing problems which build on the projects developed in round five of the SRB. Secondly, the bid outlines a number of plans to tackle community safety issues. These proposals are clearly derived from the Crime and Disorder Strategy recently produced by the District of Easington Community Safety Partnership. Finally, the bid outlines measures to improve the

health of the population although these are much less clearly specified. Their inclusion appears to be a response to issues raised in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

Again, regeneration projects appear to be driven by 'project sponsors' seeking funds rather than an overall strategy to secure the regeneration of the District. Both the District Council and Groundwork East Durham secured a considerable amount of funding under SRB, underlining their success as organisations in securing grant funding. This does not necessarily detract from the validity or usefulness of the individual projects but it does result in the fragmentation of regeneration activity.

The balance was tipped further in the direction of project sponsors and away from regeneration strategy by the SRB partnership's approach to allocating the resources which remained unspent once the initial projects were underway. The partnership issued a call for projects which, although they were evaluated with reference to the original SRB bid, shifted the responsibility entirely to project sponsors to devise solutions to the problems identified in the strategy. Furthermore, local management of the SRB programmes was combined with the management of existing European funded programmes which was also allocating resources in a similar way (see below). This institutionalised the 'call for projects' approach to implementing regeneration projects to deliver regeneration strategy. As will be shown below, this approach influenced the way in which the LSP allocated its first round of neighbourhood renewal funding.

European RECHAR II funding

The District received significant amounts of regeneration funding from the European Commission through the RECHAR programmes which were designed to provide support to former coalfield areas. The second round of the RECHAR programme funded projects between 1994 and 1999. Once again, the funding of regeneration projects was a two stage process. The European Commission allocated funding to each of the nine measures targeted by the RECHAR programme and the Task Force identified projects which would fulfil the requirements of the programme and also contribute to its own strategy. The nine measures are shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14 The measures addressed by the RECHAR II programme

1	Development and improvement of mining degraded and derelict land
2	Coalfield image improvement
3	Mining community economic development
4	Business development and support
5	Infrastructure for economic Diversification
6	Tourism development
7	Coalfield economic conversion bodies
8	Coalfield human resources development
9	Technical assistance

(Source: EU Inforegio, 1995)

The projects funded through RECHAR II are dominated by the District and County Councils and Groundwork East Durham. The pattern of projects funded suggests that rather than strategy driving regeneration projects, project sponsors are driving regeneration. The relationship between regeneration strategy and regeneration projects is, therefore, only loose. In the same way that government guidelines influenced the preparation of SRB bids through bidders' perceptions of what was required to secure funding, regeneration projects appear to be shaped by local project sponsors interpretations of what local regeneration strategy requires rather than them being part of the strategy itself. The relationship between the Task Force's regeneration strategy and the projects implemented with RECHAR II funding is, therefore, mediated by two factors: the programme guidelines issued by Brussels and the reliance on local project sponsors to design and deliver projects.

The projects implemented with RECHAR II funding are dominated by the 'big three' players listed above. Furthermore, RECHAR II funding is almost uniquely used for the 'second tier' regeneration projects identified in the Task Force's Programme for Action. As described in chapter seven, the Task Force's second tier projects are not outlined in any great detail in the programme. Indeed they feature most prominently in the 1997 Programme for Action as 'progress to date' rather than as part of the

strategy itself. This adds further weight to the suggestion that (second tier) regeneration strategy was driven by projects rather than strategy driving the projects.

EU Objective 2 Priority 4

The District received almost £3 million from the EU under Objective 2 Priority 4 for community economic development targeted at 17 priority wards in the District. Although it may have become a cliché, it is nevertheless true that the processes for allocating Objective 2 funding were extremely complex and bureaucratic. Again, the funding was allocated by a two stage process which first saw the EU allocate resources to the North East of England Objective 2 Programme to implement a general programme to tackle the problems of industrial decline. Regeneration projects were subsequently devised to address the issues identified and published in local delivery 'packages' (ECEDP, 1999). Once again, regeneration projects were designed by project sponsors and selected by local partnerships on the basis of their contribution to the aims of the North East of England Objective 2 Programme as a whole and other local priorities. Again, the District's big players in terms of obtaining grant funding were some of the largest recipients of funding, including Northern Training Trust Ltd, East Durham College and Groundwork East Durham. Unusually, there were a significant number of projects proposed by local 'settlement based' partnerships, although these were generally much smaller then the projects proposed by the District's professional organisations.

The regeneration projects implemented with funding from the Objective 2 Priority 4 programme are first and foremost related to the objectives of the programme itself. Their link with local need is established through the community appraisals which were themselves funded by the programme. The Task Force and its regeneration strategy are conspicuous by their absence from documents and projects relating to the Objective 2 Priority 4 programme.

Implementing the Programmes for Action: conclusions

The evidence presented above shows clearly that the Task Force's Programmes for Action took an implicit two-tier approach to implementing regeneration strategy. This approach was shaped by the processes through which the regeneration strategy

was funded. The Task Force's first tier of regeneration projects, which formed the core of its strategy, were largely funded through direct negotiation with government departments and government agencies. Projects included the redevelopment of former colliery sites with funding from the Derelict Land Grant and English Partnerships and the construction of new roads with resources from the Department for Transport. This approach was particularly suited to the style of the two men who drove the Task Force, Ken Frankish and Kingsley Smith, who saw their role as one of lobbying the government on behalf of the District and using their contacts in Whitehall to secure extraordinary commitment from the government to tackle the District's problems. The Task Force's strategy outlined the first tier projects even though the details had been largely worked out before the Task Force was formed.

The second tier regeneration projects implemented under the Task Force were not driven by the Task Force's strategy. These projects were funded from a range of government and European programmes, and the aims of these programmes were more important in shaping regeneration projects than the Task Force's strategy. Unlike the first tier regeneration projects, the Task Force does not outline the second tier regeneration projects in the Programmes for Action. Instead, it reports on their achievements in its progress reports. The reliance on project sponsors to devise solutions to the District's problems, even when these are devised in the context of regeneration strategies such as the Programme for Action and programme guidelines issued by funding bodies, raises a number of issues about the ability of projects to tackle the problems of the District. These are addressed below in relation to the implementation of the LSP's community strategy since, as will be shown below, they remain significant issues in contemporary regeneration practice.

The East Durham Local Strategic Partnership

In what could be seen as an implicit recognition that regeneration through programmes such as the SRB had failed to address the problems of disadvantaged areas the government introduced the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in 2001. Unlike programmes such as the SRB, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was allocated to deprived districts on the basis of need, as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000, rather than through a competition. The second major change was

that the NRF was, in theory at least, unhypothecated. In other words, Local Strategic Partnerships were free to spend the money on whatever they chose to tackle any problems they wished. In reality, however, the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and the government's floor targets set the framework within which LSPs were expected to deliver results. The importance of these central government drivers has subsequently been reinforced by guidance from the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit which accompanied the second round of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in 2004.

In terms of local regeneration strategy, the East Durham LSP had already allocated the first three years of its Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money before it published its Community Strategy. Although the Task Force had produced a succession strategy, this was never published. The development of a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was an early priority of the Chairs of the LSP's Implementation Groups, although the final document was not published until autumn 2002 and remained a peripheral document (see chapter seven). This section analyses the processes by which the LSP identified and funded projects to bring about regeneration during the first three years of its NRF.

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund 2001 – 2004

The LSP faced two challenges in allocating the resources it had received through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. First it had to decide how the money was to be split between the different problems that the LSP faced, and second, it had to identify projects and organisations to deliver them. The first decision was difficult for the LSP. Spatial targeting would have required the LSP to take some politically very difficult decisions, and despite the participation of local politicians in the partnership spatial targeting was ruled out in favour of projects which would on the whole benefit the entire District. Equally, the partnership could have chosen to target resources thematically, but this was always unlikely given the presence of representatives from all of the District's main service providers on the Chairs' Group. Ultimately, the LSP chose to divide the NRF equally between all of the Implementation Groups, although subsequently a small amount of re-allocation occurred in order to resolve problems created by the inability of the Economy Implementation Group to spend its share of the resources in time.

The second challenge, identifying projects to spend the money on, was relatively straightforward for the LSP. As outlined in chapter seven, the LSP issued a 'call for projects' and instigated its own competition to allocate the resources. This reflects the dominant role of the District Council in running the LSP and its experience with the processes for allocating SRB and European funding. The regeneration team at the council is small, and given that the same people who were involved with previous funding regimes were actively involved in shaping the evolving LSP, it is unsurprising that they chose to replicate the same allocation mechanisms, especially given the lack of time to develop a new approach. Furthermore, the LSP relied on many of the systems which were already in place at the Council for handling public money and dealing with accountability which had considerable influence on shaping the way in which the funding was allocated.

The LSP's approach to allocation

The competition which the LSP initiated to allocate its NRF was highly bureaucratic and time consuming. It is open to all of the criticisms of competitive bidding levelled at national regeneration policy in the 1990s outlined in chapter two. Furthermore, the administration of such a system by the LSP and its small secretariat based at the District Council completely overwhelmed the partnership during the first three years. This is particularly unfortunate given the intention behind the LSP that it should be flexible and allow local actors greater freedom to tackle local problems. The main problem the LSP faced in administering its NRF was its inability to spend the money sufficiently quickly. As a number of the Chairs pointed out, the East Durham LSP received a relatively large amount of NRF compared to the amount of regeneration funding that the District had received in the past. In addition the government, keen to see a rapid return from its investment in neighbourhood renewal, imposed limits on the amount of funding that the partnership was able to carry over from one financial year to the next. This move, imposed during the second year of the first round of the neighbourhood renewal fund, was designed to ensure that the partnerships spent their money quickly and got projects underway. This posed serious problems for the East Durham LSP, however, which were exacerbated by the partnership's £1 million underspend in the first year which was carried into the second year of the NRF. The combination of the need to manage the partnership's large underspend and running

the competition to allocate the funding left the newly formed LSP with little time for developing a coherent strategy to tackle the problems it faced. Meetings of the Chairs' Group during the first three years were dominated by the continuing battle to spend money. One Implementation Group Chair observed, "Certainly in the first year it was NRF, NRF and NRF and that was it… there was panic to get the money spent." (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). The large underspend became a political embarrassment to the LSP at a number of its meetings where members of the community expressed their surprise that the partnership had been unable to spend the money on regeneration despite the scale of the problems the district faced. Furthermore, some members of the community expressed their frustrations at not having access to the money for their own projects and the apparent reluctance of the Chairs to relinquish control.

The LSP's approach to allocating its NRF during the first three years of the programme is summed up by the criteria for assessing the proposed service improvements (the official terminology for what were in effect bids for project funding) agreed by the partnership at a meeting in May 2002. The three principles which were to guide the LSP in spending its NRF to tackle deep seated problems of deprivation in the district are:

1. does the service improvement reinforce partnerships?
2. is the service improvement sustainable?
3. can the requested resource be spent within the timescale?

(EDLSP, 28 May 2002, item 3)

It should be remembered that the LSP had not produced a strategy when it devised these assessment criteria. The criteria show a partnership that had little idea of what it wanted to achieve, no idea of how it was going to achieve that and was in the not unusual position of having a large amount of money at its disposal and being under intense pressure from central government to spend it quickly[2].

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[2] The District's European Partnership faced similar problems in spending its allocation of Objective 2 Priority 4 funding despite the exhaustive application procedure for EU funds. Half way through the programme, £835,771 (21%) of the District's funding had not been allocated to projects, and the

The LSP's large underspend raises a number of questions about the partnership's approach to allocating resources and about the whole concept of neighbourhood renewal. The majority of the partnership's problems originated in delays in a small number of large projects, including a number funded by the Economy Implementation Group and a joint project to tackle substance misuse. All of these projects involved organisations outside the partnership and beyond the District. This raises questions about the capacity of a small organisation such as an LSP to tackle large and complex projects. Although the delays could have been the result of misfortune, a comparison with the Task Force here is instructive and suggests that the LSP does not carry the same weight when it comes to negotiations outside the LSP. This is unsurprising, however, given the changed governance context in which the LSP is operating. During the 1990s the East Durham Task Force was largely unique as a governance structure and therefore commanded greater attention. Today all seven Districts in County Durham have their own Local Strategic Partnership and East Durham is one voice amongst many with little claim for special attention.

The East Durham LSP's inability to spend the resources allocated to it and its subsequent reliance on large scale, capital intensive projects in order to rid itself of the embarrassing underspend highlight a number of tensions in the whole concept of neighbourhood renewal. The first relates to scale. There is very little that is 'neighbourhood' about the projects implemented by the LSP. As mentioned above, the LSP chose to fund projects which would have an impact across the whole district and all of its neighbourhoods. This is understandable given the scale and the scope of the problems faced by the District. It also reflects the fact that many of the problems which the projects set out to address are faced by all neighbourhoods. It seems unlikely, however, that these problems are specifically 'of neighbourhoods'. Unemployment, poor health, crime and disorder, poor quality housing and so on are found in neighbourhoods but their causes lie elsewhere. Attempting to tackle these problems at the neighbourhood level suggests a fundamental misunderstanding of the mechanisms behind the problems. In this sense, the mechanisms implicit in the

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partnership issued a desperate 'call for projects' to the LSP to avoid losing the money. (EDLSP, 17 January 2003, item 13)

government's approach to neighbourhood renewal are flawed. This is particularly the case in East Durham where deprivation is so widespread. Although the LSP is funding projects which operate at a scale above the neighbourhood it is unlikely, however, that this is appropriate given the mismatch between the scale of the resources available and the problems faced by the District. The whole concept of neighbourhood renewal assumes that the mechanisms to tackle severe problems of deprivation lie within deprived neighbourhoods themselves. This appears ambitious to say the least given the root of many problems in factors such as structural unemployment.

This mismatch between the scale of problems and their solutions underlines a further tension in the concept of neighbourhood renewal. Neighbourhood renewal assumes that the capacity to improve public services and the quality of life in general in deprived areas lies in deprived neighbourhoods themselves. This suggests two possible interpretations of the East Durham LSP's approach to neighbourhood renewal. The first is that the government's concept of neighbourhood renewal is implicitly based on alternative, third sector approaches to tackling the problems of deprived neighbourhoods such as those documented by Amin *et al* (2002) rather than more mainstream approaches to economic and social development in which case the LSP is using inappropriate mechanism to deliver the government's programme of neighbourhood renewal. This seems unlikely, however, given the emphasis on mainstream service providers and the quality of local services in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and in the work of LSPs. The second interpretation acknowledges the explicit focus on service providers and suggests that service providers in deprived areas do not have the capacity to deliver neighbourhood renewal. This seems to be the most likely explanation of the problems faced in East Durham in implementing neighbourhood renewal and is examined in greater detail below.

Analysis of the project proposals and monitoring reports for the projects receiving NRF in 2003 revealed the great variety in the nature and scale of the work being funded by the LSP. Some of the projects, such as those proposed by the Community Safety Partnership, were clearly linked into the mainstream agenda of service providers and contributed to the delivery of existing strategies. Other projects,

however, were not so clearly related to the existing work of service providers and appeared to be speculative bids triggered by the availability of funding rather than by strategies in search of funding. The allocation of resources to these funding-driven bids suggests that there is a lack of capacity in the District to tackle the problems the District faces. Closer analysis of these 'funding-led' bids casts further doubt on the ability of local organisations to deliver solutions to local problems. On first examination, many of the proposals appear to be carefully worked out proposals which target specific problems by addressing particular mechanisms. For example, introducing children to basketball increases their level of physical activity which has a positive effect on their health. It also occupies their time after school and prevents them from becoming engaged in anti-social behaviour or crime. Better still, healthier children perform better at school and obtain better qualifications, thereby improving the economic future of the District. Whilst all of these observations are no doubt true, linking them together in such a long chain of causal mechanisms expressed with such confidence leaves little room for contingency which a critical realist reading would say was an inevitable part of such processes. What these project proposals reflect is the institutionalisation of a particular bidding language in which the suggestion of a critical realist inspired solution is given by the theoretically empty use of a critical realist vocabulary.

Analysis of the implementation of projects funded with the NRF raised further questions about the ability of local organisations to deliver solutions to local problems. The monitoring forms for one project, delivered by East Durham and Houghall Community College, detailed the 209 hours of administration required by the project to deliver an hour long basketball taster session to 40 school children at a total cost of £3223. Numerous other projects were composed of management costs and capital expenditure in almost equal measures. In an environment in which many public and voluntary sector bodies receive substantial proportions of their revenue from the state through contracted out services (Rose, 1996) it is not surprising that these same organisations should approach the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund as another opportunity to increase their turnover. It is an indictment of the lack of strategy and critical judgement at the LSP that it chose to fund such programmes. It is not surprising, however, given that those responsible for allocating the funding were in many cases themselves members of organisations which worked in very much the

same way. This is not to suggest that they were in any way misappropriating neighbourhood renewal funds, but rather that they were so closely involved in a whole system that such an approach seemed natural.

Many of the projects funded with NRF employed staff. A common problem experienced by these projects was delays in recruiting staff so that by the time the full complement of workers was in post a substantial proportion of the project had passed. Not only did this result in delays in delivering regeneration, it also contributed to the underspend problems which occupied so much of the LSP's time. This shows the incompatibility of this approach to funding regeneration projects with projects that seek to improve service provision through deploying extra staff. It also reflects the proliferation of this type of NRF funded project work and the competition between areas for a limited pool of qualified personnel. This has had an impact on the recruitment of staff for regeneration projects and also within the District Council itself where staff turnover has been significant as individuals leave for better paid jobs in other authorities.

Although the East Durham LSP allocated its first round of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund resources before it had developed its Community Strategy and with apparently little reference to the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, some of the projects it funded were related to existing strategy. The Community Safety Partnership, for example, is a statutory partnership between the local authority and the police and had its own Community Safety Strategy. The Community Safety Partnership sought money from the NRF to implement parts of its existing strategy. The same is true of the Housing directorate at the District Council which had its own Housing Improvement Plan (DEC, 2002) for which it too sought money for implementation. In slightly different circumstances, Groundwork East Durham, a voluntary sector organisation, had a clearly developed business plan and a well known approach to the District's environmental problems for which it too sought NRF money. The education and economy implementation groups, on the other hand, did not have such clearly identifiable pre-existing strategies which they could seek to implement through the NRF. As described above, the economy group was initially dominated by the District Council which had relatively little experience in economic development having played a secondary role to the County Council under the Task Force. The

Lifelong Learning Implementation Group brought together a wide range of partners from the field of education and one of their early tasks has been the production of a Lifelong Learning Strategy. In the first three years of the NRF, however, the tensions and lack of co-ordination in this sector were highly visible and were frequently manifested at LSP meetings in bitter public disputes between members of the same implementation group (especially the LEA and the FE college). Where no pre-existing strategy was available to shape the work of an implementation group the selection of projects and their ability to tackle problems appears to have been all the more arbitrary and open to funding-led opportunism on the part of project sponsors.

Neighbourhood Renewal in spite of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

During the first two years of its operation, the East Durham LSP was preoccupied with "bureaucratic processes rather than positive outcomes for communities". (LSP Implementation Group Chair, interview). The work of the LSP has been dominated by the allocation and administration of the partnership's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocation. This has been particularly evident at the level of the Chair's Group where there have been numerous meetings where the NRF has been the only item on the agenda. The LSP's difficulties in administering the NRF have been compounded by the significant amount of money which was unspent at the end of the first year of the programme and the need to put in place arrangements to ensure that it was spent in the second year. This 'slippage' amounted to almost £1 million, or a third of the first year allocation.

Although most of the chairs interviewed agreed that the administration of the NRF had dominated the work of the partnership some went further and suggested that this domination had been to the detriment of the real business of the LSP – tackling the District's deep seated problems. Roger Bolas summed up the problems of managing regeneration funds: "inevitably there has been a pull to say 'what is the best use of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds?' And inevitably when you've got a funding stream people will concentrate on that … but there is a danger that it becomes the raison d'etre of why we are there, when actually it is about how do we pool our collective wisdom and skills to make Easington great." (Bolas, interview, 01.07.03).

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund also clouded the process of the engagement of the community with the LSP. Mackie observed "One of the things that clouded the issue in the beginning was the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, and my colleagues in Derwentside, Weardale and Sedgefield, they've termed this sometimes that the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was more of a curse than a help because people tended to focus on the money. They tend to focus on the money and say 'where's the money going? Who's spent the money? How can I get my hands on the money?' So, NRF did cause a lot of... quite a bit of confusion." (Mackie, interview, 25.06.03)

If the NRF money was a significant factor behind the participation of some members of the community in the LSP then its influence on some of the 'professional' partners was even stronger. One chair observed "I think it is just like pigs in a trough at the minute. And when the trough's empty, that's when we'll hit problems. God knows what will happen when NRF goes. I have serious concerns about some of the partners who are alleged partners but don't really want to contribute. I don't think there is a commitment from the partners and I don't think the commitment will be there when the money goes." (interview). Another chair stated: "Would people have come round the table in the first place if there wasn't any money? I think not." (interview). Conway also identified the competitive element in the distribution of NRF within the LSP as a potential barrier to a new partnership approach to the problems facing the District (interview, 17.07.03).

The early experience of the partnership suggests that the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money was actually serving to undermine the very process of closer partnership working which it was supposed to stimulate. Furthermore, the partnership became so involved in the administration of the NRF that it had neither the time nor the resources to systematically engage with the problems of the district and critically evaluate its approach to the district's regeneration which in turn served to undermine the development of its strategy.

Evolving forms of governance
Although the Local Strategic Partnership as a formal structure may not constitute a radical departure from previous forms of governance, the way in which its partners operate does show signs of an evolutionary change. This section aims to theorize this

transition and uses Grabher's concept of project ecology as a model (Grabher, 2002a; 2002b). This has significant implications for the governance of regeneration in the district which are considered below.

As an organisation the Local Strategic Partnership, with its quarterly meetings and six implementation groups, is very similar to the East Durham Task Force. The similarities were outlined in chapter five. The way in which the organisations implement their regeneration strategies is, however, significantly different. These changes have implications for our understanding of the governance of regeneration. Under the Task Force, partners largely sought resources to implement their own projects. The unity and coherence of the governance structure occurred at the level of the Task Force itself which held together the various partners in a single structure with unified aims. The patterns of implementation developing under the LSP, however, show signs of greater reflexive self-organisation and reciprocal interdependence amongst partners in developing and implementing regeneration projects. The embedding of these essential characteristics of governance identified by Jessop (2003) in the interactions between partners suggests that the East Durham LSP may be taking steps, however tentative, in the direction of governance.

The forms of governance developed by the Task Force were limited to co-ordination between projects and between service providers. This continues to be an important factor in the work of the LSP and reflects the need to deliver the maximum benefit from limited resources by aligning the priorities and activities of different organisations. An example would be the work undertaken by the Environment Implementation Group to improve the gateways to housing estates in Thornley and Parkside where the Housing Implementation Group had spent a considerable amount of money improving the housing stock (Caygill, interview 08.07.03). There are, however, limits to the effectiveness of new modes of governance operating under the logic of co-ordination. Co-ordination ultimately results in frustration and dissatisfaction that nothing has really changed and that the potential for making a significant impact on the District's problems is severely limited (*ibid*). Within the LSP, this model of co-ordination has begun to be superseded by more advanced forms of inter-organisational working in which organisations begin to work beyond their

traditional boundaries. These new patterns could be crudely described as co-operation, and they are examined below.

The new forms of governance are closely linked to the implementation of individual regeneration projects. They reflect the first signs of the breakdown in the rigid distinction between sectors and organisations which was reproduced in the structure of the implementation groups. One of the earliest examples was the 'Handyman Scheme' funded with resources allocated for health improvement. This project recognised that accidents in the home amongst the elderly could be avoided by having a rapid-response handyman employed by the council to undertake minor repairs. The reasoning behind the project appears sound: accidents in the home were responsible for a large number of hospital admissions amongst the elderly, the elderly tended to require longer stays in hospital and higher levels of aftercare, so preventing accidents would be an efficient way of managing resources (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). This form of limited inter-organisational co-operation is equally subject to limits. Co-operation results in frustration when one organisation sees itself funding services which should be provided by another organisation, as was the case with the handyman scheme (*ibid*).

This initial form of co-operation conforms closely with Grabher's initial analysis of project ecology in the advertising industry in which the distinctions and interdependencies between projects and firms (or their public sector equivalents) remain pertinent (Grabher, 2002a). Grabher identifies the increasing demands for customised 'packages' of products and services and a deepening division of labour between organisations due to outsourcing and concentration on core competencies as becoming increasingly influential on organisational practice and fuelling the shift towards project based organisation (*ibid*).

Subsequent projects have taken joint working further. Examples are as yet limited, but the substance misuse initiative led by the Police and the Primary Care Trust is a prime example. The Young Persons' Substance Misuse Initiative is driven by a strategic alliance between the chair of the Health Implementation Group of the LSP, in his role as chief executive of the Primary Care Trust and chair of the Drugs Action Team, and the chair of the Community Safety Implementation Group who was also

the Police Divisional Commander. The project is funded from the budgets of both organisations as well as the NRF. It involves staff from both organisations in both the design and the implementation of the project. The project will ultimately contribute to the efforts of both organisations to deliver their services and meet their government targets. The project is, however, quasi-autonomous. It has its own director and its own budget. The Police and the Primary Care Trust have a central role as the parent 'commissioning' organisations, but the project itself ultimately operates on new territory opened up between them.

Grabher's work on project ecologies in the new media is particularly useful for interpreting these changes in the governance of regeneration projects since it "yields insights of more general relevance for understanding organisational forms and processes in turbulent environments" (Grabher, 2002b: 1911). Regeneration operates in an increasingly turbulent environment. This turbulence stems from a number of sources, including a reliance on unpredictable sources of funding, an evolving organisational context and changing government programmes which can require organisations to re-align their priorities. Grabher observes that the central organisational arena of these practices is the project – a 'temporary system' with 'institutionalised termination'. Furthermore, projects are a long established routine in industries organised around 'one-off' activities. Most regeneration has been pursued through one-off activities as a result of the way in which such projects are funded. Regeneration continues to be dominated by the project as an organisational form under the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund despite the government's emphasis on improving services and mainstreaming, reflecting the continuing turbulence in the environment. Furthermore, Grabher observes that the diffusion of traditional project ecologies has been accelerated by codified formulas and routines of planning, budgeting and managing projects as distinct organisational units (*ibid*). This resonates with the LSP's use of the systems for managing regeneration funding developed at the Council under previous regeneration programmes and its reliance on the Council's own systems of financial management and audit described above.

Grabher's concept of project ecology can, with subtle modification, be applied at two levels to the governance of regeneration by public sector organisations through a body such as the LSP. On one level, public sector organisations such as the Primary Care

Trust and the Police correspond to the firms which work together on projects in Grabher's model. The Substance Misuse Initiative is a good example of the type of project on which Grabher's work is based. On another level, however, the LSP itself could be considered as a project, the aim of which is to secure neighbourhood renewal. This has particular resonance with Grabher's (and others') studies of the new media since like the new media, the LSP is a 'self-organised project' reflecting the emergent character of this field. Grabher notes that in 'self-organised projects' neither the division of labour between team members nor the coordination of team activities follows traditional management principles. This has been clearly visible at the Chairs' Group meetings where, for example, non-local authority members have provided an extensive and imaginative range of suggestions about how the partnership should tackle the regeneration of the District. As Grabher observes, in project ecologies "knowledge, responsibility and accountability are distributed across professional domains and across organisational boundaries." (*ibid*: 1911). However Grabher also points out that "project ecologies are also populated by firms [or their public sector equivalents] and nurtured in their evolution by lasting place-bound institutions." (*ibid*: 1911). These organisations and institutions are particularly important in the context of governance as they place limits on the development of project ecologies.

Grabher's work is important, then, because it provides a framework for the study of collaborative practices in transient social and organisational domains. It provides an insight into how new processes of governance operate between organisations. It also reminds us of the limitations to governance in the form of the enduring boundaries between institutions and the impact of these boundaries on project working. These are considered in the context of the LSP below. These limitations combine with the influence of meta-governance outlined in chapter six to shape the outcome of governance.

The limits to 'project ecology' governance
Grabher's observation that project ecologies are populated by firms [or their public sector equivalents] and nurtured in their evolution by lasting place-bound institutions is particularly significant in the development of governance through the LSP. One of the most influential organisations populating the East Durham LSP's project ecology

was the District Council itself. The development of governance was limited in the first three years of the LSP by the District Council. The council is widely acknowledged to be "an old-style council... being dragged into the 21st century not always happily" (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). This was particularly true of a number of the council's officers who were responsible for creating the LSP's structures and procedures. As a result, the LSP developed as a highly bureaucratic and overly formal organisation closely modelled on the council's own procedures (*ibid*). Furthermore, since the council took the early lead in establishing the LSP it has remained 'in charge' and the implicit arbiter of changes in direction. Discussions at the LSP Chairs' Group, for example, regularly propose new and sometimes radical approaches to the District's problems with many ideas coming from health, environment, community safety and education. Rarely are these ideas taken any further, however. This reflects the control of the District Council over the LSP. The council leader chairs the LSP and its Chairs' Group (the partnership's *de facto* executive). The council's officers provide the partnership's secretariat. The agenda is set by the council leader and his officers (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). Whilst these people all undeniably do a good job, like everybody else the LSP is only a small part of their responsibilities. Consequently, they have neither the time nor the inclination to alter the LSP's course. Although the LSP is a partnership, the division of power between the partners is not equal.

Furthermore, the other organisations which populate the LSP bring their own organisational cultures which shape the work of the LSP and in particular the work of the Implementation Groups. The Health Implementation Group, for example, is based on a partnership which existed before the LSP was established which brought a commitment to public engagement in its work (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). There were also significant working relationships which existed before the LSP and which remain significant in the work of the LSP. The relationship between the Director of Groundwork East Durham and the regeneration team at the District Council, for example, has brought great benefits to the working of the Chairs group through their ability to engage in open and frank discussions about the operation of the LSP.

Institutions beyond the District also influence the project ecology of the LSP. The role of the government through meta-heterarchy imposes further limits on the

development of governance at the local level. Ironically, these limits have been exposed by a central government drive to subject LSPs to performance management systems. Performance management systems are crude governmental systems to make visible the way in which LSPs are tackling the problems they face and the impact they are having. Essentially they require the collection of baseline data to enable the monitoring of change in key indicators, such as unemployment, educational attainment and death rates form heart disease. The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, under pressure from the Treasury, has required LSPs to introduce performance management frameworks so that the impact of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund can be measured. Attempts to performance manage the LSP, however, have thrown into sharp relief the difficulties and contradictions of governance approaches to tackling regeneration.

The government's attempt to performance manage local strategic partnerships highlights the contradictions involved in attempting to improve public services through governance mechanisms. They show the salience of Grabher's observation that even in the most advanced form of 'self-organised' projects firms (or their public sector equivalent) and lasting place-bound institutions remain central (Grabher, 2002b). For example, although the East Durham LSP has stated its commitment to improving the educational attainment of the District's children by increasing the number obtaining A to C grade GCSEs, education remains the statutory responsibility of the Local Education Authority. It is true that the LSP has spent some of its NRF allocation on improving educational attainment, by providing electronic whiteboards and laptops to secondary schools, for example. Nevertheless the majority of the funding for the District's schools comes through the LEA and the majority of the decisions which shape local education are, for the time being at least, taken by the LEA. The LEA, not the LSP, is ultimately responsible for educational attainment in the District's schools. The LEA is subject to a wide range of demands, particularly from central government, and the LSP is only one factor in its decision making processes. How then can the LSP be performance managed on its efforts to improve educational attainment? The same is true of health and housing. Performance management serves to highlight the structural limitations on the LSP and the importance of meta-heterarchy in shaping what it is able to achieve.

Performance management also reveals the contradictions in the government's approach to neighbourhood renewal. The organisational drive for performance management originates in the Treasury which is concerned with value for money in public spending. Although the Treasury is concerned with public spending across the board, it is particularly keen to monitor the impact of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Performance management is an advanced liberal technology which allows the Treasury to monitor, and ultimately to govern, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (Miller and Rose, 1990). Local Strategic Partnerships, however, were intended to be concerned with much more than administering the NRF. Through its attempts to introduce performance management, the Treasury risks marginalizing any of the benefits of governance which the LSPs promised to bring and instead shifting the focus to the NRF as yet another central government regeneration grant.

Delivering neighbourhood renewal – the role of the community

The government's approach to neighbourhood renewal attempts to harness the powers associated with the concepts of neighbourhood and community in order to tackle the problems of deprivation. Rose (1996: 335) noted that "community is not simply the territory of government, but a *means* of government: its ties, bonds, forces and affiliations are to be celebrated, encouraged, nurtured, shaped and instrumentalized in the hope of producing consequences that are desirable for all and for each." (emphasis in original.) The agency of the community is sidelined, however, by the government's explicit emphasis on improving the quality of public services. Rather than part of the solution to the problems of deprivation, the community is reduced to a crude instrument of spatial targeting and neighbourhood renewal is simply another example of area-based regeneration policy.

Conclusions

The analysis of regeneration projects presented in this chapter has shown that projects are largely driven by project sponsors and not by regeneration strategy. Indeed regeneration strategy has been shown to be largely irrelevant in influencing regeneration projects. Regeneration projects have been shown to fall into two groups or tiers. First tier regeneration projects, which tend to be large scale, capital intensive projects, are usually implemented by 'core' project sponsors. These tend to be the

same individuals who devise regeneration strategy. Consequently, these core regeneration projects are often outlined in the regeneration strategies themselves. A typical example would be the road building projects and industrial sites developed by Durham County Council which are set out in detail in the Task Force's Programmes for Action.

Second tier regeneration projects, in contrast, do not feature in regeneration strategy. They are produced in response to the availability of regeneration funding (ie they are 'funding-led') by 'peripheral' project sponsors. These projects tend to be on a smaller scale and are more likely to employ staff and provide services than the core regeneration projects. Because they are produced in response to the availability of funding, the guidelines which accompany the funding programme are the most significant factor in shaping the regeneration projects. Regeneration strategy is relegated to a secondary role and is often only referred to insofar as it contextualises the projects and demonstrates the need which the project is to address.

Most of the East Durham LSP's regeneration projects fall into this second category. This reflects the fact that Neighbourhood Renewal Funding was available for projects before the LSP had developed a strategy and the government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal was, therefore, the only framework within which projects could be developed. The LSP and the District's complement of project sponsors had considerable experience of working in this way, however, since the Task Force's second tier projects funded by the Single Regeneration Budget had operated in a similar way.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

Introduction

This thesis began by outlining the social and economic deprivation which followed the complete run down of coalmining in the District of Easington. It has analysed the efforts of a wide range of individuals, organisations, agencies and partnerships over the last 15 years to tackle the problems left by the rapid closure of the mines and to deliver social and economic regeneration in the District. It has engaged with the policies of local and central government and numerous other organisations. The picture that has been presented has strong resonance with other similar work in different former coalfield locations (for example Bennett *et al*, 2000). This research contributes to the growing understanding of the factors that influence the outcome of regeneration strategy in places that have been subjected to similar social and economic changes. The engagement with government policy and the processes of government more generally mean that this research has relevance not just in formerly mono-industrial places such as the former coalfields, but in other areas experiencing severe social and economic dislocation. This is reflected by the thesis' contribution to wider debates in the social sciences, in particular those on governance and the role of the state. This chapter synthesises the findings of the research presented above.

The shift from government to governance

Chapter three presented an outline of academic debates on the changing role and geometry of the state. These debates suggested that the boundaries of the state were being redrawn, with a new geometry emerging in which a 'hollowed out' central state had relinquished power upwards to supranational organisations and downwards to the local level (Jessop, 1997). This transformation was paralleled by the destatisation of the political system (*ibid*) which is often characterised as a shift from government to governance. This trend has seen a relative decline in the state's direct management and sponsorship of socio-economic projects and an analogous engagement of quasi- and non-state actors in a range of public-private projects. Chapter five used these

debates to interpret the changes which had taken place in East Durham in the field of regeneration over the last 15 years.

The analysis presented in chapter five centred on a distinction which was drawn between the origins of the East Durham Task Force and the East Durham Local Strategic Partnership. The evidence presented showed that the East Durham Task Force was a local initiative. It was conceived, designed and run by local actors, principally at the County Council although it also engaged with a range of other organisations, including the District Council. The East Durham LSP, in contrast, is part of a central government initiative. Although it is ostensibly run at the district level, engaging a wide range of participants from across the public, community and voluntary sectors, the LSP is deeply implicated in a central government programme. This has significant implications for its operation.

The shift from government to governance implies a broadening of the range of actors participating to include organisations beyond the traditional institutions of government, and a qualitative change in the way those organisations interact. The evidence presented showed that whilst both the Task Force and the LSP had indeed widened participation in regeneration, the 'new' actors involved were overwhelmingly from the public sector and, in the case of the Task Force, from within government. Furthermore, the way in which the Task Force operated suggested that there had not been significant changes in the way in which organisations worked together. The Task Force was led from the front by the County Council which engaged other organisations only to the extent it needed them to deliver its regeneration strategy for the District.

Whilst neither the Task Force nor the LSP appeared to correspond to the structural characteristics of the emerging patterns of governance described in the literature, their purpose and the ways in which they went about fulfilling it did suggest that some changes had taken place in the traditional order of government. Jessop's description of governance as "the reflexive self-organisation of independent actors involved in complex relations of reciprocal interdependence, with such self organisation being based on continuing dialogue and resources-sharing to develop mutually beneficial joint projects and to manage the contradictions and dilemmas inevitably involved in

such situations." (Jessop, 2003: 1) was used to interpret these changes. This way of conceptualising governance, in contrast to those which emphasise structural transformations, matched more closely the activities of both the Task Force and the LSP.. It was noted, however, that Jessop's description made no reference to the balance of power between the independent actors involved in such relations of interdependence. In the case of the Task Force it was concluded that although the County Council relied on the support of other organisations to deliver its strategy, the participation of those organisations was driven more by self-interest than by any mutual interdependence. In addition, whilst performing the rituals of interdependent self-organisation, the County Council was essentially drawing on its power, reflected in its superior connections, large budget, previous experience and expertise, to lead the Task Force. This raised questions about the use of the concept of governance to analyse the organisation of predominantly public sector structures. These were addressed through the investigation of the East Durham LSP.

The introduction of the LSP followed the re-specification of regeneration by the government in terms of neighbourhood renewal. The government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal set out its understanding of the complex and interrelated causes of deprivation and the need for solutions which cut across traditional organisational boundaries in order to tackle them (SEU, 1998). This approach was given an institutional form in the Local Strategic Partnership. The interdependence between organisations participating in the LSP is qualitatively different and significantly deeper as a result of the new way in which the problems of deprivation are understood in public policy. The influence of the way in which the problems of government were thought on the action of local actors implied by the shift to neighbourhood renewal was a cue for the use of the governmentality approach in subsequent analysis to develop a more profound understanding of the processes of governance. This proved to be one of the most significant contributions of this part of the research since it responded to the criticism of much of the work on governance that it was largely descriptive (for example Stoker, 1998). Nevertheless, the analysis of the operation of governance in the public sector through the East Durham LSP further questioned the extent to which institutional arrangements had changed. Consistent with the insights of complexity theory (chapter four) the actual operation of the LSP was shown to be considerably different from the model of governance on

which the government's proposals were based. The East Durham LSP experienced considerable difficulty in breaking down the barriers between organisations and sectors and indeed it initially reproduced these barriers in the structure of the partnership.

In conclusion to chapter five it was noted that theories of governance do not adequately represent the forms of inter-organisational cooperation that characterised either the Task Force or the East Durham LSP. In part this stemmed from the domination of these structures by public sector organisations. The breakthrough in terms of understanding how they operated came from Fritz Scharpf's (1994) work on game theory and his analysis of policy making in the German ministerial bureaucracy. Scharpf observed that "many of the limitations of negotiated coordination will be overcome, or at least extended, when negotiations are in fact embedded within hierarchical or network structures." (Scharpf, 1994: 37). Scharpf's 'shadow of hierarchy' thesis suggested that in order to understand local governance we should look further up the hierarchy and consider the influence of central government. This strikes a chord with Jessop's recent work on metagovernance and metaheterarchy.

Chapter six explored the influence of the central government in shaping the actions of local actors through the processes of metagovernance and metaheterarchy. The central conclusion of this chapter was that the state was not hollowing out as earlier analyses had suggested, but that its power was being re-configured along advanced liberal lines. This chapter used Foucault's (1982) distinctive conceptualisation of power as something positive and technical, rather than more traditional definitions which see power as negative and juridical, to understand the changing role of the state. Jessop's (2003) definition of metagovernance was presented and its resonance with the governmentality approach was noted. In particular, the role of governments in attempts to "modify the self-understanding of identities, strategic capacities and interests of individual and collective actors in different strategic contexts and hence alter their implications for preferred strategies and tactics." (*ibid*: 6) was singled out as particularly significant in understanding the reconfiguration of the state. The analysis then considered the ways in which the centre influenced local regeneration strategy. The centre was shown to have had relatively little influence on the strategy of the East Durham Task Force which largely operated on its own terms. The East

Durham LSP, in contrast, was heavily influenced by central government. This influence extended from the creation of the partnership itself, through the identification of the problems it set out to tackle, the formation of a strategy to address those problems, to the implementation of the strategy.

A number of advanced liberal technologies of government were explored and the way in which they shaped the conduct of actors involved in regeneration was analysed. Numbers were shown to have been of central importance in identifying problems, through the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and in shaping the formation and delivery of programmes to tackle those problems through processes such as audit, accountability and, most recently, performance management. It was concluded that although the centre did not exercise direct control over local regeneration it nevertheless remained important in shaping what was possible at the local level. In true governmental fashion, this influence extended from shaping the ways in which local actors thought about the problems they faced through to the way in which they tackled them.

By reframing the way in which central government's power is conceptualised following the insights of Foucault (1982) it was possible to show that the state remained vitally important in shaping the conduct of local actors in regeneration. Whilst this runs counter to early writing on governance which stressed the declining role of the state, it nevertheless finds support in more recent work on metagovernance and, in particular, metaheterarchy. The understanding of advanced liberal technologies of government developed using the conceptual tools of the governmentality approach by Rose and Miller (1990), Rose (1996, 1999) and others provided a means to understand how government power in its positive and technical forms was exercised by the centre. The empirical work undertaken for this thesis suggested, however, that these two factors – metaheterarchy and advanced liberal government – were not sufficient by themselves to explain the changes taking place in the organisation of regeneration through the East Durham LSP. Patterns of inter-organisational coordination and cooperation were observed which were not adequately described by the governance approach. Grabher's concept of project ecologies was shown to provide insight into the emerging forms of inter-organisational cooperation occurring through the East Durham LSP.

Grabher's work on project ecology was undertaken in the dynamic sectors of the new economy and focussed on the interactions between firms in advertising, new media and software production in cities such as London and Munich. It is equally useful for interpreting the emerging patterns of governance in the regeneration of places formerly dominated by old heavy industry. The principal reason for the salience of Grabher's approach is its engagement with organisational forms in turbulent environments (2002b). In the field of regeneration, the main source of turbulence is the government and its influence on the constantly evolving policy context in which regeneration takes place. Jessop (2003: 8) observed that 'policy churning' was evidence of governance failure as the government was forced to constantly innovate in order to deal with the problems it faced. Project ecologies, therefore, can be seen as an organisational solution to the problems of governance in a turbulent environment in which there is insufficient stability to develop the kinds of deep organisational trust and mutuality which are features of 'true' governance. Furthermore, Grabher notes that projects – temporary systems with 'institutionalised termination' – are a long established routine in industries organised around one-off activities (Grabher, 2002b: 1911). This research showed that regeneration in East Durham continues to be organised around projects despite the government's emphasis on mainstreaming.

The concept of project ecology can be applied at two levels to the East Durham LSP. The most obvious example is the projects on which the District's NRF allocation has been spent. Although the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit intended that the NRF would be used to fund 'service improvements' rather than one-off projects, "there's very little of the NRF gone on bending mainstream services. We say 'service improvements' and I say it tongue in cheek because its *projects*. How many of them are going to be sustainable? Very few, because they rely totally on NRF." (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). Project working was shown to have evolved through three stages. Initially, partners sought to achieve coordination between discrete projects. This approach was developed in order to secure maximum benefit from limited resources. An example includes the landscaping funded by the Environment Implementation Group at the gateways to housing estates in which the Housing Implementation Group was investing in the housing stock. Subsequent projects saw the development of

cooperation between different service providers, for example in the funding of a handyman scheme by the Health Implementation Group to reduce the number of accidents in the home amongst elderly residents and hence reduce hospital admissions. Coordination and cooperation represented only minor changes in the way in which organisations worked together. Recently, however, the LSP has begun to invest in projects which are quasi-autonomous and more truly inter-organisational. The Young Persons' Substance Misuse Initiative is one example. It is funded by the Primary Care Trust, the Drugs Action Team, the Police and with NRF from the LSP and yet it has its own director and its own business plan.

In addition, the LSP itself can be understood as a project with its own organisational ecology. The 'project' in which the LSP is engaged is the regeneration of the District and the partners correspond to the firms in Grabher's analysis which bring their various skills, talents and resources to work on the project. The work of the Chairs' group in particular reflects Grabher's observation that in project ecologies, "knowledge, responsibility and accountability are distributed across professional domains and across organisational boundaries." (Grabher, 2002b: 1911). This lies at the heart of the problems the LSP has experienced in applying performance management systems to the partnership. Equally significant, however, is Grabher's observation that "project ecologies are also populated by firms and nurtured in their evolution by lasting place-bound institutions." (*ibid*: 1912). This is central to understanding the evolution of the East Durham LSP during the first three years of its operation. The rhetoric of partnership, and indeed many evaluations of the workings of partnerships, focus entirely on the operation of the partnership itself and relations internal to the partnership structure. Grabher's work, and the empirical evidence collected for this thesis, serves to remind us that partners are also embedded within organisations which they represent at the partnership, and that these organisations must also be considered if we are to fully understand the working of the partnership. The influence of the culture as well as the corporate plans of these organisations on regeneration partnerships was demonstrated.

Schoenberger's writing on the cultures of large organisations, and in particular on the failure of large organisations to respond to change, was particularly influential in interpreting the influence of some of the organisations participating in the governance

of regeneration in East Durham (Schoenberger, 1997). The evidence collected showed that the East Durham Task Force, for example, was led by two men who had dominated economic development and regeneration in County Durham for over two decades. Furthermore, many of the organisations and individuals who had participated in the work of the Task Force were instrumental in setting up and running the East Durham LSP so that elements of the LSPs approach to regeneration could be traced back almost 20 years.

In seeking to refine our understanding of the concepts of governance this thesis has highlighted the importance of considering the role of both central government and the parent organisations from which partners are drawn. The empirical evidence has demonstrated the influence of the central government in shaping local regeneration strategy through its role in processes of metaheterarchy. The governmentality approach and the technologies of advanced liberal government have been used to demonstrate the means by which central government exerts influence over local regeneration without direct involvement. This has involved the reconceptualisation of power as positive and technical rather than negative and juridical (Foucault, 1982). Finally, Grabher's work on project ecology has reasserted the importance of the organisations and lasting place-bound institutions which populate project ecologies on shaping the emerging patterns of coordination and governance. The role of the centre is pre-eminent, however, since it casts its shadow over those organisations and institutions as well as the new governance structures in which they engage.

Explaining the persistence of deprivation

This research project had its origins in the District Council's desire to understand why the problems of social and economic deprivation it faced remained so severe despite the concerted efforts of numerous organisations over the last fifteen years to deliver regeneration. The research questions set out in chapter four addressed the ability of these organisations, and the regeneration strategies they developed, to tackle the problems faced by the District. The conclusions are presented below.

Chapter seven presented a detailed analysis of the formulation of regeneration strategy in the District. It noted that strategy was an under-theorized concept in the

regeneration literature. A three staged model of regeneration strategy was proposed which conceptualised strategy as a process leading from the identification of problems through the devising of solutions to the implementation of the strategy to secure the desired outcome. The process of abstraction was seen as central to strategy formulation as policy makers produced simplifying models of reality in order to identify the problems they faced and the mechanisms by which they could be tackled. This model was used to analyse the regeneration strategies of the East Durham Task Force and the LSP in turn.

The Task Force was shown to have had a clear but very narrow focus on economic regeneration. It did little to address the social problems caused by the run down of mining in the District, and even its economic development measures were overwhelmingly focussed on physical infrastructure at the expense of developing the potential of the District's workforce. Analysis of the Task Force's Programmes for Action showed that the mechanisms which underpinned the Task Force's approach to tackling the District's problems were flawed. The Task Force's strategy essentially centred on creating the environmental conditions to attract mobile inward investment to the District in order to create jobs for redundant miners in manufacturing branch plants. The mainstay of the Task Force's strategy was the provision of serviced industrial sites and premises. The Task Force achieved significant physical success in clearing the dereliction left by the decline of the mining industry and developing industrial estates. The Task Force's strategy was, however, based on a dated understanding of the District's problems and a misplaced belief in the viability of economic development through inward investment and this was ultimately a significant factor in shaping its limited impact on the District's problems. The model of the District's problems and their solutions on which the Task Force's strategy was based was too simple and did not correspond sufficiently with reality to enable the Task Force to deliver change.

The Task Force's programme was shown to have its origins in an analysis of the District's problems produced in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In addition, the use of consultants by the County and District Councils to develop a regeneration strategy for the District was shown to have been the mechanism through which the approach to the District's problems became cemented in an out-of-date understanding of the

problems and their solutions. In addition, the Task Force failed to change its strategy even when it became clear that it was not working and, indeed, that there was little chance that it could ever succeed. Following Schoenberger (1997), the dominance of two men, Kingsley Smith and Ken Frankish, in the operation of the Task Force was proposed as an explanation for its failure to adapt its strategy to reflect the changing circumstances in which it was operating.

A two tier model of the Task Force's regeneration projects was developed to understand the way in which the Task Force approached the delivery of its strategy. The Task Force itself did not have a budget of its own and relied on influencing the way in which its partner organisations spent their budgets and on 'winning' competition funding from a range of government and European programmes to deliver its strategy. The 'top tier' of regeneration projects delivered by the Task Force were large-scale, physical reclamation and development projects which the County Council pursued with money from central government agencies and in particular English Partnerships. The 'second tier' projects were on a smaller scale and oriented towards housing and smaller scale environmental improvements. These projects tended to be pursued by the District Council with funding from programmes such as the government's Single Regeneration Budget. These programmes were more susceptible to the influence of central government bidding guidelines and this was reflected in a 'softening' of the projects pursued towards the end of the Task Force and their preliminary engagement with some of the District's social problems. These second tier projects were not part of the Task Force's core strategy and were driven by project sponsors in response to the availability of funding.

The East Durham LSP's regeneration strategy proved considerably more difficult to analyse. This reflected the fact that the work of the LSP was largely driven by the government's neighbourhood renewal programme which broadened the scope of regeneration to include a wide range of public, voluntary and 'community' sector interests. In addition, the newly formed LSP replaced the East Durham Task Force as the organisation responsible for the regeneration of the District and in doing so it inherited the Task Force's legacy. This included the Task Force's conceptual approach to the District's problems, its structure, large parts of its membership and, less positively, its politics. The LSP agenda was welcomed by the District Council

since it offered it the opportunity to take the lead after a decade of being largely beholden to its "big brother" (Frankish, interview 08.04.03). Indeed the LSP arrived at just the right time since the County Council was already turning its attention to the problems of the rural west of the County (Smith, interview 12.03.03) and the District was becoming restless to take on the full responsibility for tackling its problems. It is significant that John Smith, the former Task Force coordinator and head of economic development at the District Council produced a 'Task Force succession strategy' early in 2001, and although this formed the basis of the LSPs approach to the District's problems, the Council never published the document (DEC, 2001).

The most significant feature of the East Durham LSP's approach to the District's problems during the first 30 months of its existence was that it operated completely without a strategy. Although the Task Force's approach to the District's problems was implicit in the work of the partnership, and the LSP took up many of the projects which had been initiated under the Task Force, the Task Force's narrow focus outlined above was wholly inadequate for guiding the LSP's approach to the new neighbourhood renewal agenda. The East Durham LSP cannot, however, be held wholly responsible for its lack of a strategy and the consequent allocation of its entire first round of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money before it had the opportunity to produce a strategy. Central government must take responsibility for the limited impact of LSPs in the first two years following their introduction given its lack of foresight in introducing the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and allocating significant amounts of money to LSPs without first giving them the opportunity to plan how they would use the money, especially given the pressure exerted by the centre on LSPs to spend the money quickly. Although the LSP did produce a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy in 2002 this was shown to be largely a translation of the government's National Strategy into local language rather than an attempt to engage with the causes of and potential solutions to the specific problems faced by the District. In addition, the LSP's Community Strategy, published in 2003, was shown to be similarly inadequate and contain little more than a 'wish list' of improvements in the District without any serious consideration given to how they could be achieved. In any case, the Community Strategy could not be said to have been part of the LSP's approach to the process of regeneration since it was produced after the event and following a demand from central government. It was reassuring to observe the

widespread and vocal dissatisfaction with the strategy expressed by the community and public sector at a 'development day' held by the LSP in July 2003, although the Partnership is yet to formally respond beyond tasking a small group of officers to take the issues forwards.

The LSP's operation effectively without a strategy had a significant impact on its ability to deliver regeneration in the District. This was demonstrated by the projects on which the partnership spent its NRF. First, the LSP failed to prioritise either particular problems or particular places in the District. This position was adopted by the partnership since it avoided the need to take politically difficult decisions, and it also reflected the widespread nature of the problems the District faced. Although the District received a considerable amount of money from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund when compared to previous regeneration programmes, the broadening of the scope of regeneration under the neighbourhood renewal agenda meant that those resources were very thinly spread. This raises questions about whether the resources allocated by the centre were ever likely to be sufficient to achieve a significant impact on the District's problems.

The second major problem caused by operating without a strategy relates to the absence of any systematic link between the identification of problems and the projects which were funded with NRF. The East Durham LSP's approach to allocating its NRF relied completely on service providers and 'project sponsors' to put forward ideas for projects which they would undertake using the partnership's resources. This was effectively a continuation of the approach to regeneration pursued by the District Council under the Single Regeneration Budget. As a number of the Implementation Group Chairs observed, the LSP effectively continued a funding-led approach to regeneration. The District has a stock of project sponsors who have considerable experience of composing funding applications and are well versed in the language of mechanisms and outcomes. Questions remain, however, about the viability of some projects and the ability of some sponsors to deliver the outcomes promised. The bankruptcy of the Northern Training Trust, a large training provider which relied entirely on regeneration funds, is a case in point.

The intense pressure exerted by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit on partnerships to spend their NRF allocation quickly exacerbated the problems faced by the LSPs. As with the Task Force, the projects undertaken by the LSP can be divided into two tiers. The top tier projects were large scale, high value projects undertaken largely by public sector organisations and corresponded most closely to the model of service improvements envisaged by the government. As a result of their size and complexity a number of these projects experienced difficulties in spending the resources allocated to them sufficiently quickly. This increased the problems the LSP faced in spending its funding since it had to identify projects to fund using the 'underspend' from other failed projects. This led to the LSP being relatively indiscriminate in the projects it funded and ultimately adopting a project sponsor's ability to spend money quickly as the deciding factor in evaluating their project proposals and allocating its resources. This tended to favour capital projects which tended to mean physical regeneration, as opposed to revenue based projects which might employ people to deliver services.

The second tier of regeneration projects tended to be smaller and more opportunistic and reflect the interests of the project sponsors more than the needs of the District. It is likely that these projects were funded because the LSP had resources it needed to spend rather than because it believed they would have a significant impact in delivering neighbourhood renewal. Delivering basketball taster sessions to school children is a case in point (chapter eight). In addition, the LSP did not have any mechanisms in place to judge whether project sponsors were qualified to deliver what they promised in their proposals.

The result of the problems the LSP has experienced in delivering the government's neighbourhood renewal programme is that £9 million of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds has been spent on the regeneration of the District and yet there is relatively little to see by way of improvements (Implementation Group Chair, interview). Although the more optimistic Implementation Group Chairs were keen to point out that the LSP was about more than just the NRF, all agreed that the NRF had dominated the work of the partnership in the first three years almost to the exclusion of any deeper engagement with the District's problems. However, the responsibility for the limited impact of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund cannot be placed solely

on the LSP. Central government is deeply implicated in a number of the structural weaknesses of the neighbourhood renewal agenda, and these are considered below.

On an operational level, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was supposed to represent a new 'light touch' approach to the monitoring of local spending by central government. It was noted in chapter eight, however, that the District Council, as the accountable body for the NRF, had implemented an exhaustive and bureaucratically cumbersome system for monitoring the spending of NRF by projects which was almost identical to the system administered by the Council for the SRB. The adoption of this system followed a highly critical audit of the District Council by the Audit Commission (Scott, interview 29.05.03). Whilst one branch of government, the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, might have envisaged greater freedom for local partnerships in the way they handled the money and instructed government offices not to get involved in the way partnerships chose to spend their NRF (Hanley, interview 27.02.04), the practices of another part of government sent a contradictory message. The result was that the LSP became so heavily engaged in managing its resources to the level it believed was expected by government audit that it had little time to engage with the problems of deprivation that the District faced. This echoes Sennett's (1998: 56) observations on the management of the modern firm which is too preoccupied "doing the accounting on its own demands" to address the real challenges that face it.

Chapter eight also illustrated the limitations of local solutions to the problems faced by the District. This raises a number of questions about the whole concept of neighbourhood renewal. First, there is a fundamental scalar incompatibility between some of the problems faced by the District and a neighbourhood approach to finding solutions. This is particularly pertinent in relation to the LSP's efforts to regenerate the District's economy and deliver job opportunities for the District's residents. Although the District may not have had to compete with other disadvantaged places to secure neighbourhood renewal funding, it is nevertheless engaged in a costly competition with the same locations for an increasingly scarce number of jobs. Just as the Task Force spent large amounts of money on environmental improvements and infrastructure developments so as not to lose the opportunity to compete with other locations for inward investment (EDTF, 1993), so too the LSP is investing large amounts of NRF in increasing the 'employability' of the District's residents in the

hope that this will attract the elusive jobs. The concept of neighbourhood renewal does not allow for causes of problems that lie beyond the neighbourhood level, and there is little sign that other branches of government are tackling these problems. This is particularly significant since bodies from the Coalfield's Task Force to the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit itself in its national strategy have emphasised that the root cause of deprivation is unemployment and the poverty that this creates. Government has had plenty of time to reflect on this since it was also the central conclusion of the 1977 Department of the Environment White *Paper Policy for the Inner Cities* (DoE, 1977).

The concept of neighbourhood renewal is also optimistic in hoping to find the solutions to deprivation in deprived neighbourhoods themselves. Where deprivation is as longstanding and deep-seated as in East Durham it seems unlikely that neighbourhoods will be able to solve their problems on their own. In addition, one of the central mechanisms of neighbourhood renewal outlined in chapter seven was the improvement of local public services. The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was intended to provide small amounts of money to try new ways of providing services which could, if successful, be 'mainstreamed' (Bright, 2003). There is, however, a fundamental mismatch between the scale of the resources available through the NRF and the scale of the problems faced by local public services. Examples include the underfunding of the Primary Care Trust by £26 million per year (EPCT, 2004) and the £300 million of repairs needed to bring the District Council's housing stock up to the Decent Homes standard. Another mechanism envisaged by the NRU was 'programme bending' through which resources would be diverted to an LSP's most deprived areas. This is clearly not practical in Easington where deprivation is so widespread.

The failure of the central mechanisms of the government's programme of neighbourhood renewal outlined above has two important implications for the theories of governance and governmentality in understanding the processes of government outlined in chapter three. Jessop (2003) has written about the likelihood and implications of governance failure which Malpas and Wickham see as the most likely outcome of governance itself (*ibid*). Jessop noted that governance success may be limited, partial and localised and in order to fulfil expectations, governance must be

undertaken in a reflexive manner. The governmentality approach, by focussing on the way in which the problems of government are thought about, offers the possibility of providing the reflexive solutions to these problems of governance. It is clear, for example, that the way in which the government thought about the processes of governing regeneration which underlie its programme of neighbourhood renewal do not match the experience of those delivering that programme at the local level in East Durham. The concept of community which is central to the government's programme of neighbourhood renewal (chapter six) is another example where the concepts behind government policy do not correspond to local experience and consequently undermine the operation of those policies in particular places. The community implicitly envisaged by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit is active, unified, skilled and empowered. Although government policy makes superficial concessions to the unlikelihood of real-life deprived communities possessing all of these capacities, by providing funding for community development through Community Chests for example, this ideal-type community nevertheless remains central to the success of the neighbourhood renewal agenda.

Governmentality is also concerned with shaping the way in which local actors think about the processes of governance. The evidence presented in chapters seven and eight on the operation of the Local Strategic Partnership suggests that as well as governance failure we should also be alert to the potential for 'governmentality failure'. By this, I mean that central government can shape the "conduct of conduct" but not necessarily the processes which lie behind the actions. It is important to remember that the local actors whose conduct is being shaped by the centre are sophisticated political actors in their own right. It is possible, therefore, for members of the LSP to give the appearance of involving the local community, as directed by the centre, whilst effectively marginalizing them through their actions and processes (Arkley, interview 02.07.03). Similarly, the LSP can talk about 'service improvements' when in fact it is funding projects (Lynch, interview 27.06.03). Whilst governmentality is useful for understanding the motivation behind government policy and the processes through which it operates, it is vital to keep in mind the lessons of complexity theory: it is impossible to know in advance what the consequences of particular local actions will be.

Improving 'best practice'.

The concept of best practice outlined in chapter one highlights the importance of place based learning and the importance of place matters in regeneration policy. The evidence gathered in East Durham, however, suggests that place based learning has not been a significant feature of either the East Durham Task Force or the East Durham LSP. In particular, the analysis of the transition from the Task Force to the LSP has shown that the lessons of previous policy failures have not been learnt. This has significantly undermined the ability of the LSP to tackle the problems which remain. This suggests that there is considerable scope to improve 'best practice' within the District.

The government's neighbourhood renewal agenda raises further interesting questions in relation to best practice. Despite appearing to devolve the responsibility for local solutions to local problems to local areas, the government is effectively pursuing a 'one size fits all' policy to regenerate deprived neighbourhoods. The processes and governmental technologies through which it does this were described in chapter six. The neighbourhood renewal agenda leaves little scope for place based learning. In doing so it denies the importance of place based learning which the evidence from East Durham has shown to be so important in improving the District's own best practice. Furthermore, in its attempts to transfer best practice between places (as illustrated by its neighbourhood renewal website, for example) the government further sidelines the importance of place. This is likely to be central in shaping the outcome of the latest round of neighbourhood renewal policy. The government has yet to devise an adequate policy response which successfully resolves the contradiction between the Social Exclusion Unit's approach which highlights the similarities between deprived neighbourhoods (SEU, 1998) and the Coalfields Task Force's conclusion that the coalfields face a unique set of problems which demand place-specific solutions (CFTF, 1998).

Policy implications

This research clearly has policy implications for both central and local government in devising and implementing regeneration strategy in deprived areas. These are set out below.

Central government

The problems of deprived neighbourhoods cannot be tackled solely at the neighbourhood level. Government policy must recognise the limits of what can be achieved through local public services.

Public services in deprived areas may be underfunded and this may be a significant factor in the persistence of deprivation. It may be unreasonable to expect those public services to contribute to the regeneration of the area without first redressing the mainstream funding deficit.

The LSP agenda contains significant contradictions regarding the responsibility and accountability for tackling specific issues which need to be addressed before they can be effectively tackled by the LSP.

Organisations in deprived areas may lack the capacity to tackle the problems they face and the government should allow time for local actors to plan and produce a strategy before allocating large amounts of money and expecting the rapid delivery of results.

Programme bending is not a realistic expectation in areas experiencing severe deprivation and alternative mechanisms are required to tackle the problems these areas face.

New institutional arrangements which add to the already high pressures on those involved in regeneration are unlikely to provide a forum for significant change in the way organisations tackle the problems they face.

Local government (and its partners)

A strategy is necessary to ensure that regeneration funds are used to tackle an area's problems. Spending resources without a strategy, or with an inadequate strategy, perpetuates an ad hoc, funding-led approach to tackling an area's problems.

A strategy should identify problems, potential solutions and the mechanisms through which solutions operate. It should abstract from reality sufficiently to enable mechanisms and solutions to be identified, but not so much that the implementation of those solutions does not correspond to conditions in the 'real' world.

Where resources are scarce they will probably have greatest impact if they are targeted either spatially or thematically.

An LSP should seek organisations to deliver projects that the LSP itself has identified rather than seeking organisations to spend the money it has available.

Persistent problems are likely to require innovative solutions and not simply 'more of the same'. Innovative solutions require partnerships to adopt new ways of working, open themselves to new ideas, new forms of leadership and new understandings of the problems they face.

Reflections on the approach taken in the thesis

ESRC CASE collaboration

The research for this thesis was conducted in the context of the ESRC's CASE programme for collaborative research with the District of Easington as the collaborating partner. This had a number of implications for the project. First, the District Council contributed financially to the project, making the research possible. Second, having the Council as a partner in the research facilitated access to a number of sources, including grey literature, interviewees, meetings and informants, without the need to negotiate access. Third, the Council played a significant role in developing the research questions on which the project was based. However, although the Council was involved in drawing up the initial brief for the research project, its officers subsequently took a non-interventionist approach to the development of the project. Whilst this reflects the pressures under which the staff at the Council were working and the lack of continuity in supervision of the project as successive supervisors retired or moved on to new jobs, it nevertheless benefited the project. The Council's staff remained helpful and supportive throughout the project.

The engagement of the District of Easington made it possible to conduct a research project which combined empirical and theoretical work to an extent that would have been difficult without their collaboration. In particular, the Council's participation made it possible to engage in (participant) observation at the offices of the Council's regeneration directorate and in meetings of its regeneration partnerships. This research method played a central role in producing a richly textured account of the regeneration of the District. Finally, this particular CASE studentship was fortunate in that it did not experience the difficulties described by other CASE students (for example Macmillan and Scott, 2003) with more interventionist research collaborators.

Working closely with the District of Easington did, however, pose a number of challenges. The first was the rapid turnover of staff, described in chapter seven. Although the long-term nature of the collaboration helped to dispel the novelty of my presence at the Council and reduce the distortion that this might have on the processes which I sought to observe, the frequent arrival of new staff served to draw renewed attention to my presence. The second challenge of working with the District was the politics of the organisation, both internally and in relation to other organisations operating in the area. In this context it was necessary to adopt a somewhat 'slippery' identity and to draw on my links with the council differentially according to its profile in the eyes of the people with whom I wanted to engage. Whilst this may suggest an unethical approach to research, I was careful to maintain high ethical standards in relation to the evidence gathered. Consequently, in the context of this project I have been careful not to use evidence which may undermine one organisation in the eyes of another, even though this was one of the principal outputs of research in such a political environment. Indeed this raises further significant questions for future research relating to inter-organisational relations, which are examined below.

Conceptual framework

This thesis has taken an institutional approach to interpreting the regeneration of the former East Durham Coalfield. In part, this reflects the engagement of the District of Easington in the research project through the CASE collaboration. It also stems from the way in which the research questions were developed and, in particular, the critical realist methodology adopted. During the early stages of the project – the

conceptualisation of the objects of the research – the critical realist focus on structures and relations was used to draw attention to the role of organisations such as the state, local government and partnerships and regeneration policy in shaping the regeneration of the District. The debates on governance, metagovernance and governmentality were used to interpret the relations between these objects of the research, and in particular between different levels of government. This approach enabled the research to examine the role of place-based learning in regeneration and to highlight the implications of a (lack of) sensitivity to place for the outcome of regeneration policy. The metagovernance and governmentality debates allowed the research to go beyond the rhetoric which surrounds many accounts of partnerships and governance in regeneration and explore how the different levels of government interact.

The focus on institutions and organisations, however, has a number of limitations. It is difficult to incorporate an understanding of the way in which *people* respond to the challenges of deprivation, poverty and regeneration when a project's analytical lens is focussed on organisations. Indeed, people, especially local people, are notable by their absence from the project. This does not detract from the value of the work done, however, since one of the insights from the use of the governmentality approach was to draw attention to the potential mismatch between the understandings on which policies are based and the realities of the world in which they are implemented. Further research would be required to investigate the way in which regeneration influenced people's lives. The possibilities of further research are considered below.

Future Research

The shift in emphasis from regeneration to neighbourhood renewal as the way in which the problems of deprived neighbourhoods are thought about in government policy raises a number of interesting questions which require further work if we are to understand their significance in terms of both their concrete effects and their implications for theoretical debates. The inclusion of so many different public, voluntary, community and, potentially, private sector interests in the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods raises questions on the nature of governance, accountability, local democracy and the nature of citizenship. The interaction between the state and the citizen through the processes of advanced liberal government (Rose, 1999) and the

ability of this relationship to deliver regeneration in deprived areas are also subjects for future research. Future research must be sensitive to the specificities of place in order to develop an understanding of the ways in which deprived places are different from each other and from more prosperous places.

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East Durham SRB / European Funding Partnership: Papers and minutes from meetings held on 3 March 2003, 29 May 2003, 4 September 2003

County Durham Strategic Partnership: Papers and minutes from meetings held on 8 May 2003 (Officer support group), 23 May 2003, 10 October 2003

Note: I attended all of the above meetings as a (participant) observer and recorded observations in my field notebook.

Appendix A

Membership of the East Durham LSP

Name	Organisation
Mr P Hanley	Government Office for the North East
Mr K Hodgson	One North East
Mr T Crompton	Learning & Skills Council (County Durham)
Mr D Lane	Learning & Skills Council (County Durham)
Mr Mick Wood	Business Link County Durham
Ms Jane Ritchie	Co Durham Business & Learning Partnership
County Cllr G Tennant	Durham County Council
County Cllr D Ross	Durham County Council
County Cllr D Hodgson	Durham County Council
County Cllr M Nicholls	Durham County Council
Mr P Conway	Director of Cultural Services, Durham County Council
Mr N Charlton	Assistant Director of Education, Durham County Council
Dr N Reed	Life Long Learning Partnership, Durham County Council
Mr R Ward	Economic Development and Planning, Durham County Council
Cllr A Napier	Leader of Council, District of Easington
Cllr R Crute	Regeneration Portfolio holder, District of Easington
Cllr L O'Donnell	District of Easington
Cllr A Burnip	District of Easington
Mr P Wilding	Chief Executive, District of Easington
Mr A Caygill	Director of East Durham Homes
Mrs J Johnson	Director of Regeneration & Development
Mr S Arkley	Head of Community Regeneration, District of Easington
Mr P Coe	Head of Regeneration and Partnerships, District of Easington
Ms Anna Lynch	Director of Public Health & Health Development
Russell Morgan	Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, District of Easington

Name	Organisation
Mr T Scott	Joint Trades Union, District of Easington
Mr David Robinson	Business Broker, East Durham Business Service
Mrs S Slaven	East Durham Business Service
Mr B Blair	Chair Strategic Funding Group
Mr P Richards	Groundwork East Durham
Chief Supt Derek Hall	Durham Constabulary
Divisional Officer D Turnbull	Community Safety Manager
Dr R Bolas	Primary Care Trust
Mr I Prescott	East Durham & Houghall Community College
Ms K Welch	Easington Action Team for Jobs
Mrs P Thirlaway	Durham County Age Concern (Easington)
Ms V Taylor	Connexions
Mr Norman Mackie	Community Network (Chair)
Mrs E Connor	Community Network
Ms Jane Robertson	Community Network
Ms Carol Firth	Community Network
Ms Gill Stokoe	Community Network
Mr Jack Hesslewood	Community Network
Mr C Reynolds	Community Network
Mr Allan Miller	Community Network
Mrs Taylor	District of Easington Tenants & Residents Federation
Ms A.E. Nutter	Project Leader, Wingate & Station Town Family Centre
Mr Gordon Tempest	Wheatley Hill Community Partnership
Mrs Margaret Roberts	Westlea Residents Association
Mr E Robinson	Murton Steering Group
Mrs M McPherson	Easington Colliery Partnership (Chair)
Mrs S Shippen	Clerk, Horden Parish Council
Mr E Mason	Assoc. of Parish & Town Council Reps

Name	Organisation
Mr Stan Cudlip	Clerk - Seaham Town Council
Mr John Arthur	Clerk - Peterlee Town Council
Mrs M Hindmarsh	Senior Community Development Officer
Mr David Dorman-Smith	CVS Director

correct at 18.6.04

Source: Easington District Council, personal correspondence

Appendix B

Interviews

Name	Organisation
Arkley, Mr S	Head of Community Regeneration, District of Easington
Bolas, Dr R	Primary Care Trust
Caygill, Mr A	Director of East Durham Homes
Charlton, Mr N	Assistant Director of Education, Durham County Council
Coe, Mr P	Head of Regeneration and Partnerships, District of Easington
Conway, Mr P	Director of Cultural Services, Durham County Council
Greenfield, Mr K	Chief Executive, East Durham Development Agency
Hanley, Mr P	Government Office for the North East
Johnson, Ms J	Director of Regeneration & Development, District of Easington
Lloyd, Mr M	Director of Economic Development, Durham County Council
Lynch, Ms A	Director of Public Health & Health Development
Mackie, Mr N	Community Network (Chair)
Napier, Cllr A	Leader of Council, District of Easington
Richards, Mr P	Groundwork East Durham
Scott, Ms B	Neighbourhood Renewal Coordinator, District of Easington
Smith, Mr J	East Durham Task Force Co-ordinator & Head of Regeneration, District of Easington
Smith, Mr K	Chief Executive, Durham County Council
Wilding, Mr P	Chief Executive, District of Easington

Appendix C

Sample interview schedule

Paul Wilding, Task Force Member, currently Chief Executive of Easington District Council.

4 April 2003 at 12:00, Easington District Council

Subject: establishment of the Task Force, the origins of the Task Force's Programmes for Action, the Task Force's construction of the District's problems and appropriate solutions, interaction between the District and County in the context of the Task Force, change within the Task Force during its operation, The way in which the Council is responding to the creation of the LSP.

Rationale: to understand the reasons for the Task Force's successes and failures, how policy responses were related to problems with a view to informing future strategy in the District.

Q1 What were the origins of the East Durham Task Force?

Where did the idea come from?
Why was the Task Force created when it was?
Why the Task Force model?

Q2 Who were the key people driving the work of the Task Force?

What were their backgrounds? Where did they come from? How did they obtain their understanding of the District's problems? Was there stability in the key personnel leading the Task Force over time?

Q3 How did the District respond to the creation of the Task Force?

What role did the District play in setting up the Task Force and producing the Programmes for Action?

What was the nature of the District's involvement in the Task Force?

When and why did relations between District and County cool?

How did the turbulence in the District Council in the late 1990s influence the Task Force?

Q4 What problems did the Task Force set out to tackle?

Why were *these* problems singled out for attention?

How did the Task Force understand these problems? What were the causal mechanisms?

What was the significance of the ECOTEC consultants report? And other existing strategies?

Q5 What solutions did the Task Force attempt to put in place?

How were these solutions based on the Task Force's understandings of the problems?

What were the mechanisms which linked problems with solutions?

What arguments were put forward to justify the Task Force's approach?

Q6 Did the Task Force need to reconcile different positions / ambitions?

Was there a broad consensus over the approach taken by the Task Force? (among who?)

Was the strategy a compromise?

Between District and County?

Between local and national priorities? To what extend did national policy context shape the work and strategy of the Task Force?

Between what was needed and what could be done?

Did the Task Force achieve any additionality over the contribution of individual partners?

Q7 How did the Task Force's strategy change over time?

How was the Programme for Action reviewed / updated?

What were the implications of the contradiction identified in the 1993 Programme for Action for the strategy pursued by the Task Force? Were alternative strategies considered? [by whom / why not?]

How did the District and County respond? Were there differences of opinion?

What efforts did the Task Force make to reflect changing circumstances / understandings in its Programme for Action?

What led to the slight softening of the Programme for Action by 1997?

Q8 What was the role of the Task Force in shaping the national policy context?

What did the Task Force do outside the County to improve conditions in the District?

How did the Task Force influence national strategy – eg through the Coalfields Task Force, and consultation on the IMD 2000?

Q9 How is the LSP different from the Task Force?

What is your role in relation to the LSP?

How does the LSP differ from the Task Force – in terms of its structure / operation and its aims?

What are the implications and significance of local political involvement in the LSP?

How does the work of the LSP relate to / overlap with the role of the council, apart from involving its staff?

What is the LSP doing that the Council wouldn't / couldn't otherwise be doing?

Are there any factors which limit the effectiveness of current arrangements?

How has the Council responded to the changing requirements of its new role in the LSP – in terms of staff numbers, skills, the way it works...?

What is the relationship between the political side of the council and its officers in terms of its regeneration work? How do politicians influence the way in which the council does regeneration? Has this changed over time?

Appendix D

Extract from field notebook

East Durham LSP meeting at 9:30 on 31 October 2003

The Glebe Centre, Murton

Agenda items 1-3: formalities

AN Introduces **JM**, the LSP's new Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator.

Agenda item 4: Development Day - progress

PCoe presented recommendations from the LSP's development day (see handout). In particular issues raised related to the operation of the partnership and the performance management agenda which was to be imposed on the LSP. Outlined a commissioning approach to service delivery via the LSP. Asked for comments.

PH emphasised that performance management was seen as critical by the NRU and that systems would be required to be in place by next April.

RB The danger of emphasising performance management is that the LSP only manages the NRF and better joint working gets left behind.

AN Agreed. NRF is only one element of what the LSP does, but performance management is important for that.

PH Performance management can be applied equally to the LNRS

KW Performance management has been used by the Horden and Easington Colliery Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder where it has been a valuable tool.

JJ Seeks authorisation from the LSP for PC and his team to take the development day issues forward (6 themes).

Agenda item 5: National LSP Evaluation

JM has attended one evaluation meeting and considers that East Durham is not doing too bad. Nationally there is a great variation in structures adopted by LSPs. Many LSPs view voluntary and community sectors as one and the same, but they are different. LSP is the accountable body for the spending of NRF. East Durham is seen by others as rural but sees itself as semi-urban / urban [JW – influence of IMD

indicators?] Allocation of NRF by LSP is complex and LSP is large compared with other partnerships. LSPs without NRF have had to look at mainstreaming much earlier. East Durham has been more bottom-up. Difficulties of engaging business in LSP agenda.

RB Smart to work together across institutional boundaries despite difficulties. If it is right for the area, surely we can find a way through.

AN Partnership is good when things go well, but when things don't go well, it falls back on the local authority. Need to move away from having 60 projects to having some big infrastructure projects which benefit the whole district, sub-region, region.

GT Who will be responsible for the process of performance management?

AN We are talking about the performance management of the LSP and the need for constitutional change. [JW – did not answer question]

NC Difficult to say at the end of the day who is ultimately responsible. We are all responsible to our own organisations. We can't expect the District Council to performance manage everybody. Audit Commission and the national evaluation are ducking this issue. It is a paradox – it is difficult to have a system that everybody owns. Also budgeting problems on a year-by-year basis due to unforeseen problems make it even more complicated.

BB Proper funding is needed to support community groups.

Agenda item 6: Joe Montgomery's visit

JJ East Durham is one of 26 of the original 88 LSPs awarded NRF to receive top-up monies over the next two years. Joe Montgomery (Head of NRU) visited to see how the LSP is using NRF to tackle problems. Extra funding was awarded to districts furthest from the government's floor targets. Employment was a particular problem in East Durham. Also health and deprivation. The Business service has helped 50 business start-ups this year, but only 5 are VAT registered – a long way to go. Joe Montgomery asked bluntly if the LSP was going to be able to spend its NRF allocation on time. He welcomed the proposed move away from a large number of small projects – said this situation was difficult to performance manage and was likely to result in an underspend. He didn't say that the money would be taken away, but stressed the importance of getting it spent.

AN Clear from Joe Montgomery that the ODPM is under intense pressure from the Treasury. NFR is on our side, but Treasury has friends in the cabinet who want to see

the money drawn back. Montgomery stressed the inadequacy of 57 small projects. Pressure to spend the money or it *might* be withdrawn.

RC Need to reduce the number of schemes and take up the NRU's offer of support on performance management

NC EAZ money to run out next year. Schools in the south of the district have not had access to EAZ money. Big problems ahead for education.

PH Joe Montgomery was aware of the SRB mentality lingering on and the need to move away from that.

GT Wants to know what the 57 projects are, where the money is being spent and what on. Risk that moving away from small projects excludes local people. [JW – there are not 57 projects. '57' was originally mentioned in the context of a pun on the '57' Heinz varieties, but this seems to have been forgotten].

PConway Education, economy and health were the big three areas identified by Joe Montgomery where the LSP was under performing. Economy problems were related to a skills deficit and not premises.

PR Groundwork had one single service improvement with 40 separate outcomes. Groundwork (the environment implementation group) have taken responsibility for managing the input of each of their service providers.

AN This is the way forward.

RB Need to subsume settlement differences and unify to work across the district.

AN Agreed, but this is difficult because it requires cultural change.

RB Primary Care Trust's primary aim in its 5 year plan is to improve the life chances of young children.

Agenda item 7: NRF Update

JM (Figures provided on handout) Anticipated £800,000 underspend at the end of the year. First round of NRF ends 31 March 2004 – this is the end of that programme. Carry-over for the following year is not guaranteed. Many projects are revenue based. Problems of recruiting staff for short term contracts given competition. Need to offer advice on how to spend creatively.

AN At the moment there is a potential underspend of £1.4 million next March. £800,000 underspend last year when proposals to the value of £4.5 million were received by the LSP, but still the money wasn't spent. Short term fix required.

KW Freedom to spend within the service improvement is welcomed. Previously if a project couldn't spend on what it said it would in its bid the money was taken away.

JM Government Office must be notified by 27 November how underspend will be spent. Government has told LSPs that this must be done.

[Loud sighing and murmuring of discontent from community representatives]

AN Is there a problem at the back?

ANON (An angry community network representative) "It's scepticism. We had an underspend last year. We have an underspend this year. Have you not learnt anything?"

AN Originally the LSP had to work within the LNRS. Unfortunately it hadn't learnt. Problems with reporting lines and financial arrangements. Cannot work fast enough. Taken on too much with the 57 projects. Sadly we didn't learn, but we will learn from this.

GT Who is going to divvy up the un-spent money? Why can't the community have access to money?

AN Led to believe that there is community representation on each implementation group.

COMMUNITY Not on the economy group and little community engagement with the environment group.

COMMUNITY Why doesn't the LSP fund projects which cover the whole spectrum – health influences education and so on?

[JW – none of this angry exchange, one of the first attempts by the community to hold the executive to account, was recorded in the official minutes of the meeting]

AN Agreed, but right now we need a quick fix to deal with the problems we have now and spend the money quickly.

NM Is there any kind of health check on the people who deliver projects and their ability to deliver? Deliverability of projects needs to be looked at. True, the community are looking for money, but it must be from the right streams.

JM There was a call in the early days to make the process simple. The idea was that anybody should have access to funding. LSP as a whole has not demonstrated a capacity to deliver.

JJ Economy group reformed 6 months ago. Before that there was no private sector involvement. Third meeting will be held on Monday. JJ invites community

membership of that group today [JW – a bit late? Community largely excluded from economy group.]

Agenda item 8: Coffee break

Chat to BB about Dawdon steering group and NM about progress of Community Network. Arrange to phone PH's assistant to fix date for interview.

Agenda item 9: Presentations

KW (see handout) gave a presentation on the 14-19 Learning Review. Vision developed – learning in Easington leads somewhere. Big ideas for delivery and implementation outlined, including Centres of Excellence, Sports and Leisure, Business and Technology. Proposal for a 'learning campus' outlined – federation of training providers.

NC (see handout) gave a presentation on 'Building Schools for the Future'. Proposals outlined to demolish and rebuild all 7 secondary schools in the district (cost £130 million). The cabinet of the County Council chose to focus on East Durham. Indicators of deprivation used to allocate funding. County to bid for resources to central government [JW – bid ultimately failed]. Problems of mixed use of educational sites eg privacy if GP surgeries incorporated in new school buildings.

Key

AN	Alan Napier, Leader of the Council and Chair of the LSP
JM	John Murphy, LSP's Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator
PH	Peter Hanley, Government Office for the North East
RB	Roger Bolas, Chair Health Implementation Group and Chief Executive of PCT
KW	Kate Welch, Easington Action Team for Jobs
JJ	Janet Johnson, Director of Economic Development, DEC
GT	Gordon Tempest, Community Network
NC	Neil Charlton, Chair Lifelong Learning Implementation Group and Deputy Director of Education, Durham County Council.
BB	Bob Blair, Chair Dawdon Steering Group
RC	Rob Crute, Regeneration Portfolio Holder, DEC

PCoe   Head of Regeneration and Partnerships, DEC

PConway   Director of Arts and Libraries, DCC

PR   Peter Richards, Chair Environment Implementation Group, Chief
            Executive Groundwork East Durham

NM   Norman Mackie, Chair of Community Network

JW   my own notes.

Appendix E

A Sample Interview Transcript

Interview with Anna Lynch 09:00 on 27.06.03 at Easington Primary Care Trust, Bracken Hill, Peterlee

JW I wanted to talk about the LSP. My interest is in persistent deprivation, and I've been trying to get a feeling of what has been happening from the work of the Task Force, carrying on into the LSP, and I've spoken to lots of people who were involved at the County Council and now I'm trying to bring that up to date. And I'm interested in the implications of bringing health and health care into the regeneration arena. So, that is my starting point. I wonder if you could talk about the PCT's contribution to the LSP? What sort of stake do you have in the LSP?

AL Organisationally, there is probably not a great understanding of the LSP and why we are involved in it. Personally, I see it as quite a high priority and I think Roger Bolas, the Chief Exec, also sees it as a high priority. But with my background in Public Health I know that realistically our biggest opportunity of improving health and therefore helping to reduce deprivation and poverty is around working with the partners around those factors that impact greatly on health. So that is to do with employment, education, the whole regeneration of the area, bringing jobs into the area, raising the aspirations of school kids, creating the environment where they are able to get jobs locally instead of migrating out of the area.

JW What do you seek to get out of the LSP?

AL Part of it is to try and get health higher up on their agenda, OK, from health issues, but also to work collaboratively with the other elements of the LSP. So, in particular with the Police, with education, with the housing, with environment.

JW So, it is a much broader agenda than just the service improvements through the NRF?

AL Oh God, yes, that's sort of... those are really opportunistic things that come along because you've got NRF and you can see gaps in services or bits of services that you could deliver differently if you had an additional resource. So, for example, the smoking cessation one, we have a core smoking cessation team that works through Primary Care. One of the issues is that not everybody goes in to see their GP, so we wanted to widen the access – opportunities for people to come into that service if they wanted to stop smoking. So, we got NRF funding to... and it was a service improvement, to broaden the access into that service via communities. So, there is work going on in Working Men's Clubs, you know, stop smoking groups. There are community members becoming involved as volunteer smoking cessation advisors to work in their own community. So, from my perspective that is very important because that... the smoking element is a crucial one if we are looking at health inequalities. If people quit smoking en masse that would do more for our health status in the next ten – twenty years than anything else we could do. As one single item, I would always pick that out. OK, go back to your question, pull me back in!

JW I know that it is early days in terms of the LSP, but how does that seem to be working out.

AL Well, I think that it has been very Council dominated and it has been very formal. I think that it has gone down a very traditional route of the structural – organisational side of it, and I guess that is to be expected because the council work in a certain way. I think there is a certain lack of transparency about what the Council has got from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund that hasn't been quite as overt as... and subject to as much scrutiny as some of the other service improvement bits, and I know that for a fact. And I'm not sure that everybody else knows that. The Council didn't have to be the lead body. That could have been challenged, but nobody really had their act together or wanted to take it on board, because it is a massive administrative job and the council has got a lot of expertise in dealing with regeneration money whether it is European, whether it is Single Regeneration Pot or whatever. So they have a lot of expertise in that area.

JW What do you think the influence of running the whole LSP basically through the economic development directorate has been, because as you say it needn't have been that.

AL No, it needn't have been that. I just think that it is historic in the fact that John... it was seen as a continuation of the East Durham Task Force and John Smith was involved in that and moved back to the council and continued in the same manner of working that the Task Force had had. A bit bureaucratic, a bit top-heavy. And of course what is happening now is I think there are challenges coming from the Community Network which I think are quite timely. I think there is a development day which Berni Scott is trying to pull together, probably the end of July / August, although it should have been June, that was the original plan, then it slipped and slipped and of course Berni is leaving anyway. She is looking at having this development day because we need to take stock otherwise you continue as you are continuing. We need to take stock and see if we can do things differently and refocus. You know, that sort of thing that you need to do midway through a programme of some sort. I think the LSP has the potential to be very powerful and to really set the strategic direction over... as an overarching body in a whole host of areas, but I don't think there is full engagement yet with all the partners, and all the partners, us included, are still doing our own strategic plan without necessarily looking at that bigger picture, and that is partly organisational culture, isn't it, that makes you want to keep what you've got in house somehow. I don't know whether I'm explaining it very clearly. And then everybody pays lip-service to completing their elements of the Community Strategy. Oh, yeah, we'll all put a bit in about health, we'll all put a bit in about environment, but somehow it doesn't just quite connect with what is going on.

JW The whole isn't quite greater than the sum of the parts?

AL No, no.

JW I'll maybe ask you a little more about the partners...

AL I mean, I dread to think what the other LSPs are like because people think the Easington one is fabulous. And I think, well, God help the others, then, because... I

don't think it is dysfunctional at all, but I don't think it is functioning as it could function.

JW How does working with the LSP fit in with your own organisation and its priorities?

AL Well, it is very clearly linked to public health, and that is why I am involved, because the whole regeneration element is going to improve health ultimately, and it is from that perspective. I mean, there isn't really at board level... there is a good understanding of the wider determinants of health and that the NHS treats people when they are sick and to stop people becoming sick we have to work at the other end of the spectrum and work with organisations that impact on the health of people. So, community safety – a massive impact on mental health and well being, particularly for older residents. Housing, street lighting, environmental issues – massive impact on health. You know, where we have houses that aren't heated adequately old people become ill, get admitted to hospital, may never come out, so all aspects of it link in to the heath improvement and health inequalities agenda.

JW Right, and have your priorities had to change as a result of engaging with the LSP?

AL Personally, mine haven't because I've always had a wider perspective of public health and always worked with that partnership agenda. Organisationally, it has probably become a little bit more formalised in that there is an understanding that we have to work broader than just with the NHS. And that didn't come naturally, that has had to be talked through with the chair and with the board to get them to understand why we are working with partners – education is education, what has it got to do with what we do? And it is about helping them to understand and make the links. Personally it has had a large impact on me. My role as Director of Public Health is a joint appointment between the PCT and the District Council, and that is new ground, you know, we've not done that before. It is very exploratory. The council aren't quite sure where it fits in! As an organisation, so we are still exploring. You know, I've never been to Directors meetings at the Council, I've never been to Corporate Management Team, and we are still...

JW Oh, so are you a joint employee of the two organisations?

AL My contract is with the PCT, but the post is a joint appointment. The funding comes from health, but it is a joint appointment. So, it has got to be unpicked further. I mean, I'm taking great pains to make sure I don't just become an NHS focussed Director of Public Health, that I need to work with the Council, and that will develop over the next year or so, really.

JW Because from the outside that looks great, doesn't it, but...

AL Oh yes, but what is the precedence because we haven't done it before. Although in the past up to 1974 Directors of Public Health, although they probably weren't called that, but their equivalents were based in local authorities and school nursing and district nursing were run by local authorities. So, it is a little bit of a... it is not a backward step because the agenda is different now and certainly at Director level there is engagement with my appointment and an understanding of how we will work together, but in reality and on a day to day level that has not been realised yet, and it is still early days. It is going to be very interesting to see how it develops. And the other thing we have done is we have jointly funded with the council a communications post so that Head of Communications, Mike Lavender, is a joint appointment between the PCT and the Council, and he is managed by the council but half his time is with us to do some of the communication things that we need doing, basically, internally, externally with patients, with communities etc.

JW So, these are very early stages in that process of bringing organisations closer...

AL Yes, I mean, I certainly... if I have a vision, then I do see a lot more joint working, so whether we go down the route of further joint appointments or secondments from one to the other and working in both directions, or whether we have a joint public health unit, that's down the road a few years. But the things that are happening like the housing stock is going out to the ALMO, the arm's length management organisation, hopefully that will happen. That's gone through the Deputy Prime Minister's office. That will reduce the responsibilities of Alan Caygill's role.

They are also looking at a compact with I think it is Chester-le-Street to take on board the environmental services like grass cutting and maintenance and things like that. So, that is reducing his directorate somewhat because the staff will go TUPE across. So, there may well be opportunities to pull public health and environmental health bit which is the statutory function that the council has around food hygiene, food safety, the environmental health issues that they have a statutory responsibility to do. And that is public health work. It is a bout protecting the health of the public, you know, the water quality, the air quality, the quality of the food that they eat, the checking and auditing of premises that have food on them. The public rely on the environmental health service to ensure that that is safe. But it is public health, it is another bit of public health. So, I can see a lot more collaboration and joint working in those specific areas. And the other bit where I see opportunities are the community development side, because within the economic development section Janet Johnson has a small team of community development workers. Now, I have a team of community health development workers. They are all working to similar agendas around community empowerment, involving local people and we need to be looking at those teams of people working closer together and not duplicating but having a complementary role, because there is little... if truth be known it is not always plain sailing and there is treading on toes and we have to get around that. There is that preciousness, you know, this is my bit, that does go on with staff on the ground. And that has to be worked through.

JW The council is quite a... I have to be careful how I say this... an interesting case politically, isn't it. It has a very strong heritage in political terms. To what extent do you see that influencing the work of the LSP?

AL Erm, I think it is an old-style council. I think it comes across as being dragged into the 21st century not always happily. I think Alan Napier is an excellent advocate for Easington. I think he is an excellent leader. I mean, I don't know how long he will stay because he has probably got the regional agenda in his sight. I don't know. Who knows what will happen. But he has raised the profile of Easington because he is very vocal at other meetings that he chairs and outside of Easington, so he has raised the profile of Easington and I think that has been good. And he has the interests of the local people at heart and it is very clear, very clear. So, I think he is a very good

leader. I think it must be difficult for any other residents to think they have an opportunity of getting in to the council, because I think... when you look, Robin Todd, who is our vice chair of our board, actually, and that is another good link that we are very pleased to be able to make. Robin Todd, he has been unopposed for God knows how many years in the area that he comes from. So, there is a very traditional approach, very traditional. It's not being challenged, really. It's not being challenged. So, I don't know whether the status quo will continue. I'm thinking in terms of the LSP, because the LSP meetings follow council... the agenda is set by the council. And that is partly the responsibility of partners to put things on the agenda as well, and to a certain degree that does happen, but on the whole the council... Berni, probably, and Alan Napier would set the agenda.

JW The agenda seems to have been dominated by NRF for as long as I can remember.

AL Yes, yes.

JW And I am almost left wondering if the LSP does anything more than that. It obviously does from what you have been saying...

AL Well, [sighs] certainly the very first year it was NRF, NRF and NRF and that was it, because it... the allocations come down later in the year and Easington got quite a lot for a small area and there's panic to get the money spent. The slippage in the first year was quite enormous and Government Office allowed it to be rolled over, but you just create an on-going problem for yourself the second year. And the one thing that is lacking really is that big *vision* somehow. It is lots of small fry. Lots of small things, and when you look at places, and I know that metropolitan areas are slightly different and you look at Gateshead and you look at Newcastle and you look at Sunderland and over the last ten years there have been phenomenal changes in those areas. Massive changes, and when you look... I've been working here eleven, twelve years, you know, the town centre looks almost the same. Yes we've got a nice arcaded area but that other street looks exactly the same. It's full of charity shops, low budget shopping. It's not going to attract people in. Dalton Park is one example of a success, and from all accounts it has succeeded in employing around 60 odd percent of local people which is very unusual and they've been monitoring that quite

carefully, so that is really good. But, you know, when you drive into this industrial estate it is *ropey*. You drive in and you think 'oh, this isn't a thriving area'. It's not so bad when you come round the bend into Bracken Hill with the newer buildings like this but the general air is one of deprivation when you come into this district. So somehow there hasn't been the big vision, the big thinkers because I'm damn certain they can pull in the money for it because there is always European money around and it goes on little things all the time. It's little things, and yes you can say that all those little things add up to big things in the end, and I know there are differences in what you can do in a semi-rural area compared with a city centre, and I understand that, but we haven't got anything other than Dalton Park that we'd say 'wow, this is a real flagship for our area'.

JW Why do you think it has been all little schemes.

AL Because there are a lot of people who are still around, probably me included, who have been around for a long time, and I guess you work on the day to day things and you don't step off that treadmill to think strategically and visionary. I can remember earlier this year or towards the end of last year the County Durham LSP had a visioning day and they had… were you at that, it was held in the Glebe?

JW I wasn't at that event, but I was…

AL They probably had them with other people. They had, I don't know if it was an American guy, somebody who was…

JW They had a consultant, Lee Schostak.

AL Yes, and he was quite inspirational because he was trying to make people think out of the box and think big. And one of the things I'd said was… in fact it was after Christmas, it must have been January because I'd been to Mexico for Christmas. What struck me about where I was in Mexico, we were about an hour south of Cancun in what 15 years ago had been nothing but rocks and rough coastline, and somebody had a vision and they saw this becoming a marina and a big resort area, and they pulled money together and they did it and it is a fabulous development. We've got a

coastline that is totally really unexploited, and yet it is different, it is not the Caribbean or whatever it is around Mexico. It is the North Sea and it is damn cold, but actually it doesn't matter to people who sail boats. The water temperature only matters if you are going to be swimming basically. Why has nobody developed a marina? Look what Hartlepool has done. So it is that sort of small-mindedness instead of thinking of the potential. And nothing may every come of it, but at least it gets people thinking than they have been thinking. I do see that as a drawback in this area that there isn't a grandiose master plan of how the area is going to be in twenty years.

JW And I suppose the people who are involved are so busy and tied up with the day to day business.

AL Yes, yes, that is part of the problem I think. But the NRF... this year again we are forecasting from the projected spends of the service improvements around a million pound underspend, and we have a chairs meeting next week to look at how we are going to address that and we've got service improvements that have to be capital basically. But they will all be reasonably small, discrete things, you know.

JW So even the governments grand scheme to try and address the problems is not working in the right direction.

AL It is being addressed by very small initiatives and developments without any grand masterplan type of thing. Do you understand what I am saying. There is not one big thing that everybody is working towards. There is still a lot of insular thinking around health, environment, although we can make the links with the service improvements, but they go on in isolation and they are not all... somehow they are not quite gelled together.

JW It is almost a question of 'what are you making things better for?'

AL We would all say we are improving the lot of people who live and work here. And I think that genuinely that is what we all feel, but I don't know that it is enough. I do think more has to be done with creating the employment and the sustainability of

employment. It is small employment like engineering, there is nothing major here, but one of the things that local employers say is, well, we can't employ local people because they haven't got the skills we need. So it just gets to be a vicious circle. So then they say, how do we get the people with the skills we need? Well, we'll get them from Sunderland, we'll get them from Teesside, so you get people coming from out of the area to work in the area, and so it is not improving the opportunities for local people. So that needs the college, and Ian Prescott at the college would say that they are trying to work with local employers to put on courses that deliver the skills, but again there's politics with a small 'p' where the college is involved, you know, with the Learning and Skills Council, with the District Council, although they've probably resolved some of the issues, but they are not mutually supportive organisations. And Ian is a bit of a maverick. He has done quite a lot for the college in the number of years that he's been here. Well, he's done a phenomenal amount to improve the environment for learning and the range of opportunities, but I don't know whether it would be able to create the skills necessary for bringing employers in. And if you don't bring the employers in, you train the young people up and they will go... the most able will go. So it is about that synergistic approach, about working together to that common aim, because the college could put on all sorts of skills based modern apprenticeship courses, they could do all that sort of thing, and if the jobs aren't here we've got the outwards migration of the young, able people again and you are left with the less able people, and that is what happens, and that just perpetuates the deprivation. And the kids are going in to schools and they are from second and third generation of parents with no jobs, so they have low aspirations and in an area such as this where you have kids with low aspirations, teachers don't want to come and teach so you end up with crap teachers in some instances. I'm not meaning that derogatory, there are some excellent teachers, but they can't get locum, they don't call it locum, supply cover in some of the schools because they won't come here. It's just amazing. So you can see how all these disparate bits are all contributing to the problems of the area.

JW Do you think it is something that a local initiative can break out of this vicious circle that you've described.

AL Well, [sighs] who else is going to be interested? One of our MPs is Tony Blair. You can't get a more high profile MP than that. And yes, he only does cover the west of the District, but who else is going to take it forward. When you look at the IMD stuff and Easington is the most deprived area outside London, you think that would trigger bells in people's minds. When you look at the health domain from the IMD stuff, out of the 8,000 odd wards in England, out of the 20 with the poorest health, ten of them are in Easington. You say that to people and they are astounded, and then we as a PCT for our health service provision in this area are £26m below what we should have *per year*. Now, there is something not right somewhere. Somebody isn't making the connections up there at Whitehall. So you think, well, they're not doing anything at government level, and of course we know why. I shouldn't say we know why, but politically it is a safe seat. Nobody is ever going to get in here but Labour, so why would they break their necks to do anything different? Do you understand what I am saying about the big political context. There is never ever going to be anybody but Labour voted in here. It is one of the strongest Labour seats in the country, so why should the government go out of their way to improve things. You can see them doing it in marginal constituencies, and they are not going to do it here. And that is political with a big 'p'. I think it is very covert, and I don't think anybody ever says that, but it makes you wonder, doesn't it.

JW It is just another element of the powerlessness, isn't it. Somebody I've spoken to said the District could have done with riots like Toxteth…

AL Yes, well, then it would have got on the agenda. But we don't have a mass of people, we don't have a mass of people to be able to… for anybody to generate that head of steam. Peterlee is the biggest bit of the conurbation with 35, 36,000 or whatever it is. It is a small amount. Culturally, they are very homophobic, very racial, you know, we have hardly any ethnic population here. It is not a comfortable place for people to settle in if they are a little bit different.

JW How has the LSP handled the issue of targeting?

AL [Big sigh]. It is very difficult when you have an area that is so deprived. We have very tiny pockets of relative affluence, but across the district as a whole, when we

were doing the target setting, the ward based target setting looking at the IMD stuff and any other data we could pull in, there was a hair's breadth between why we would choose X, Y and Z and not A, B and C wards. It's very difficult in an area like this, and to certain degrees they are unnatural boundaries, and I think greater and greater we are finding that a lot of the service improvements will impact across the district rather than specific wards. And of course one of the things that is always very difficult in anything like this is when you are trying to identify how much you spend in a ward. There is no formula for it. So, yes, we provide health visitors who work across the district, but no health visitor works in one ward, and no school nurse works in one ward, no district nurse works in one ward, no GP works in one ward, so how do you start apportioning their time and the relative cost. We don't have a formula to say well... what we should do is say, well, our budge it £99m, we have 26 wards, lets just do a straight division, because that is the reality, you know. But of course there are different numbers of people in the wards, so you would have to factor in all of these different issues into a formula, and nobody has come up with a satisfactory formula for us.

JW And how about when it came to the NRF, dividing that between the different implementation groups. I think in the end it was just divided by five, wasn't it?

AL Yeah, well, how do you separate the issues of, well, health is underfunded by £26m in any given year, the housing stock you know needs £100m spending on it to bring it up to reasonable living standards, community safety, a statutory responsibility, needs lots of money in to it. So, all those areas are priorities and there was no agreement... it was never discussed that we should focus on one of the floor targets but that the NRF would be spread across all. And as an indicative amount to get things moving, then I think there was an agreement that it would be roughly split... I mean, at the end of the day it didn't come out quite like that, but that was the starting point which was as good as anything. It was as good a model as anything you can hope to work with. I think one of the things that will hopefully help as time progresses is this strategic funding partnership that is being established, because one of the things that is an absolute nightmare is the fact that all these pots of money that come in – Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Children's Fund, the Single Pot money, the Urban II money, other European pots, I can never remember, 2, 3 & 4, you know, all

these different pots of funding that come in, all have different documentation that you've got to complete, different proformas, different timescales, different monitoring criteria, different requirements for audit purposes, and you think... nightmare. We've had here, because we have quite a lot of funny money coming in for health improvement... what I call the funny monies, not mainstream NHS, we've had to take on somebody who is a financial management person because we can't deal with all of these different audit requirements and requests that come in. We have a big system, you know, the Health Economy in Durham, and we have a shared financial service that deals with £700m a year, and then they are asking, NRF is as bad as any of them, Berni is asking for copies of invoices, details of travel expenses. We don't have a system that allows us to do that. And a small voluntary organisation will, because they'll have all theirs in house, they'll have it all filed somewhere and they can produce that. We can't do that. We can't do it, and we've been penalised for not being able to do that, although we are delivering... you know, we lose money because we can't demonstrate some of the spend although it is there on the spreadsheet. I don't know what happens to invoices. And it has taken a phenomenal amount of staff time for peanuts, *for peanuts*. Anyway, we've had to get somebody from finance to have a full time dedicated post for dealing with this because we just can't do it.

JW It is ridiculous, isn't it?

AL Yeah, so it has been... and it is not just us that is complaining about it. Everybody complains about the bureaucracy. And NRF was meant to be an easily administered, loose pot of money, and it is as bureaucratic as any of them. And I think that is the council's fault as the accountable body. But I also understand that they had an audit that penalised them quite heavily – an external audit, so they have tightened up their procedures. But when you read the NRF guidance, it is meant to be very flexible, very easy to administer, not like all the other regeneration pots of money, and it has become one of them from an administrative point of view. And that is not right, although you have to monitor and be accountable for public money, but there must be a better way of doing it. Because it creates jobs for people. It creates jobs in the system that could be spent out there doing other things.

JW That is interesting. Within the Health Implementation Group you got a pretty small sum of money at the end of the day from the NRF. How did you select service improvements or projects? How did you put them together.

AL Well, the members of the Health Implementation Group were the main ones who put in service proposals, though some did come from communities who weren't members on the Health Implementation Group, like Barnardos submitted a proposal and they are not on the group, although they could be, but they are based in Newcastle but they have a worker here with the carers project. We had our own... the HIG had... has its own priorities and had worked... the HIG was an existing group before NRF, and we re-vamped it when NFR came along. It was originally, as all the others were, a sub-group of the Task Force, a Task Group, and we re-vamped it when the LSP came along and took on a broader membership and tried to widen the scope. Now, I don't think we've been particularly successful at doing that. I think... although people think the HIG is a well-functioning group, and it is quite good, and it stays quite focussed, but it could be much more. I think it could be much more. And we are going to have a day either at the end of October or the beginning of November where we are pulling all the members in... its time to take stock, as it is with the LSP, we need to take stock and we are going to get an external facilitator in to take us through the process. We need to think a bit more laterally, outside the box and think about how that group develops and what its role and responsibilities are. I mean, nobody sends anything to the agenda. I do the agenda with Roger. It becomes one of those groups that just keeps going. Would people care if it didn't keep going? You don't know, do you? You don't know. I do have another pot of money, and part of me thinks that I should take it to the HIG and put it in there because it is for health inequalities, you know, pump-priming money to start things off and that are a bit innovative and a bit different, and I am not doing that at the moment, I'm just waiting to see what happens, because on of the things that annoys me to a certain degree is that pre-NRF, all the money that went into the Health Implementation Group came from health. It was a partnership, but nobody else put a penny in. Not a penny, but they were all quick enough to want to draw out of it. There was a commitment at the beginning that money would come in from different organisations, that we would look at it with a corporate health approach, that multi-agency partnership, and look at the best use of that money for small projects, small developments, innovation, different

areas of work. And of course, nobody put any money in, and it is the same old story. And it is ironic that we are so grossly underfunded for health, that we end up funding the things like the handyman scheme at the council. It is a really good programme. We funded that for the first year fully, second year we've more or less ended up funding it, but we've only done it on the proviso that it is picked up by the council as well and we'll part-fund it. And I can't believe that they can't find £15,000.

JW That's not bending the mainstream, is it, it is more like substituting one source of funding for another?

AL One of the issues I've had with the implementation groups, and I can see both sides of the arguments, is that if you are looking at bending mainstream services, then you need to be doing things differently, and everybody takes great care to talk about service improvements, whereas in reality what we have are projects. There are some service improvements, I've certainly got a couple that I would consider service improvements – that smoking is one...

JW That happened before NRF, didn't it?

AL Yes, we had the smoking cessation service. Now, a lot of the other pieces of work that are going on with the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund are additional pieces of work, they are not service improvements, they are new pieces of work. It is not bending the mainstream. Now, I had a big problem accepting that we should be spending on aids and adaptations from the health budget, because that is mainstream funded. Yes, there is a big backlog, but I said we are doing exactly what we have always done with it – we are putting more money in to try and get rid of the backlog. We will never do it. We are not doing anything differently. Now the HIG, the group did not support that proposal to go through, and of course it was overruled at the chairs meeting, and that was partly because of Patrick Conway who comes, because of the political pressure he'd got from county councillors over this. So it was overruled. The HIG didn't support it, and we had to backtrack and take it to the HIG and say, well, sorry, we need it for the record that we'll support this. But they said exactly what I've said originally. This is putting good money into bad, not that the... aid and adaptations are essential but the service isn't delivering anything any different, it has

just got more of the same. It is the system that needs changing and that's not happened. So, I had a real problem accepting that that was bending the mainstream. And I said it wasn't. The same with the housing, the money that went into housing. How is that bending the mainstream? It is not doing anything different. It is bringing forward what would be done in two years time, but it is not doing anything different. And that is what I have a problem with. Because there is so much underfunding, and we are at such a poor level of services anyway... and the converse argument is, well, if your services aren't the normal services that people should expect, then you should be using this money to bring them up to that standard, and you can't bend them until you get to that level where it is the same as everywhere else in the country. So, there is that converse argument which is the argument they used. I don't care what they say, there is very little of that NRF gone on bending mainstream services. We say service improvements and I say it tongue in cheek because its projects. How many of them are going to be sustainable. Very few, because they rely totally on NRF. We will pick up ours, I think, but we are expecting, and we've talked about it at the chairs' that where there are posts involved for years four and five there needs to be a taper, so that is going to eat into the new allocations. So where there is a post that is 100% funded, instead of saying, OK, you did say it would be sustainable and you would look to mainstream it for years four onwards, we recognise that that is not always possible, so we will fund 75% this year, 50% year five and then you are on your own after that, so it is a tapered approach. And I think that is what will happen, so I actually think that the new monies for years four and five won't be... will already be spoken for to a certain degree. In theory, that is what will happen, because you can't just take away a service that you've been providing. You can't just do that, it is not ethical. And I'm thinking across all of the floor targets, for example, the Place to Be that is in the schools, that is a joint one between lifelong learning and health where there is a group of people who support kids in schools with any problems that they have that are health related, emotional, behavioural or whatever. That is totally funded by NRF. That is not going to be picked up by schools. They have no money. So, ethically, we can't say, sorry guys, you had £250,000 over the last two years, you can't have any more. That will have to be a tapered approach. There is that whole issue of you can't... where services are so grossly underfunded, they are not going to be able to mainstream things and make them sustainable, so they need to rely on the NRF for another two years. Then who knows what happens? So, all those issues are

there, and they are talked about. The chairs talk about those. The other big one that could have been a flagship and could still be quite good and certainly I've talked with Trevor Watkins [Watson] about it, and we know that it needs to happen because of the community appraisals and the issues around substance misuse and young people is this young people's substance misuse service. And we've actually got £400,000 allocated to this. Not a penny has been spent yet, and there is pressure on that, and it will be spent. It is a difficult one, we are actually looking at premises next week in the town centre, right next to the college, so I'm doing with the DAT coordinator David Cliff, and if that looks suitable, and we are not going to look at it as a young person's substance misuse centre, we're going to look at it as a young person's health and resource unit or something like that because otherwise it would become 'the drugs shop' or... it will get some stigma attached to it, so it needs to be in a more generic approach to working with young people. So there is a lot more to be done on that.

JW What has held that up? There was something about the lack of a business plan...

AL Well, again, yes, because we have a two-tier local authority we have a DAT, Drug Action Team, that cover the county and a DAT coordinator that works across the county as a whole, and that is seven local authorities and it is not easy. Seven local authorities, five PCTs I think. I might be one off with the local authorities. Historically it has been quite a difficult partnership, I think, now... the DAT leads on commissioning of drugs or substance misuse services across the county, so PCTs don't... we work with the DAT to commission. There is a joint commissioning budget for adult services and we are piloting a joint commissioning service for young people's services this year as one of five national pilots, I think, for drug action teams. So, it has meant that yes, although I managed to get the money ring-fenced and carried over from last year to this year, the DAT coordinator and, we have to take some responsibility – Roger is the DAT chair as well, so we have to take some responsibility as well for not putting a rocket up David's backside to get this moving quicker. And he is totally committed to it and he has had a group working on this, but part of the jigsaw puzzle didn't fit, and that was the supporting people element because they were looking at trying to get more of a residential setup established, and the supporting people element didn't get supported by the supporting people board or whatever it is called, so that bit of the picture fell out. So, it had to go back to square

one a little bit, so the full business case has never been in a position to be developed. And I had said 12 months ago that we needed a project manager to take this forward, and I think David was loathed to give up that element of involvement, but there is going to have to be a project manager appointed. One of the things that we will... the actual cost is going to be far more than the £400k. One of the issues that we will have, of course, is trying to get some agreement in principle that NRF will support this in the subsequent two years, because we can't go ahead with this unless we know that there is some more revenue coming onstream, because we are probably talking a £1m piece of work with some revenue implications which, yes, the PCT and partners may be able to pick up ultimately, but that needs feeding in to our local planning. We haven't got the money to do it now, but if we know in two years time we are going to have to pick up a bill of £400k for recurring costs or whatever, then we can programme that in and make allowances for that, but we can't do it now. So it's a position where we want that piece of work to move forward, everyone in community appraisals mentions the issues, we know from the work that goes on in the community, from the work that... we have an adult substance misuse – ESMI, Easington Substance Misuse Initiative based in Peterlee and we have one based in Seaham, and we know that those are over-subscribed, there are too many people wanting to use the services, they don't deal with under 16's. So there is that whole issue of we are not providing a service. There is nothing in reality... it is essential that we get that going. But there will be some hoops to go through before that happens, but then I have to acknowledge that yes, I think I should have done more, but actually I couldn't have done more because I had too much to do anyway, and you rely on other people in partnership work to take things forward, and sometimes things are slower than you expect them to be and there are valid reasons why that is the case. But there will be pressure next week on this money, because if we can't give a clear indication that it will be spent it will go into the pot. But we have to be able to get it re-provided next time so... and that could be quite a nice mini-flagship type of service, because Trevor Watson wants to get the community safety angle in, there is a big issues with homelessness and young people, we'd want to get something around that in, generic health issues, there's a lot we could do. We could get Connexions involved, we could get community education involved, or education in the community as it is now called, the Youth Service, so there's lots of strands that we could pull in to it.

JW And once it is up and running it sounds like it would be an ideal candidate for mainstreaming.

AL And it would be a real good piece of work. And there is no reason... the will that is there to make this happen... so, we'll see what happens.

JW I'm very conscious of the time... one final thought, if I may. I'm interested in how you get from identifying local problems and priorities and how you understand... or where the understanding comes form and how problems operate and how that feeds in to what you are trying to tackle them... I've been looking at the Task Force and that seems to be something that was missing...

AL Yes, that is the crux of the matter, isn't it, and that is part of the community network's... well, the Task Force didn't have a community network to support it or to feed in to it, or public involvement, really, from my recollection. Or if it did, it was lip-service. Public services have been notoriously poor at involving local people. Basically what happened in the past, services would do all the work around developments and changes and come up with a proposal that basically was a done deal and then go out to consultation, and there were bureaucratic management events, and you were lucky if you got two or three people coming to them. And you think somebody would have said at some point, 'hey guys, this isn't working, we're not doing it right else people would be more interested in what was happening.' So, notoriously bad history of involving local people. I think that will all change, and I think it will be a slow process. One of the things from a health perspective that we did in 1995 we set up the community health forums. In theory that is a good model, in practice it didn't work as effectively as it could have done, and again, on reflection, we subcontracted that to the council, and it got a bit subsumed by the council agenda, and there were some petty issues between some of the staff who were working on that initiative and some health staff not getting on, and actually partnership work depends on the personalities involved. More and more you see that where you've got somebody who's very difficult to work with, it can halt and stop any development at all. So, I think that can hold things up enormously, and people come and people go, and there is always that turn over of people in an area in statutory services. The

engagement comes when, as with the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder when you are working in a very small area – that is three wards – or when you are working in an area like SureStart, which again is focussed on three wards and you have dedicated people who are working on an area basis, instead of a district wide basis, and you can get that true involvement with people, you can invest the time, because you can't just go along and expect people to want to be involved, you know, community development is long term, it is resources intensive, it is time intensive. And for too long we have had non-recurring pots of money to develop community development work, and you can't do it. We did have an opportunity, it must have been about eight years ago, we had a big initiative called East Durham Community Development Initiative and we had a team of sixteen community workers working in the various communities, but politics got in the way big time between the [county] council and the district council, and it was not a smooth programme of work and it didn't get picked up or mainstreamed or anything. People were glad to see it go for political reasons, basically. And that was the Task Force involved, dabbling, parachuting stuff in. Now, when I think to the small area work, where you have SureStarts, where we have the Neighbourhood Management pathfinder, you see real engagement with local people, although I think the pathfinder tends to...[interruption] What was I saying, I've lost my thread? Where you have that involvement like the pathfinder, and I believe actually there's a lot of local councillors on the pathfinder board. Now I don't know, because Graham Gregg's the chair of the health group there, he's one of my heads of service, and I've never worked on that piece of work, he leads on that. There are politics with a small 'p'. They get in the way all over the place, and there are local councillors who think they know what everybody wants, and they think because they are a local councillor that everything should go through them and they should have a control of what is going on. What was quite interesting in the health bit of the Neighbourhood Pathfinder, we thought that the issues from health would be all around access to GPs, not having GPs where they want them, poor quality services, and none of that came up from the communities. It was all around lifestyle issues – smoking and young people, about smoking in pregnancy, and around substance misuse, teenage pregnancy rates, nothing to do with the level of services which surprised us, because we'd got somebody from a service commissioning point of view involved in that group initially, Susan Foster, and then we had... she stepped down and Graham had to take it over because the area of work was not what we

expected. So, that was quite unusual, I think, but you only get true community involvement when, as an organisation, you work to change the culture of an organisation. We're just about... and Carol has come in because we are shortlisting for a public and patient involvement coordinator post, and that person will have a massive agenda, because not only will they be trying to involve local communities, supporting some of the work that the health forums do, the Community Network, looking at whatever other mechanisms there are like the area forums, I mean, there's all sorts of two-way communication networks for agencies to tap into and work with local people, but I still don't... I think we are a million miles away from getting true engagement and involvement, but from this year PCTs have been given a statutory duty to involve local people, and that is quite scary, and we've got to have a change in our organisational culture. And it will happen because we've got a board that is a lay board. We've got more non-executives who are local people on our board than we have officers from the PCT, and they are strong advocates for local people. And we have to be working... and part of our new strategic plan, which is a five year plan that is at the printers now, so it is going to be sent to partners to engage dialogue. We haven't done it with partners, we've done it in house, and again you think 'oo, well, was that the way to do it?'. But that is the way we have done it. But partnership work is in there, and also we've set our self objectives that we will have a robust community involvement strategy implemented by 2005 or whatever it was, I can't remember the date, and we are being performance monitored on it. And part of that community involvement strategy will involve training for staff and... because our front line staff work with people in the community day in, day out. They have a responsibility to be involving, engaging and treating them as equals, not the doctor patient relationship where you are done to by the doctor, but where you have a true engagement. We have a lot of opportunities to do that but we don't capitalise on it. So, I think that will happen, but I think it will be a slow process, you know, me doctor, you patient, me nurse, you patient mentality that is still there and is part of the training.

JW It sounds like an exciting future...

AL Oh, yes. And I'm very optimistic, and I think that the partnership work and the work with the council, the opportunity with my post, I think the LSP has a good

opportunity. It is quite interesting that Alan has been appointed as Chair again unopposed – nobody else has even been in the frame, put their head above the parapet, and I'm sure there are very able people out there who would do that and do it differently, but there is a lack of willingness to challenge that status quo. And I admire Alan enormously, he's done a lot for the District, and I'm not saying he shouldn't be chair, but there are other people who would do it differently and the LSP would be a different animal. We're not there yet, we're not there where anybody is being open enough or creative enough to take that forward. It might happen...

JW We've run over, thank you ever so much.

AL I can talk forever...

END

Appendix F

Analytical categories and themes established following interviews with members of the East Durham Task Force

1. District ill-prepared for colliery closure

Only a small council – essentially a housing authority. Unusual political situation – difficulty of planning for closure whilst supporting the case for the continuation of mining. Absence of planning for closure at national level.

2. Immediacy of problems

The immediacy of the problems made planning for the longer term difficult – emphasis on inward investment was understandable then. Limited options available. Perhaps LSP will have the edge now?

3. Lack of capacity in District

District didn't have an economic development function until 1996 – even then it was a one-man-band (Bill Scorer). County had extensive expertise from its work in Consett and Shildon, dedicated staff & budget. Promotion of people for wrong reasons within District (people without the appropriate skills)?

4. Scale

The County Council had resources which it was able to divert to particular problem areas such as East Durham, the District Council did not. The County Council has an annual budget of £500m compared to the District Council's £10m

The County Council had, and was able to use, links, influence and trust with organisations and individuals that the District Council did not. Links with government and Europe were particularly important in this context. This has implications for the work of the LSP.

5. Physical success – easy to achieve?

The majority of the Task Force's successes were physical. Easy to achieve with the 'bullish', well-connected leadership of Ken Frankish? For further investigation – where did funding come from? Not mainstream regeneration...

6. Organisational roles

To a large extent the County Council was simply addressing its statutory responsibilities through the work of the Task Force – especially highways, environmental improvements. Likewise with the District Council – especially housing. There was apparently little joint working (of the sort emerging under the LSP).

7. Relationship between County and District

The relationship between County and District was undermined by local government review in the early 1990s. District suspicious of intentions of County. Strong feeling of 'go it alone' from District – almost keen to wind up the Task Force? Strong paternalistic attitude held by some officers at County (still). Strong personalities with long memories remain significant obstacles to better relations. Feeds a culture of 'separatism'.

8. Turmoil in the District Council

Financial mismanagement, staff turnover and Bill Scorer made the District an unappealing investment for public sector bodies.

9. Influence of Task Force structure on LSP

Structure of the Task Force with its working groups has been taken up by the LSP. (Unsurprisingly) same people involved to some extent. Likely to shape the problems they address and the way they go about doing it. Can already be seen in the LSP's community strategy.

Appendix G

East Durham LSP Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Service Improvements 2002 / 3 and 2003 / 4

Key

Project title	Implementation Group
£ NRF awarded / £ total cost of project	
Lead Partners	
Brief description of the project, its aims and objectives.	

Economic Development

Positive Pathways	Economic Development IG
£125,351 / £193,000	
East Durham Partnership, Shotton Hall School	
Advice, guidance, basic and soft skills training (including parenting and confidence building programmes) for people not currently engaged in active work, in an informal, non-threatening environment to enable those people not reached by mainstream service provision to enter the labour market.	

Marketing and Promotion of the District	Economic Development IG
£180,000 / £180,000	
District of Easington	
Promotion and marketing of the District and its Enterprise Zone sites to promote the opportunities for job creation and business growth. The establishment of a Business Forum to engage local businesses with each other and the community.	

Dalton Park Training	Economic Development IG
£120,000 / £180,000	
New College Durham	
Retail, customer service and basic skills training tailored to individual needs to enable Jobseekers to apply for jobs in the Dalton Park Retail Outlet.	

Providing Business Advice to Retailers	Economic Development IG
£89,554 / £89,554	
East Durham Development Agency	
Provision of retail advice to the retail sector and non-SMEs through funding of staff and overhead costs at EDDA	

Business Broker	Economic Development IG
£30,400 / £152,000	
East Durham Development Agency	
Additional funding to support a government sponsored Business Broker pilot to engage the business community in the work of the LSP.	

Business Start-Up Grants	Economic Development IG
£150,000 / £150,000	
Business Link County Durham	
Support and advice for individuals starting up their own businesses	

Small Business Grants	Economic Development IG
£88,000 / £168,000	
East Durham Development Agency	
Grants to enable firms to move into larger factory premises and businesses seeking to move into office accommodation.	

Improving Physical Infrastructure	Economic Development IG
£300,000 / £ ?	
District of Easington	
Economic and environmental impact assessment of the East Durham Link Road (£50k) and construction of access to the former Hawthorne Cokeworks site (£250k) which has been identified as the location for the next business park in East Durham and will hopefully house over 5000 jobs.	

CCTV Scheme	Economic Development IG
£200,000 / £200,000	
District of Easington, Community Safety Unit	
Installation of CCTV equipment in Easington Colliery to act as a deterrent to crime and antisocial behaviour and to record evidence to assist in prosecutions. No recorded progress on this project.	

Bracken Hill Call Centre / IT Training and Childcare Facility	Economic Development IG
£95,000 / £175,000	
Northern Training Trust	
Provision of call centre and IT training linked with a childcare facility (30-40% of places for training participants). NTT went in to liquidation during the project which was taken up by East Durham and Houghall Community College.	

Action for Housing and Communities

Thornley Improvement Scheme	Action for Housing and Communities
£1,280,579 / £2,980,579	
District of Easington	
Improvements to council houses in Thornley to improve security and bring the properties to the Decent Homes Standard, with additional benefits to residents' health.	

Parkside Improvement Scheme	Action for Housing and Communities
£638,316 / £3,378,520	
District of Easington	
Improvements to council houses in Parkside to improve security and bring the properties to the Decent Homes Standard.	

Health Improvement Group

Easington Young Carers	Health Improvement Group
£74,000 / £74,000	
Barnardos	
Employ a project worker to identify and work with young carers in schools to tackle the impact of caring on young people's health and education.	

Aids and Adaptations	Health Improvement Group
£200,000 / £200,000	
Social Services, Durham County Council	
Provision of specialist equipment and property adaptations for disabled people and their homes.	

Food and Health	Health Improvement Group
£66,000 / £102,000	
Primary Care Trust	
Work with local communities to address barriers to healthy eating, including breakfast clubs in schools and healthy eating classes for older people. Undertaking of a food mapping exercise in a number of settlements	

Sustainable Health for Easington	Health Improvement Group
£20,000 / £40,317	
Durham County Council	
A programme of cycling and walking training events across the District to encourage cycling and walking for recreation and transport with benefits for people's health.	

Older People's Health Initiative	Health Improvement Group
£74,000 / £98,000	
Primary Care Trust	
To employ a development worker to focus on older people's health issues, including flu immunisation, exercise, home safety, the Warm Homes Initiative, and combating isolation and its effects on mental health.	

Smoking Cessation	Health Improvement Group
£68,000 / £96,000	
Primary Care Trust	
To employ a project officer to provide group sessions and individual counselling for people wanting to stop smoking through a community-based, self-referral service to compliment the PCT's Smoking Cessation Service.	

Health Programmes	Health Improvement Group
£58,025 / £89,600	
Primary Care Trust	
To employ a project officer to work with practice staff in the coastal wards to deliver services in response to local needs and to develop a community development approach to health improvement.	

Physical Education & Sport Development	Health Improvement Group
£50,000 / £590,000	
School Sport Co-ordinator (DCC / DEC)	
To complement Lottery Funding from Sport England to provide sports activities for young people across the District, including major events and festivals, training for coaches and leaders and transport to enable disadvantaged youngsters to participate.	

Health, Education and Allotments	Health Improvement Group
£60,000 / £120,000	
Groundwork East Durham	
Allotment improvement work and the development of a community allotment to contribute to improvement in mental and physical health of residents through the "Grow Well, Eat Well" initiative. Environmental improvements in selected settlements and involvement of young people to divert them from inactivity.	

Young People's Substance Misuse Service	Health Improvement Group
£400,000 / £700,000	
Primary Care Trust	
Housing, education, counselling and specialist prescribing for young people with substance misuse problems.	

Skipping for Health	Health Improvement Group
£22,000 / £38,000	
East Durham and Houghall Community College	
Expansion of a project initially funded by SRB5. Introduction and coaching for primary school children to skipping and organisation of inter-school competitions. Opportunity to try non-contact boxing	

Sport for Better Health	Health Improvement Group
£21,000 / £40,200	
East Durham and Houghall Community College	
To employ a dedicated development worker to introduce children aged 7+ to basketball and provide opportunities for progression in the sport which will improve health, educational attainment, reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. [Staff time largely spent on administration – January to March 2003: 40 children participate in taster sessions, 41 hours of basketball delivery, 209 hours of administration, total cost £3,223	

Learning and Skills Forum

Easington District Basic Skills Support	Learning and Skills Forum
£270,000 / £470,000	
Developing Initiatives for Support in the Community (DISC) Ltd	
To employ a team of four peripatetic workers to deliver basic skills provision for non-traditional learners in community venues.	

Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator	Learning and Skills Forum
£80,000 / £80,000	
To employ a lifelong learning coordinator to promote lifelong learning across the District, produce a lifelong learning audit and strategy, encourage employers to engage in skills development and engage community groups in learning.	

Supporting Child Development	Learning and Skills Forum
£40,000 / £1,000,000	
Sure Start Peterlee	
Physical infrastructure (three venues) to deliver a range of early years services to the most high-needs children	

World Class Digital Literacy	Learning and Skills Forum
£400,000 / £1,957,000	
Education Action Zone	
Provision of electronic whiteboards and laptops – one whiteboard and four laptops in every year six classroom to promote digital literacy among pupils who will be able to act as teachers for others and compete for jobs in the new economy.	

Excellence Challenge Summer Schools	Learning and Skills Forum
£40,000 / £146,000	
Education Action Zone	
To provide a one week motivational summer school for 60 year 9 students (10 from each of 6 schools) identified as having high potential but low motivation. Students provided with laptops as long as they remain in education.	

Place to Be	Learning and Skills Forum (joint with Health Improvement Group)
£340,000 / £412,000	
Education Action Zone	
Commissioning therapeutic mental health services from The Place to Be (charity) to address the needs of primary school children by contributing to social and emotional well-being and self esteem. The project aims to increase attendance, reduce unauthorised absence and improve results in 12 EAZ primary schools.	

Speech and Language – Early Years	Learning and Skills Forum
£112,000 / £164,000	
Education Action Zone	
Provision of 4 nursery nurses trained to deliver speech therapy and language enrichment to nursery children to improve their education and life chances.	

Flexible Vocational Learning	Learning and Skills Forum
£80,000 / £210,000	
East Durham and Houghall Community College	
To expand a project supported by the Learning and Skills Council to provide vocational training (through the college) for 14 – 16 year olds. The project aims to improve staying on rates in education and training, improve participants' job prospects and decrease the likelihood of young people becoming involved in crime and antisocial behaviour.	

Leadership and Management	Learning and Skills Forum
£118,000 / £134,000	
Education Action Zone	
Leadership and management training for senior managers in EAZ schools, including tuition costs, residential fees and teacher cover. Improved managers will be able to share their skills with other staff and contribute to the improved performance of the District's schools.	

Learning Mentors	Learning and Skills Forum
£462,000 / £517,000	
Education Action Zone	
To provide 19 learning mentors (3 for each secondary school in the District) to raise expectations and enable students to attain their full potential. The project is based on a successful initiative developed through the Excellence in Cities programme	

Secondary Schools English Assistants	Learning and Skills Forum
£116,000 / £153,000	
Education Action Zone	
To employ three support staff in each of 6 secondary schools to work with individual pupils and small groups to improve literacy, prepare materials and undertake administration, releasing professional teacher time.	

Pathways to Academic and Vocational Learning	Learning and Skills Forum
£440,000 / £755,000	
Northern Training Trust	
Short courses (up to 13 weeks) in soft skills (citizenship, communication, motivation, interpersonal skills and attitudinal issues incorporated into vocational courses designed to meet the needs of the client group) to encourage school leavers (16 – 19 years) to remain in further education with the incentive of a training allowance paid to those taking part.	

Community Safety Partnership

Reducing Burglary Initiative	Community Safety Partnership
£238,266 / £300,000	
Community Safety Partnership	
A multi-agency co-ordinated approach that will identify and target prolific offenders. Target hardening in burglary hotspots and focussed work with prolific offenders to curb re-offending.	

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour	Community Safety Partnership
£561,734 / £608,734	
Community Safety Partnership	
Establishment of a dedicated team of council and police officers to address anti-social behaviour from an enforcement, prevention and rehabilitation perspective. Work with young people at risk through Positive Futures and Youth Inclusion Programmes.	

Environment

Common Ground	Environment
£600,000 / £1,200,000	
Groundwork East Durham	
Production of a strategy document for environmental improvements in the District for the next decade and community-led environmental improvements in settlements, including improving derelict land and buildings using Intermediate Labour Market labour wherever possible. Project will improve people's well-being, the basis of community and employability. Environment was a high priority in community appraisals.	