

# **The participation of women in urban regeneration: A longitudinal study in Sheffield**

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## **Abstract**

The growing trend towards community based urban regeneration schemes has prompted a number of studies examining the participation of local residents within these initiatives. This thesis is one such study, but takes a different perspective from most others, in that it specifically examines the participation of women in urban regeneration.

The research adopts a longitudinal, qualitative approach in order to examine the level and depth of participation over a twelve month period in two neighbourhoods of Sheffield, which are in receipt of regeneration funding through the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund.

The research has three main findings. First, participation is a complex concept, which may be experienced at a number of levels (non, token, active and activist) and it changes through time. Second, local residents do not appear to be empowered through the regeneration process. Third, there are a number of barriers faced by women considering participation in their neighbourhood.

The findings are used to inform the dominant paradigm of urban governance: regime theory. Integrated regime theory is proposed as a more inclusive way of exploring the governance of urban regeneration. The research also contributes to the policy debate by confirming that there is a greater need for the participation of local residents and suggests further ways in which this can be promoted.

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**List of abbreviations**

BCF	Black Community Forum
CAT	City Action Team
CC	City Challenge
CCP	Comprehensive Community Programme
CDF	Community Development Foundation
CDP	Community Development Projects
CLG	City Liaison Group
CPU	Central policy unit
CRESR	Centre for Regional Economic Social Research
CRIC	Community Resource Information Centre
DETR	Department for Environment, Transport and Regions
DoE	Department of Environment
EA	Estate Action
ERCF	Estate Renewal Challenge Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EZ	Enterprise zone
FEDs	Food Enterprise Development on Norfolk Park
HAT	Housing Action Trust
JISER	Joint Institute for Social Economic Research
LDDC	London Development Docklands Corporation
LMB	Local Management Board
MDC	Merseyside Development Corporation
NAO	National Audit Office
NDC	New Deal for the Communities
NWICA	North West Inner City Area
PEP	Priority Estate Project
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SCC	Sheffield City Council
SCCAU	Sheffield Co-ordinating Centre Against Unemployment
SDC	Sheffield Development Corporation
SERC	Sheffield Economic Regeneration Committee

SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
TA	Tenants Associations
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
UDC	Urban Development Corporation
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
VAS	Voluntary Action Sheffield
WDS	Women's Design Service
WSG	World Student Games

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## Introducing the research

“The term ‘regeneration’ and before it the term ‘renewal’ have been used by Governments to describe their policies for restoring a better quality of life to an area, whether by stimulating the local economy, by refurbishing old housing estates, or by other means. In each case, the infrastructure on which the money has been spent supports a community. It is the well being of communities which provides the rationale for regeneration policies, yet communities themselves - as distinct from their elected members - have in the past been excluded from the decision-making process. The SRB is supposed to be different” (Environment Committee First Report on the Single Regeneration Budget, para. 43, 1995: xx).

Urban regeneration has been defined as: “the process of renewing the social and economic vitality of an area” (DoE, 1993:1). Tyler recognises that in the UK there are three general regeneration challenges: “a weakening economic base; large concentrations of unemployed and socially disadvantaged residents and; physical deterioration/poor environment” (1998: 1). From this it may be inferred that for urban regeneration programmes to be effective, they need simultaneously to address economic, social and physical problems. However, previous regeneration policies have tended to have a narrowly defined emphasis: being designed to alleviate inequalities of wealth, or to improve local economies, and do not appear to have achieved an adequate synthesis of the two (Robson et al., 1994).

In similar vein, Flecknoe and MacLellan recognise that: “the physical regeneration of a

neighbourhood must be accompanied by *social* regeneration if significant changes are to be brought to people's lives" (1994: 17, emphasis added). Social regeneration may be distinguished from physical regeneration by its focus on improving local people's quality of life, rather than rejuvenating the local economy and infrastructure. In recent years the issue of social regeneration has emerged as a major policy debate, partly due to the rise in concern about social exclusion, and the Government's desire to empower communities (Ginsburg, 1999). Social regeneration is thought to be achieved through involving local residents in the regeneration process (Robson, 1994).

This thesis seeks to highlight the extent and degree to which women engage with the regeneration process in Sheffield in order to explore this issue of social regeneration. The main aim of the thesis is to examine what influences and inhibits women's participation. By doing so, the thesis will contribute to the current body of knowledge on urban regeneration by examining a gender element, which is largely absent from current studies.

This first chapter discusses the rationale behind the research. It consists of four sections. First, a brief history of urban policy is presented, in order to frame the context for the emergence of the Single Regeneration Budget, which is examined in part two. Third, the apparent gender neutrality of regeneration programmes is explored. The final part presents an overview of the thesis and explains the ordering of the chapters.

## 1.1 CHANGING NATURE OF REGENERATION PROGRAMMES

The origins of urban planning can be traced back to the last century when population growth and urbanisation raised concerns over public health and housing issues, which required Central Government intervention (see Cullingworth and Nadin, 1997). The 1960s witnessed increasing problems of multiple deprivation in inner city areas, and at the same time a large influx in Britain's non-white population, also to inner city areas (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). This growth in the migrant population gave rise to Enoch Powell's anti-immigration speeches, predicting racial tensions (Lawless, 1989), and also contributed a racial and social element to early developments of inner city policy (Edwards and Bately, 1978; Bailey et al., 1995). The first initiative specifically addressing urban issues, announced on 5th May 1968, was the "Urban Programme", then known as "Urban Aid" (Higgins et al, 1983; Bailey et al., 1995). The purpose of this initiative was to reallocate resources to urban areas suffering from multiple deprivation (DoE, 1981; Wolman et al., 1992: 207; Gibson and Langstaff, 1982: 151).

In addition to targeting ethnic minority populations, a gender element could be interpreted from these early urban policies. In the Community Development Projects (CDPs), described later, women were, in part, seen to "cause" urban deprivation: "women contributed to the decline of inner urban areas by being poor mothers and transmitting poverty to their offspring" (Brownill, 1997: 5). For instance, CDPs, were evaluated according to the degree to which they moderated social ills, such as divorce rates (Lawless, 1989). There was also a distinct social regeneration agenda to these early policies. Emphasis at that time was primarily on improving the lives of local

residents.

During the 1960s other initiatives were also introduced with an emphasis on social regeneration, in an attempt to tackle multiple deprivation. 'Education Priority Areas' were established in 1963, following the Plowden committee's recommendations for education resources to be allocated to specific areas (Hall, 1981: 71). 1965 saw the publication of the Milner Holland Report, which examined housing stress (Bailey et al., 1995) and in 1968 the Seebohm Committee reviewed the responsibilities of Local Authority's Social Services Departments. Furthermore the concept of public participation in planning was introduced in 1969 by the Skeffington Report (Hall, 1992). Some commentators, however, have concluded that the Skeffington Report was too simplistic and optimistic in what it could achieve (Lawless and Brown, 1986; Cullingworth and Nadin, 1997). These attempts at regeneration recognised, to some extent the need for '*social*' regeneration and also encouraged area based initiatives (Lawless, 1989). However, the emphasis of urban policies was soon to change following the introduction of the 1977 White Paper: "Policy for the Inner Cities" (Robinson et al., 1993).<sup>1</sup>

The 1977 white paper in turn led to the Inner Urban Areas Act of 1978 (Cullingworth and Nadin, 1997), which "committed both Central and Local Government to work in partnership towards the regeneration of the inner cities" (Bailey et al., 1995: 44). The White Paper demonstrated an awareness of the multifaceted nature of urban decline and moved more towards tackling inner city problems from an economic or physical basis, rather than continuing the social regeneration agenda introduced in the previous decade.

Atkinson and Moon recognised four general aims of the policies to address this. These were:

- “(i) the need to seek economic improvement;
- (ii) the need to improve the physical environment;
- (iii) social improvement and;
- (iv) a new balance between population and jobs” (1994: 68).

Following this economic-led focus to regeneration, towards the end of the 1970s, there was a further shift in the emphasis of regeneration policy. This move was accompanied by an increasing desire on behalf of the newly elected Conservative Government for greater involvement with the private sector (Lawless, 1991), which Robson (1994) argues presaged the property-led approach to regeneration, characteristic of 1980s urban policies. The refocused, economic orientated approach for regeneration, paved the way for 1980s initiatives, such as City Action Teams, Enterprise Zones (EZs), Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), Inner City Task Forces and City Grant (Robson, 1994). These initiatives appeared to pay little attention towards social regeneration issues and throughout the 1980s, there was an increasing centralisation of urban policies (Bailey et al., 1995). This increasing centralisation occurred simultaneously with an expanded emphasis placed on the involvement of the private sector. These developments were argued for in the Action for Cities document (1988), which stated that the Government could no longer be expected to, and would not, play the lead role in regeneration (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Bailey et al. (1995) state that Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), City Action Teams and Inner City Task Forces were increasingly staffed and managed by private sector appointees and Civil Servants rather than local government officers.

The most significant urban policy initiative of the 1980s was UDCs, which were designed to be private sector influenced and property-led. UDCs were premised on the assumption that through physical improvements, benefits would ‘trickle down’ to local residents and indirectly regenerate the social fabric (Robinson et al., 1993; Docklands Consultative committee, 1990; Robinson and Shaw, 1994: 225). Rowley argued: “the UDC would act as a catalyst to attract investment, providing what the private sector wanted” (1994: 3).

By 1993, thirteen UDCs had been designated in five phases. They varied considerably in size and population area, but tended to be located in either city centre locations, such as central Manchester, or areas suffering wider industrial decline, for example Teeside. They were directly funded by Central Government and had no statutory requirement to involve or be accountable to the local populations (Bailey et al., 1995; Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Partly, as a consequence of this lack of accountability, Robinson and Shaw comment: “developments in the middle of nowhere may be *in* the inner city but do little for the people *of* the inner city” (1991: 66; original emphasis). This comment illustrates how the emphasis of UDCs was on property and economic regeneration, rather than on social led regeneration. When Healey examined this property-led approach of 1980s urban policies, she argued: “the benefits of the outputs and jobs generated often did not trickle down to people living in nearby areas” (1995: 221; see Imrie and Thomas, 1993; Turok, 1992). In particular, the two first UDCs, the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) and Merseyside Development Corporation (MDC), were severely criticised for failing to respond to community and

social development needs, which led to a restructuring of UDCs staffing structure and the appointment of specialists in these fields (NAO, 1988).

In addition to UDCs, other Central Government initiatives were introduced during the 1980s, which aimed to achieve urban regeneration and promote the enterprise culture. Estate Action was established in 1985 to allocate increasing levels of resources towards “problem” estates. However, the problems of some estates were seen to be so severe, that a radical approach had to be adopted. In 1988 this resulted in the establishment of Housing Action Trusts (HATs) (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). HATs involved a transfer of ownership to a Board of Management appointed by the Secretary of State, which aimed to combine physical, social and economic regeneration (Bailey et al., 1995). In an attempt to co-ordinate the growing numbers of programmes, and Government Departments, City Action Teams (CATs) were developed in 1985. These tried to co-ordinate the impact of economic and environmental programmes and CATs were later absorbed into Integrated Regional Offices of Government in 1994 (Bailey et al., 1995)<sup>2</sup>. This brief review has illustrated the extent to which there has been an overly defined emphasis on economic and physical led regeneration in the last twenty years, rather than, or in addition to, social regeneration issues.

Despite the regeneration of land and buildings, local residents were seen to have been by-passed by most 1980s urban policies (Robinson and Shaw, 1994: 226; Robson et al., 1994). Robson recognises urban policies in the 1980s were: “at best modest and at worst ineffectual” (1994: 216) and suggests that there was an increase in social polarisation during the 1980s. Harding et al. (1994) also argue that many local residents

even in UDC areas were excluded from employment opportunities. A further criticism of the UDC's emphasis on property development and enterprise culture, was that they were seen to preclude women from public sphere involvement (Kitchin, 1997: 16). Brownill concludes: "the fact that UDCs operated with a view of the community as a homogenous 'other' not structured along the lines of gender, race or class meant that consultation policies did not explicitly set out to seek women's views" (1997: 7).

Property-led regeneration programmes appeared to have reached their peak during 1990/91, when there was a period of recession in the previously booming property development market. After this time, a greater emphasis seems to have been placed on community and social issues (Mawson et al., 1995). Healey (1995) argues that in order to secure regeneration of an area there had to be a longer-term approach by development agencies and more emphasis on training and education programmes. Healey's argument for a more "socially orientated" approach to regeneration can be seen to have influenced the, then Conservative, Government which subsequently introduced City Challenge to be followed by the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). Colenutt and Cutten (1994: 238) have identified four main indicators of this shift in urban policy from the 1980s property and economy-led approach to the 'partnership' model of the 1990s. These are:

- (i) A massive restructuring of the Local Government by Central Government, involving a devolution of power from Whitehall to Local Councils and communities.
- (ii) The aim of Central Government to legitimise urban policies at a national level, and the bringing together of previous programmes into a single national budget.
- (iii) A move to regeneration partnerships, following the 1991 urban riots.
- (iv) The acknowledgement that the private-sector could only play a limited role in resolving urban problems.

In the light of this perceived failure of 1980s urban policies to impact on local residents (Colenutt, 1993:179), concepts of participation and empowerment were re-introduced into 1990s urban policy initiatives, such as City Challenge and SRB, in an attempt towards promoting socially based regeneration initiatives.

In addition towards the drive for social regeneration at the start of the 1990s, there was also a move towards “sustainable regeneration”, in order to promote thriving communities and prevent having to regenerate again in twenty years, such as the case in Hulme, Manchester. Robinson and Shaw state: “urban policy was now supposed to regenerate communities, not just land and property markets” (1994: 227). This move towards social and sustainable regeneration at the start of the 1990s illustrated an apparent urge to introduce regeneration policies linking physical, economic and social regeneration. These linkages between programmes were seen as essential by Government as urban problems were thought to be caused by the interaction of a range of socio-economic and political issues (Nevin and Shiner, 1995a).

City Challenge, introduced in 1991, initiated the concept of a competitive system for the allocation of finite regeneration funds (Oatley, 1995). It emphasised the formation of regeneration partnerships to promote *social* regeneration (see DeGroot, 1992). City Challenge sought to achieve a balance between investing in people and places (Oatley, 1998). Twenty successful authorities had been announced by July 1992 and each was to receive £7.5 million per year for five years. In contrast to UDCs, City Challenge schemes were more locally accountable, as they were local authority-led (Oatley and Lambert, 1998). The focus of schemes was very local, within tight boundaries, usually

in areas, which had experienced riots at the start and mid 1980s. Mawson et al., argued: “it [city challenge] adopted a pro-participation approach, which involved ideas of active citizenship” (1995: 18). City Challenge arguably represents the first real move towards active local residents’ involvement, with a focus on community initiatives, including crime reduction programmes. City Challenge encouraged residents to take a stake in their areas by becoming involved in the regeneration initiatives. However, Robinson and Shaw argued that City Challenge was “still dominated by bricks and mortar outputs, with revenue based “social” projects appearing to take second place (1994: 228). The next major development in urban policy was the introduction of the Single Regeneration Budget in 1994, which constitutes the main area of research for this thesis.

## **1.2 THE SINGLE REGENERATION BUDGET**

The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was formally introduced on April 1st 1994, in order to promote economic, social and physical regeneration of areas of decline throughout England and Wales (Cullingworth and Nadin, 1997). Oatley considers the SRB to be: “the most significant reorganisation of urban policy and government regional office structure since the 1978 Inner Urban Areas Act” (1998: 146). The SRB aimed to simplify the way Government supported regeneration, economic development, and industrial competitiveness (DoE, 1993: 1). Twenty separate programmes were brought together (see table 1.1) and the DOE claimed that the SRB was a: “flexible support for regeneration” (1993: 1).

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Table 1.1 Programmes brought together for the Single Regeneration Budget (1994)

Source: Oatley (1998)

As such, Nevin and Shiner (1995b: 311) heralded it: “as a new co-ordinated approach to urban funding,” which had the potential to give local residents influence over spending priorities by involving them in decision-making and regeneration partnerships.

A significant feature of the SRB, compared with previous approaches for urban regeneration, was: “its recognition of problems of poverty, isolation and community breakdown in rural areas and of industrial decline in non-urban areas” (Oatley, 1998:

146-147). This means anywhere in England, both urban and rural areas, can now compete in the 'open competition' for SRB funding (Oatley, 1998; CURS, 1995; 1995b; 1997), causing Robson (1994: 222) to question its validity as an 'urban policy'. Other commentators are also critical of the SRB. Robinson and Shaw argue the introduction of the SRB was a: "smoke screen for cuts" (1994: 230). Indeed, there was a real reduction in the total amount of government funds available for regeneration (Hill and Barlow, 1995; Stewart, 1994). Oatley (1998) notes that there has been a 29 per cent decline in resources between 1994/5 and 1998/9.

One of the main objectives of the SRB is to bring about social regeneration through partnerships (DETR, 1998a)<sup>3</sup>. Robson stated: "the major issue in regeneration is how to add a social dimension - how to lever in the deprived communities and individuals who have been driven to the margins of society - effective regeneration cannot be conceived simply in terms of infrastructure" (1994: 222). The aims for the first five rounds of the SRB are highlighted below:

- enhancing employment prospects, education and skills of local people, particularly the young
- leveraging in private money and European money
- encouraging sustainable economic growth and wealth creation by improving the competitiveness of the local economy
- tackling crime and community safety
- protecting and improving local environment and infrastructure
- improving housing conditions for local people
- promoting initiatives of benefit to local people
- enhancing the quality of life, health and capacity to contribute to regeneration of local people (DoE/DETR, 1993; 1995a; 1997a:1-2)
- addressing social exclusion and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged (DETR,

1998a)

Since the introduction of the SRB, its aims have remained predominantly consistent, although increasing emphasis has been placed on the involvement of communities. It is this emphasis on promoting public participation within SRB schemes, which has increased in significance during subsequent rounds of the SRB Challenge Fund. For instance, in the bidding guidance for round Five (1998/99), up to 10% of funds can now be used for community capacity building (DETR, 1998a). In addition, Ginsburg recognises that: “talk of tackling social exclusion and promoting equality was not included in the Conservatives’ SRB guidance”, which covers Rounds one and two of the SRB Challenge Fund (1999: 61).

One way of involving local residents in regeneration schemes is to involve them in regeneration partnerships. An important feature of the SRB is its aim of promoting partnerships amongst local government, the private sector, voluntary bodies, local communities and, other government agencies, such as Training and Enterprise Councils and English Partnerships (Atkinson and Cope, 1997: 211; Colenutt and Cutten, 1994; Hill and Barlow, 1995; Nevin and Shiner, 1995ab). The DoE Bidding Guidance Notes for the SRB Challenge Fund Round Two state: “bids must be supported by partnerships representing an appropriate range of interests ... local authorities and TECs can be expected to play a central role, but partnerships should include other relevant interests in the private and public sectors, and in local voluntary and community organisations, including faith communities ... all partners should have an effective say in the allocation of resources” (DoE, 1995: 4). Like other concepts associated with urban regeneration, “partnership” involves a high level of ambiguity (Mackintosh, 1992). However, it has

been defined as a: “coalition of interests, drawn from more than one sector in order to prepare and oversee an agreed strategy for the regeneration of a defined area” (Bailey et al., 1995: 1). Peck and Tickell contend: “partnerships exist, [then,] in part because funding bodies require it. They also exist because organisations must increasingly work together in order to achieve anything in the field of urban regeneration” (1994: 263), and in recognition of the need for regeneration initiatives to tackle a range of issues simultaneously.

A critical issue concerning regeneration partnerships is the degree to which the various partners work together. This point is explained by Braye and Preston-Shoot: “partnership does not necessarily mean that participants have equal power, but does imply recognition and open discussion of how power is distributed and used” (1995: 108). In addition to the differing levels of power, regeneration partners may achieve, Hutchinson also points out that there can be a number of different communities within the same neighbourhood. These may be: “defined by, for example, ethnicity, business or economic activity, gender or age” (1994: 338) and all may desire to influence the regeneration process. This points to the importance of recognising the heterogeneous nature of communities in regeneration initiatives (Brownill and Darke, 1998).

The use of the term community in relation to urban regeneration is itself contested (see Nevin and Shiner, 1995b: 319; Colenutt and Cutten, 1994: 243). Not only is there a plethora of definitions for the term, but it also has strong gender implications. Brownill identifies how the community may be viewed as the women’s sphere in contrast to “the harsh realities of urbanised, capitalist society ... Community corresponds to the world of

the home, the private sphere where relationships are caring and there is an escape from the harshness of the outside world and the world of paid work” (1997: 2). In this research the term community refers to people living in regeneration areas, which are spatially defined by funding boundaries and it is used interchangeably with that of “local residents”. This corresponds with the definition provided by the DETR: “those people living or working within those target areas [they] are, in general, the people intended to benefit from regeneration initiatives. They constitute the community” (1995: 7).

The broad objective of this thesis therefore, is to uncover how women relate to the regeneration process, funded by the SRB. The research addresses the situation of nineteen residents in two inner city areas of Sheffield. The research includes an age dimension, which allows a variety of women’s lives to be researched. The city of Sheffield is the focus for the study because of its success in attracting SRB funding (see Chapter Three). This research also incorporates a longitudinal element of analysis to examine changing levels of engagement over a twelve-month period of the SRB. There are three ways in which local residents or the local “community” may relate to the regeneration process. These are as participants, by being empowered, or by being excluded from the process, and these are examined below.

### **1.2.1 Community participation**

In this thesis “participation” refers to the ways in which residents relate to the urban regeneration process. Participation can be either through directly attending meetings

and voicing opinions; and/or indirectly through a sharing of the outcomes of the regeneration process. Central Government sees this involvement of local residents as helping to secure long-term social regeneration, and it has, since the election of New Labour, assumed more importance. The SRB aims to enhance local people's quality of life and promote social regeneration by involving them in the regeneration schemes, (DETR, 1997). The DoE recognised: "bids should harness the talents and resources of the voluntary sector and volunteers and involve local communities, both in the preparation and implementation of bids" (1993: 2). Since Round One of the SRB Challenge Fund, increasing emphasis has been placed on local residents' involvement. By Round Four, in 1997, the SRB was designed to make provisions to: "secure real involvement of local communities, including ethnic minority communities, both in the preparation and implementation of bids. Bids may include projects to enhance community involvement over their lifetimes" (1997a: 2). More recently, for Round Five, the DETR has proposed:

"The Government believes it is crucial to ensure the active participation of local communities in the regeneration of their areas and that they should be directly involved, both in the preparation and implementation of bids. Bids should mobilise the talents and resources of all sectors including, for instance, the faith-based voluntary sector, the wider voluntary sector, ethnic minorities, local volunteers (whether or not they work from their local church, mosque etc.). Activities already being carried out by the local community (e.g. community-enterprises such as credit unions) and which rely very heavily on volunteers, should also be taken into account. Volunteers should be encouraged to participate fully in local regeneration activity because of the knowledge, skills and expertise they can make available" (<http://www.DETR.gov.uk/SRB>, February, 1998)

The Community Development Foundation (CDF) argues: "local communities are the key people in regeneration" (1996: 1). The CDF go on to suggest that the regeneration process is most effective if local residents, whose lives and conditions are to be

improved - the *beneficiaries*, are involved as:

- consultees
- participants, and
- partners in regeneration schemes (CDF, 1996: 1)

Although, one objective of the SRB is for local residents to participate actively in the regeneration process, it is not always clear how to bring about such community participation. In the SRB Guidelines there are no definitions given of how this involvement of local people is to be achieved. There is, however, a Government publication, *Involving Communities in Urban and Rural Regeneration* (1995b; 1997b) which offers advice to practitioners about how to involve the community. According to Craig and Mayo, community participation: “should be related to overall goals of cost sharing/cost reduction for the public sector (that is, shifting costs from public sector budgets by persuading communities to make increased contributions through voluntary effort and/or self-help/voluntary unpaid labour) and through increased project/programme efficiency” (1995: 4). This emphasis upon reducing public spending, through promoting self-help and community participation (Mayo, 1994) has been a recurring theme in debates concerning the shifting boundaries of the welfare economy (Craig and Mayo, 1995: 4; Thomas, 1995). The community is increasingly being forced into providing its own services as the state no longer provides all of them: “some politicians and civil servants saw community development as a way of stimulating self-help to replace lost services and of managing major problems in society such as rising crime, and of course, unemployment” (Thomas, 1995: 6). Making the community solve its own problems within regeneration areas may be viewed as an effective way of promoting social regeneration. But, it can also be seen as an attempt by

Government to diminish its responsibilities (Thomas, 1995; Craig and Mayo, 1995).

Against this negative picture of community participation, Hastings et al., suggest three main reasons underpin the rationale behind promoting local resident's participation with other city actors in regeneration plans, developed by partnerships. First, "synergy is created by a range of bodies working together, which in turn generates more strategic and effective regeneration than if these bodies acted independently from one another" (1996: 6). Second, they suggest more resources may be brought to the regeneration arena if actors work together. Finally they consider that community participation was introduced by the Government following the apparent lack of benefits local residents were thought to have received from 1980s urban regeneration programmes (Hastings et al., 1996; Healey, 1995; Colenutt, 1993).

A further debate in the community participation literature is highlighted by Stewart and Taylor: "it has now been acknowledged that residents need to be involved in regeneration initiatives, the ways in which existing power relations in the political and professional arena are continuously reinforced have yet to be addressed" (1995: v). However, they continue: "in the literature on participation and involvement there is surprisingly little explicit discussion of 'power', even if the idea of empowerment is implied in many of the participation studies" (1995: 11). Stewart and Taylor argue that a study of community participation is not possible without reference to a discussion of power<sup>4</sup> and community empowerment. In similar vein, May points out: "a concern for empowerment means that there must be an analysis of power, and of those who are systematically disempowered, including the ways in which women and men internalise

their own low social status” (1997: 13). Brownill concludes by suggesting: “ways of promoting the inclusion of women and minimising the exclusion and the reinforcement of gendered inequalities in power and influence need to be considered” (1997: 13).

### **1.2.2 Community empowerment**

Barr asserts that: “empowerment is a fashionable phrase. It is easily used but its meaning within different ideologies (individualist/collectivist, liberal/radical) is variable” (1995: 122 -123). Likewise, Karl suggests: “empowerment is a word widely used, but seldom defined” (1995: 14). In considering empowerment within regeneration, Atkinson makes a similar point: “relatively little meaning has been given to these two terms [empowerment and partnership] and their implications for regeneration” (1999: 59). Whilst recognising the increasing significance of “empowerment” within urban regeneration, these commentators highlight the ambiguity surrounding its very definition. In short, empowerment within urban regeneration, may be viewed as not only giving local residents the opportunity to define their needs, but also providing them with the capacity to make decisions designed to secure their needs. An SRB officer in Sheffield, interviewed as part of this research, comments: “there is a wider political role giving the community a voice, it is not just about putting a few projects into a community, I think they need to empower the community where they say this is what we need in our community. It is giving them a voice, and giving them power to do something about their community” (SRB officer 2, 1998).

In this thesis the exploration of power relations within urban regeneration derives much inspiration from regime theory, which seeks to explain the governance of cities by specifically examining power relations in cities. This framework appears a suitable starting point for beginning to understand how some actors may influence the decision-making process, whereas others may be marginalised or excluded from decisions concerning the regeneration of their local area. However, this thesis develops regime theory, using a grounded theory approach (see Chapter Two), to illustrate the extent to which gender also influences urban power relations (see Chapter Seven).

### **1.2.3 Social exclusion**

Robinson and Shaw argue that UK urban policy has not lowered unemployment figures, cut crime, or tackled homelessness. They suggest instead that a much wider programme of economic, social and political reform is required in the UK to reverse: “the deep divisions in British society today” (1994: 234). The SRB could be seen as part of this social and political reform, as one of its objectives is to reduce social exclusion. To Richard Caborn, Minister for Regeneration and Regions: “the SRB is one of the most useful tools for tackling social exclusion – pockets of need which may not be targeted in main programmes” (DETR, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1997). Ginsburg also comments: “urban regeneration policy as social policy has to address the issue of social exclusion more effectively” (1999: 59). A recent DETR report (1998b) by the Social Exclusion Unit, specifically examined social exclusion, which resulted in the establishment of the New Deal for Communities, amongst other regeneration initiatives<sup>5</sup>.

There are varying definitions of exclusion within the growing debate encompassing “poverty”, the “underclass”, and “social exclusion” (Room, 1995; Oppenheim and Harker, 1996). Some commentators view social exclusion as multifaceted and involving a lack of control over circumstances. Walker points out: “social exclusion survives as a sufficiently ambiguous term to facilitate a continuing dialogue about matters that some would equate with, or at least, include within, the concept of, poverty” (1995: 102). Walker adds: “the term ‘social exclusion’ is beginning to replace that of ‘poverty’” (1997: 7). However, Oppenheim (1998: 14) argues some people are poor, but are not excluded from society (such as students), yet others who are not in poverty may be excluded (such as the disabled or ethnic minorities). These definitions of exclusion, or varying conditions in which exclusion can arise may have implications on how regeneration policy is to address social exclusion issues.

Regeneration initiatives, such as the SRB may play a part on the social exclusion agenda, however, these broader exclusion issues are beyond the scope of this thesis. In this Sheffield based research, exclusion is seen to result from failing to share in the outcomes of the regeneration programme, or not being involved in the regeneration process, in terms of making decisions or setting priorities for spending. With this in mind, this research specifically examines residents who are excluded from the regeneration process, by not participating within it or excluded from the benefits flowing from it. In addition, this research examines those residents that do participate, and may therefore be included within the regeneration process.

The research offers several original contributions. Above all, the content of the thesis

contributes to urban regeneration studies by examining a gender dimension and this extends the scope of many urban regeneration studies.

### **1.3 WOMEN AND URBAN REGENERATION**

A striking feature of urban regeneration studies to date is their general lack of explicit attention to gender issues. One of the first books concerning women and the changing urban environment is an edited collection by Little, Peake and Richardson (1988): *Women in Cities*, which examines the way women perceive their urban environments. More recently, *Changing Places* (1996) an edited collection by Booth, Darke and Yeandle, examines the diverse opportunities and constraints faced by some women in cities. Further developments in the limited literature on women and regeneration are two Joseph Rowntree Reports: May (1997): 'Challenging Assumptions', and Brownill and Darke (1998): 'Rich Mix'.

Recent debates in the literature on "women and regeneration" (e.g. Brownill and Darke, 1998; May, 1997) recognise how regeneration policy and programmes can significantly impact on the lives of women living in regeneration areas. This is because women are seen to be both active within the grassroots initiatives characteristic of the regeneration process and also as main recipients of programmes (Stewart and Taylor, 1995; Christie, 1997). Kitchin et al. argue: "arousing women's awareness and interest in urban regeneration should not be difficult. Nothing can be more immediate and direct than the wholesale reconstruction of your home and neighbourhood" (1994: 6). Equally, Christie

argues: “the potential for the SRB to change and improve women’s lives is huge, as women are more likely to experience poverty, poor housing, bad health and to live in fear of crime” (1997:1).

Urban regeneration can be viewed as male dominated with many senior policy and decision-makers being male (Greed, 1994). However, many participants in the local regeneration process are actually female (Stewart and Taylor, 1995; Kitchin, Chelliah and Evans, 1994: 21). Explaining this dominance of women at a local level, Riseborough points out: “women often provide the informal support networks for neighbours and relatives, they are often the key members of grass roots community groups” (1997: 30). Local activism by women is also reflected in Brownill and Darke’s observation: “women ... are over-represented in areas undergoing regeneration. However, [race and] gender are rarely prioritised as major strategic issues within regeneration policy at the national, regional, or local level” (1998: 1). Christie also recognises the higher proportion of women living in regeneration areas compared with men, and uses this to highlight how regeneration initiatives need to recognise a gender element: “women are marginalised, their needs seldom addressed - and this when it is obvious that regeneration schemes have many women living in poverty within their boundaries” (1997:1)<sup>6</sup>.

Two main explanations have been proposed for this apparent lack of attention given to gender within urban regeneration. Riseborough (1997) argues urban regeneration, and in particular the Single Regeneration Budget, has been ‘gender blind’, in that it does not recognise how gender may influence policy outcomes. For instance, in the SRB

guidelines there is very little mention of gender (see DoE, 1995a; DETR, 1997a, 1998a). If gender is not referred to as a variable, then this may imply that there are no differences between men and women's needs. In this perspective priorities are the same for both genders. As an illustration, in Round One of the SRB challenge Fund, only one of the 35 output measures mentions women: "5A Number of elderly, women or all people who benefit from community safety initiatives"(DoE, 1995a: 13). Data for ethnic minority groups and disabled people are, however, required on almost all output measures. In Round Four supplementary Guidance Notes for the Yorkshire and the Humber region (Government Office, for Yorkshire and the Humber 1997) there is no mention of outputs directed at women, despite a brief mention in the national guidance for that year (DoE, 1997a: 30). However, the Regional Development Agencies, established in April 1999, are expected to achieve some gender balance, with at least three of the twelve posts on the Management Boards being exclusively reserved for female appointees (see Chapter Eight).

A second reason for the lack of attention towards gender within urban regeneration is outlined by Brownill: "gender blind is perhaps a misnomer as the operation of these policies and strategies hold within them major implications for women and operate within a society in which sexism and discrimination is still operating" (1997: 2). She uses several feminist perspectives to illustrate how women have been marginalised - or excluded in some cases - from the urban policy process. The main thrust of Brownill's argument is that urban regeneration initiatives need to change in order to accommodate women's 'needs'. But, as Kitchin (1997) notes, regeneration policy needs also to recognise that women have diverse needs reflected by their multiple identities. With

these arguments in mind, the overall objective of this thesis is to explore the following hypothesis:

- **To examine how the trend towards social regeneration and community initiatives within the Single Regeneration Budget addresses the engagement of women in two areas of Sheffield**

In addition, the research has a number of subsidiary aims, which are:

- To explore the degree of female participation within the regeneration process in two SRB areas of Sheffield.
- To identify in marginalised communities who becomes empowered at the potential exclusion of others.
- To examine power relations in urban areas and the relevance of these relationships to regime theory

The study of the Sheffield case can be used to provide lessons for other areas in receipt of regeneration funding. The theoretical approach also contributes to refining regime theory by adopting a grounded theory approach. An original methodological contribution is also made by the research, through the longitudinal approach. The structure of the thesis is outlined below.

## **1.4 THESIS OUTLINE**

Chapter two presents the qualitative case study research design and methodology of the study and chapter three outlines the context for the research. Chapters four, five and six present the empirical findings. These three chapters (four, five and six) combine reviews

of relevant literature with empirical data, in order to facilitate analysis and discussion. Pseudonyms are used in the three empirical chapters to enable the reader to trace individuals through the research process longitudinally. The adjectives, “younger” and “older” relate to the two age groups of women interviewed: 18-25 years and 45-60 years respectively. In addition, the words “estate”, “neighbourhood” and “regeneration area” are used interchangeably to refer to where the regeneration changes are being brought about. Chapter four explores the engagement of women in Sheffield’s regeneration initiatives and discusses the characteristics of those residents who become involved, and the factors, which influence participation. In chapter five the participation of residents in the decision-making processes associated with the SRB in Sheffield is examined, in order to determine who is, or is not, being empowered by the regeneration process. Chapter six examines barriers that prevent some women in Sheffield from being empowered or from participating in the regeneration process. Three main types of barriers are discussed: institutional, attitudinal and circumstantial. Chapter seven uses the arguments posed in the preceding three chapters to highlight how regime theory may be reformulated in the light of findings from this research. The final chapter provides an overview and illustrates how the empirical findings could impact on future urban policy. The thesis concludes with suggestions for future research in the area of participation within urban regeneration.

<sup>1</sup> Following on from the early reports of the 1960s, there was a series of research initiatives designed to discover the causes of urban deprivation. In 1969 twelve CDPs were launched in mainly urban areas suffering from multiple deprivation (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Their remit was to identify how resources could be better co-ordinated to tackle urban problems (Bailey et al., 1995) and, as such, Atkinson and Moon termed them: “action research experiments” (1994: 47). CDPs were seen to have a significant impact on the 1977 White Paper (Bailey et al., 1995). Urban problems were researched further in a series of Inner Area Studies, introduced in 1972. Initially three studies were conducted in Birmingham, Liverpool and Lambeth to investigate the causes and possible solutions to urban deprivation. Three further studies, conducted in Oldham, Rochdale and Sunderland, were concerned with Local Government decision-making and its impact on environmental problems (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Subsequent research into urban deprivation took place with the introduction of the Comprehensive Community Programme (CCP) in 1974. However, only two CCPs were designated, partly as a consequence of the introduction of the White Paper in 1977, which was instrumental in bringing about a change in the emphasis of urban programmes (Bailey et al., 1995). Nevertheless, Atkinson and Moon suggest that CCPs were important for providing a “glimpse of the notion of partnership” (1994: 52).

<sup>2</sup> In 1986, Inner City Task Forces were introduced to target small inner city areas, to encourage enterprise and enhance the employability of residents (Bailey et al., 1995). A further manifestation of the Conservative’s enterprise culture was the introduction of Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). Eighty-two TECs were established from 1990 onwards in order to provide training programmes, develop skills, and promote enterprise. The Management Boards of TECs, however, have been severely criticised by some for primarily consisting of white, male, middle class industrialists (Bailey et al., 1995).

<sup>3</sup> There are a number of European programmes, which can also influence the regeneration of areas, such as the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). These programmes are likely to have an increased impact in Sheffield, as South Yorkshire becomes designated as an Objective 1 area for funding.

<sup>4</sup> There are variable opinions on power. First, Lukes identifies three dimensions of power: the overt resolution of conflict between two or more conflicting positions; the covert or hidden dimension that excludes issues from public decision making and; the third structural dimension through which interests are institutionalised within society. Structures of power are accepted and internalised without question or even recognition (1974). Croft and Beresford simplify this and argue: “the model proposed by Lukes may be helpful... for Lukes power involves conflict of interest, though conflict may also be pursued by power and influence - falling short of the exercise of power. He assumes at least two parties in conflict and that power is exercised when one of them (call them A) gets the other (B) to act in a way which is against B’s interests as perceived by B. These two parties need not be individuals. Groups and institutions also exercise power

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between each other” (1992: 37). In addition, Stewart and Taylor also cite Lukes: “the issue of what gets onto the agenda for discussion and what is excluded (Lukes, 1974; Bachrach and Baratz, 1962) is central to community empowerment” (1995: 11).

A further debate on power concerns whether it is infinite or finite, which could have implications on community empowerment. Stewart and Taylor (1995: 12) address this issue by questioning whether by empowering residents, is power being taken away from key decision-makers (finite) or is power being shared (infinite)? Croft and Beresford (1992) suggest power is infinite, in other words it is not a zero-sum game. Instead they argue: “involvement can be concerned with changing the nature of the relationship between participants” (1992: 38).

<sup>5</sup> Since the Labour Government came to power in May 1997, there has been a host of regeneration initiatives introduced. These are summarised in appendix 1 and discussed in Chapter Eight.

<sup>6</sup> This ignorance of women’s issues within regeneration seems to have parallels with what is happening at a European level: “planning and economic strategies are based on a general standard of ‘human’ or ‘public’ need often modelled on the needs of men. The very different experiences and requirements of other groups, including women, have usually been totally neglected” (Kitchin, 1997:17). However, recent developments in European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) funding arrangements means projects receiving funding are having explicitly to recognise women and equal opportunities measures (Braithwaite et al, 1999).

## **Methodological framework**

This chapter reviews the design of the research in order to explore the research statement outlined below:

**What is women's relation with the regeneration process in two SRB areas of Sheffield?**

First, a brief overview of the methodology is presented. Part two discusses the theoretical framework underpinning the methodology. The third part examines qualitative research methods, which includes a justification for the chosen methodology. Part four illustrates the main advantages and disadvantages of such methods to elicit women's engagement within the regeneration process.

### **2.1 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY**

The main method employed in this research is semi-structured, in-depth, interviewing (Bryman, 1988). The research also adopted a longitudinal approach. Within this framework two inner city areas of Sheffield were examined: Norfolk Park and the North West Inner City Area (NWICA) (see Chapter Three). The research is based primarily on nineteen women living in two regeneration areas of Sheffield who were interviewed twice in twelve months. These interviews are additional to nine in-depth interviews with community activists in the two research areas and fourteen interviews with key

actors within Sheffield’s regeneration process. In total seventy interviews were conducted<sup>1</sup>.

Glaser and Strauss suggest different population groups are interviewed (1967:52) to uncover different aspects to the research. As a result, the fieldwork consisted of five stages. The first stage was to interview three female residents as part of a pilot study. Second, twenty-four women from the two regeneration areas were interviewed in June and July 1997. Third, fifteen key actors within the regeneration process in Sheffield were interviewed in March and April 1998. Fourth repeat interviews with nineteen of the original residents interviewed were conducted in June and July 1998. The fifth stage involved interviewing ten community activists in July and August 1998. See table 2.1 for a summary.

Table 2.1 Field work timetable

Fieldwork stage	Dates
one: 3 pilot interviews	June 1997
two: 25 interviews with local residents	June - July 1997
three: 15 interviews with key decision-makers	April - May 1998
four: 19 repeat interviews with local residents	June - July 1998
five: 10 interviews with community activists	July - August 1998

The research programme is designed to provide an insight into the impact of the SRB on women’s lives, in terms of their relationships with the regeneration process. Achieving this aim required in-depth interviewing of women in SRB areas, in addition to the other groups interviewed, as outlined above. Burgess (1984) argues that other methods, associated with quantitative studies, would have been unlikely to have produced as detailed and ‘rich’ information. Miles and Huberman (1994) propose that researchers

approach the research field with a collection of ideas to provide aims and objectives for the research. The 'ideas' for this research revolved around the lack of emphasis of gender issues in urban regeneration. The research aims are highlighted in chapter one. Three main empirical themes emerged during the research process:

- In what ways do women participate in the regeneration process?
- Are women more or less likely to be empowered by the SRB?
- Does the regeneration process, in general, include or exclude women?

The next stage of the research required a methodology to be designed, which reflected the research aims and questions. The methodology was to allow the retrieval of longitudinal data on the impact of the SRB on women's lives. Methods adopted for this research are based on a grounded theory approach, which was first introduced by Glaser and Strauss in 1967. The empirical findings are used to develop a grounded theory based on existing theory: regime theory. Rather than generating a wholly grounded theory, regime theory is reconceptualised in the light of findings from this research. Regime theory is used partly because of its relevance and partly because of the shortfalls of using only a grounded theory approach (see 2.5). Regime theory ostensibly appears a suitable theoretical framework because it seeks to explain how decisions are made within urban contexts (see Chapter Seven). Within this framework, the power relations within local communities and between regeneration officers can be examined in order to develop a more comprehensive theory of urban governance, which seeks to illustrate the impact of gender relations on urban power relations.

## 2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.2.1 A grounded theory approach

In the late 1960s, Glaser and Strauss first conceived an approach for developing and producing theory through empirical data. The publication of '*Grounded Theory, principles and practice*' in 1967 outlined the rationale behind this method. They suggest fieldwork may be used to generate theories about social life, which result in: "a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses" (1967: 3). In view of research findings being temporally and spatially specific, it is important to generate theory from the data as: "the discovered theoretical category lives on until proven theoretically defunct for any class of data, while the life of the accurate evidence that indicated the theory may be short" (op cit.1967: 24).

They point out that a theory, generated through a grounded theory approach, is used:

- “(i) To enable prediction and explanation of behaviour;
  - (ii) In theoretical advance in sociology;
  - (iii) In practical applications;
  - (iv) To provide a perspective on behaviour- a stance to be taken towards data; and
  - (v) To guide and provide a style for research on particular areas of behaviour.”
- (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 3).

Developing this thinking, Strauss and Corbin (1990) argue that grounded theory is a naturalistic observation method and has five main stages:

- (i) The theory is grounded upon the data through data/theory interplay.
- (ii) Constant comparisons are made between the previous work and research done by others on the same topic which allows for internal and external comparisons.
- (iii) Theoretically orientated questions need to be asked.
- (iv) Placing the data in theoretical informed categories and making sense of the data.

(v) Development of the theory.

Grounded theory may be used to describe and explain “social events”, as and how they occur. The approach would appear to be ostensibly an ideal vehicle through which to explore the engagement of women in the regeneration process. They explain: “grounded theory is derived from data and then illustrated by characteristic examples of data” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 5). Grounded theory allows other researchers to test the theory as it develops and becomes more refined, in their own research setting. Glaser and Strauss explain: “generating a theory from data means most hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of research” (op cit.1967: 6).

Generation of theory first necessitates the collection of empirical data: “with a particular sociological perspective, and with a focus, a general question, or a problem in mind” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 33). However, they assert: “it is presumptuous to assume that one begins to know the relevant categories and hypotheses until the: “first days in the field, at least, are over” (op cit. 1967: 34). In this Sheffield based research the first few days in the field were enlightening, they opened up new areas and began to provide analytical categories for the emergence of substantive theories. Furthermore, formal theories subsequently developed from these preliminary theories, around the concepts discussed in chapters four, five and six. They add: “the design allows a progressive building up of facts, through substantive to grounded formal theory. To generate substantive theory, we need many facts for the necessary comparative analysis; ethnographic studies, as well as direct gathering of data, are immensely useful for this purpose” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 35).

Essentially there are three stages to Glaser and Strauss' (1967) grounded theory approach: data production, data analysis and theory generation. Attached to each of these three stages are 'facts' and 'concepts'; 'categories' and 'properties'; and theory development respectively.

### **2.2.2 'Facts' and 'Concepts'**

Glaser and Strauss suggest at a certain stage in the fieldwork, a core of emerging 'facts' and 'concepts' became apparent and these become: "a theoretical guide to the further collection and analysis of data. Field workers have remarked upon the rapid crystallisation of that framework, as well as the rapid emergence of categories" (1967: 40). They suggest interviewees reveal 'facts' about their life and situation during the interviewing process, which are subsequently used in theory development. 'Facts' in this research concern women's experiences of the Single Regeneration Budget from a number of perspectives: their own, community activists and key actors within the regeneration process. As 'facts' and 'concepts' emerged from the first three stages of the research they were tested during the next stage of interviewing. Thus the interview guides (see section 2.3) developed as the fieldwork progressed. However, Glaser and Strauss suggest there has to be an equal balance between theory generation and validation in follow-up research (or in subsequent stages of the fieldwork): "verifying as much as possible with as accurate evidence as possible is requisite while one discovers and generates this theory - but not to the point where verification becomes so paramount as to curb generation" (op cit.1967: 28).

### 2.2.3 'Properties' and 'Categories'

Glaser and Strauss state the next stage of generating theory is to develop 'facts' into what they term as 'concepts', which are to be used in the analytical process (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Strauss and Corbin propose: "data are broken down into discrete incidents, ideas, events, and acts and are then given a name that represents or stands for these" (1998: 105). In this research, series of what they see as 'concepts', such as negative attitude to authority, intimidating experience, and lack of control, are compiled from different interview transcripts and: "where the facts are similar or different, we can generate properties of categories that increase the categories' generality and explanatory power" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 24). For, instance in this case the facts mentioned above developed into the 'bureaucracy' category, which later became a sub-category of empowerment as analysis became more thorough (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Furthermore, Glaser and Strauss state: "in generating theory it is not the fact upon which we stand, but the conceptual category (or a conceptual property of the category) that was generated from it. A concept may be generated from one fact, which then becomes merely one of a universe of many possible diverse indicators for, and data on the concept" (op cit.1967: 23). Concepts, such as those concerning influence and control, developed from 'facts' revealed during the first stages of interviewing and were subsequently verified through the longitudinal research process.

The theory begins to develop from these 'categories' and their associated 'properties' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 107) (see table 2.2). Strauss and Corbin state: "each time an instance of a category occurs in the data, it is possible to locate it somewhere along the *dimensional continua* ... Hence, each category has several general properties, and each

property varies over a dimensional continuum” (1990: 70; original emphasis). In other words, a category, such as empowerment comprises a number of properties, which help to explain it as a category. For example decision-making may be one such property. In turn all the properties, which make up the category, vary between individuals, in that some individuals may have a large role in decision-making, whereas others may adopt a lesser role. It is this variance which is called the “dimensional continua”. Another example from this research is illustrated in table 2.2. Categories developed from interview transcripts, in the form of broad themes, such as participation, exclusion and empowerment (see Chapters Four, Five and Six). Interview transcripts were analysed according to emerging categories, whilst also allowing further categories and properties to emerge when necessary.

Table 2. 2 Generating properties from categories

Category	Properties	Dimensional range
Participation	⇒ frequency ⇒ type ⇒ who ⇒ extent ⇒ benefits ⇒ influence ⇒ understanding of process	often .....never token .....activist women .....men more..... less many .....few significant....none plenty..... ..none

Glaser and Strauss suggest: “both implicitly and explicitly, the analyst continually checks out his theory as the data pour in” (op cit.1967: 26). This implies the processes of data collection, analysis, and generation of theory occur simultaneously throughout the research. However, in practice only the data analysis and generation of theory occurred simultaneously, following each of the five individual stages of data collection (see table 2.1).

## 2.2.4 Emergent Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) propose that there are two types of grounded theory: substantive and formal. Substantive theory is developed from the empirical base from the 'facts' and 'concepts' and is applicable only to the group studied. Formal theory is developed from 'categories' and 'properties' and is thought to be more developed and refined. However, not all substantive theory can be forced together and this is where contradictions in the data can arise. Glaser and Strauss advise: "it must be emphasised that integration of the theory is best when it emerges, like the concepts. The theory should never be put together, nor should a formal-theory model be applied to it until one is sure it will fit, and will not force the data" (1967: 41). Substantive theory emerged during data analysis and data collection. Developing theory was then compared and contrasted with relevant literature, as Glaser and Strauss explain: "similarities and convergence with the literature can be established after the analytic core of categories has emerged" (1967: 37). The emergent theory was also compared and contrasted with regime theory to add to a more refined explanation of how urban regeneration is governed, using the empirical data. They further suggest: "the generation of theories should aim at achieving much diversity in emergent categories, synthesised at as many levels of conceptual and hypothetical generalisation as possible" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 37). Burgess argues: "theorising is a central part of the research process that influences the problem posed, the methods used, the data collected, the analysis made and the final research project" (1982: 211). It is the theoretical implications (see Chapter Seven) of the research findings, which will be more significant than the actual empirical data. Furthermore, Glaser and Strauss assert: "the scope of the theory is

further increased by comparing different types of groups within different, larger groups” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 52). In this Sheffield research, different perspectives on the SRB are compared, female residents; community activists; and key actors.

‘Facts’ and ‘concepts’ emerged as empirical data was analysed. With increasing ‘categories’ and ‘properties’ emerging, there were more substantive theories. More substantive theory meant the final theory (see Chapter Seven) becomes more grounded in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The theory emerged as a process of development and modification of regime theory which allowed it: “to become quite rich, complex, dense, and makes its fit and relevance easy to comprehend” (op cit.1967: 32). A grounded theory gives: “the feeling of a need for continued development” (op cit.1967: 32). As more research is conducted on women and urban regeneration, the theory presented in Chapter Seven is likely to be further refined and developed.

Glaser and Strauss suggest: “grounded theory can be presented either as a well-codified set of propositions or in a running theoretical discussion, using conceptual categories and their properties” (1967: 31). This may not easily be carried out without an explicit methodology, which informs readers how the data was collected and the theory generated. The use of grounded theory as a theoretical framework for the methodology requires a flexible research design (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

## 2.3 METHODOLOGY

### 2.3.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research can be defined as: “an approach to the study of the social world which seeks to describe and analyse the culture and behaviour of humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied” (Bryman, 1988: 46). Opinions vary regarding the value of qualitative research: “Qualitative data are sexy. They are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 1). Alternatively, Denzin and Lincoln argue qualitative research: “is termed unscientific, or only exploratory, or entirely personal and full of bias” (1994: 4).

Bryman (1989) proposes the main difference between qualitative and quantitative researchers is how they decide research topics. Quantitative researchers decide first what to prioritise in the research, whereas qualitative researchers are informed by their subjects about what is important (Bryman, 1989: 139; see Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research is seen to have five significant features. First, Bryman (1988: 63) identifies one of the roles of qualitative research methods is in providing detailed descriptions of social life. The second main characteristic of qualitative research is the ability to build on these descriptions of social life and to provide analyses of the social environments studied. Third, qualitative research can emphasise responses, interpretations, and how perspectives change through time. Fourth, Glaser and Strauss assert: “qualitative method was the only way to obtain data on many areas of social life not amenable to the techniques for collecting quantitative data” (1967: 17).

Burgess suggests a further advantage of qualitative data: “is their *richness and holism* with strong potential for revealing complexity...Qualitative data, with their emphasis on people’s “lived experience” are fundamentally well suited for locating the *meanings* people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives” (1982: 109; original emphasis). The use of qualitative research methods in this study is based on these five characteristics.

Different methods of qualitative research are used in different settings. They can uncover unknown areas and they can look at detailed and focused research questions making it a flexible approach to almost any research project. It appears more important for interviewees to determine what they think is significant, through a qualitative approach. In contrast, a quantitative approach would require first defining what may be significant to their lives, (Bryman, 1988) which would not necessarily highlight women’s experiences of the SRB process. Qualitative methods were therefore used because detailed empirical material was required about the relatively under-explored area of women and regeneration. In-depth qualitative interviewing with women, from two age groups, along with key actors and community activists has been employed to elicit feelings about the SRB and the impact it is seen to be having on women’s lives.

In this context, this study did not just want to describe the participation of women in the regeneration process, but wanted to provide a rationale for women’s participation, or the lack of it. A feature of qualitative research is to acknowledge how opinions are likely to be influenced by their environments (Bryman, 1988). Thus, it is necessary for qualitative data to be fully contextualised (see Chapter Three). For instance, Bryman

argues that interviews: “have to be set in the context of the values, practices, and underlying structures of the appropriate entity (be it a school or slum) as well as the multiple perceptions that pervade that entity” (1988: 64). In similar vein, Miles and Huberman, argue qualitative data are: “buttressed in local groundedness, the fact that the data were collected in a specific situation” (1994: 10). In Sheffield, different perspectives concerning the SRB and its impact on women were collected to help contextualise the research (table 2.1).

However, qualitative methods are not without problems. For instance, they are time-consuming, they create a large volume of data, and question marks still hang over: “the adequacy of sampling when only a few cases can be managed, the generalizability of findings, the credibility and quality of conclusions, and their utility in the world of policy action” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 2). While qualitative research may be fairly easy and quick to generate a vast quantity of data, there may be problems, which are caused at the analysis stage. Many researchers reach: “a feeling of data overload as a result of the huge volume of rich data produced by even a moderate-sized study” (King, 1994: 34).

### **2.3.2 The longitudinal element**

Another feature of the methodology adopted within this research is its longitudinal nature. Miles and Huberman argue: “the fact that such data are typically collected over a *sustained period* makes them powerful for studying any process (including history); we can go far beyond ‘snapshots’ of “what?” or “how many?” to just how and why things happen as they do” (1994: 10; original emphasis). In Sheffield four groups (two

age groups and two areas) of female residents were interviewed twice over a thirteen-month period: between June 1997 and July 1998. This was designed to show how the engagement of women with the regeneration process changed during a thirteen-month period of the SRB. In addition, this approach revealed insights into the process of social regeneration and its relation to the participation of local residents. The longitudinal element also offered the research a comparative framework for examining three different stages of SRB funding. In June 1997, Norfolk Park was in its first year of SRB funding and the North West Inner City Area had begun its second year (see Chapter Three).

However, the longitudinal approach was not straightforward. There was a problem gaining access to some interviewees in the second year of interviewing. Ford and Reutter contend: "the longitudinal nature of much qualitative work also encourages unpredictability. Many life events can occur during the time period of the study, events which participants may not anticipate when they first agree to be studied" (1990: 188). The longitudinal element may have been more problematic in this research as housing demolition and renovations have led to population displacement from the two research areas in Sheffield, in addition to everyday life events. This was particularly significant in the North West Inner City Area. However, contact was maintained with most of the women in the twelve-month period, in the form of two letters and a Christmas card, which included change of address slips. Inevitably, several women moved between 1997 and 1998 without contacting the researcher, and could not be traced.

A second issue relating to the longitudinal approach concerned the degree to which women that moved from the regeneration areas should be pursued. However, women,

who had moved, were seen to have engaged with the regeneration process in year one and two, and were therefore interviewed. Three residents, despite their commitment in year one, refused to be interviewed a second time. Another respondent was ill in hospital (see table 2.3). As a result, nineteen women, including the three pilot interviews, were interviewed twice. Empirical evidence presented in chapters four to six are based on the successive interviews with these nineteen women because of the importance of the longitudinal element. Nine women who were only interviewed once do not feature in the analysis, apart from in helping to develop interview guides for the second year of interviewing.

Table 2.3: The status of residents - 1997 and 1998

Status	1997	1998
Living in NWICA	15	8
Living in Norfolk Park	13	11
Moved: contact	0	4
Moved: no contact	0	6
Refused 2nd interview	0	3

Some commentators examining qualitative research recognise it encompasses a wide variety of methods with a multiplicity of uses, such as interviews, life histories and participant observation (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Bryman, 1988; Marshall and Rossman, 1989). The interview appears to offer the most suitable method for eliciting views about regeneration. In contrast to life histories and participant observation, Marshall and Rossman argue: “an interview is a useful way to get large amounts of data quickly” (1989: 82).

### 2.3.3 The interview

King claims: “without doubt, the most widely used qualitative method in organisational research is the interview” (1994:14). Equally, Denzin and Lincoln declare: “the interview is the favourite methodological tool of the qualitative researcher” (1994: 353). According to Fielding there are two principles that inform qualitative interviews: the questioning should be both as flexible and open ended as possible: “in order to gain spontaneous information about attitudes and actions.” He adds: “the questioning techniques should encourage respondents to communicate their underlying attitudes, beliefs, and values, rather than a glib or easy answer” (1993: 138).

The design of interviews has been debated amongst commentators (e.g. Burgess, 1982). Burgess suggests the qualitative interview: “can be placed on a continuum with structured interviews at one end and unstructured interviews at the other” (1982: 107). Most observers recognise interview types range from structured interviews associated with quantitative studies, to flexible open-response interviews (see Burgess, 1982; Bryman, 1988; King, 1994; Fontana and Frey, 1994). Structured interviews, associated with quantitative studies, consist of pre-determined questions, which do not allow researchers to diverge from the research topic. In contrast, the unstructured interview encourages researchers to follow up issues interviewees propose and reveal new dimensions to a problem (Burgess, 1982: 107). Burgess states: “the unstructured interview may, therefore, appear to be without a structure, but nevertheless the researcher has to establish a framework within which the interview can be conducted; the unstructured interview is flexible, but it is also controlled (1982: 107). While, the interview seemed the most appropriate method for retrieving data, the type (and format)

of interview had to be decided.

As the research focuses on an area that is generally well documented, albeit not from a gendered perspective, specific issues, such as participation, could be identified, which deserved further exploration. However, flexibility was also necessary to allow further issues to emerge as the research evolved. According to Whyte: “the interview structure is not fixed by predetermined questions, as in the questionnaire, but it is designed to provide the informant with freedom to introduce materials that were not anticipated by the interviewer” (Whyte, 1982: 111). Interviews, therefore, were semi-structured which allowed interviewees to raise issues that they felt important, whilst at the same time following a similar format to ensure several key areas were covered in each interview (Bryman, 1989)

Semi-structured interviews may be conducted as ‘conversations’ (Burgess, 1982) that are as natural as possible with occasional questions being posed to keep the informant within the boundaries of the subject, or to keep the conversation flowing. This approach promotes a relaxed and informal atmosphere, necessary to make interviewees feel comfortable. King discusses how the interviewee should be made to feel comfortable. His advice is simple and useful, such as ending the interview on a positive note, and not asking leading questions (see King, 1994: 21-22). Listening for the omission of answers is as important as asking relevant questions: “researchers need to have understanding and sympathy for the informant’s point of view” (Burgess, 1982: 108; see Rubin and Rubin, 1995; McCracken, 1988). It was necessary to keep control of the interview, to make sure questions were covered - although this brings into question unequal power relations between researcher and researched (Whyte, 1982). Thus the ability to listen to

interviewees is important, in order to determine the direction of the interview. Whyte further emphasises the importance of the interviewer's listening role: "the research interviewer listens more than he talks, and listens with a sympathetic and lively interest" (1982: 111).

Burgess asserts it is important for interviewees to talk in their own words, but also be given: "some guidance and support" (1982: 108). Whilst interviews in this Sheffield-based research generally took the form of 'conversations' (Burgess, 1982; 1984; Marshall and Rossman, 1989: 82), interviews had to cover topics of interest to the researcher, which may have been: "of no interest to the informant" (Whyte, 1982: 112). In this setting, it was necessary to employ certain techniques to ensure interviewees spoke about certain issues and to encourage responses to particular questions (e.g. Fielding 1993: 140-141).

To encourage some interviewees to answer more difficult questions, prompting was required. This, "involves encouraging the respondent to produce an answer" (Fielding, 1993: 140). Probing techniques were also used, in order to further explore emergent issues from all three different perspectives: residents, activists and regeneration officers (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). These techniques ranged from repeating questions to making respondents redefine answers, such as what did they mean by 'important' (McCracken, 1988).<sup>2</sup>

## **2.4. METHODS**

### **2.4.1 Area selection**

Two study areas (see Chapter Three) were researched to compare and contrast how the SRB impacted on women's lives. There are both Third and Fourth Round SRB areas in Sheffield - the Manor estate and Burngreave - but these were not granted money until June 1997 and April 1998 respectively and were seen as too recent in origin for this research. It is unlikely significant changes made in these later designated SRB areas would have happened during the period of research. Furthermore, accessing the populations of these two later SRB areas may have been more problematic, as contacts were not well developed in these areas.

The Joint Institute for Social and Economic Research (JISER), consisting of academic staff from the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam had been commissioned to provide a baseline against which to measure changes in NWICA and Norfolk Park following intervention by the first two rounds of the SRB. They have conducted a large quantitative study in the two areas.

Contacting residents in the two areas of Sheffield was done through the questionnaire undertaken by JISER. A control area was deemed unnecessary as the experiences of women due to the SRB were regarded as more important than simply evaluating the SRB as a mechanism for urban regeneration. In addition, as Marshall and Rossman point out: "qualitative research does not pretend to be replicable. The researcher purposefully avoids controlling the research conditions and concentrates on recording

the complexity of situational contexts and interrelationships as they occur” (1989: 148). Furthermore, the contrasts and comparisons between the three perspectives of the SRB - residents, officers, and community activists - were seen to be more interesting than the similarities and differences between SRB and non-SRB areas.

#### **2.4.2 The interviewing process**

It had to be decided how to research *social* regeneration. First, social regeneration needed to be defined (see Chapter One). It could be measured as an outcome or as a process that takes time for local populations to benefit from, hence the necessity of a longitudinal approach. One aspect of how social regeneration may be brought about is through the participation of local residents in regeneration schemes. This research is based partly on the premise that social regeneration may be delivered to local residents through their participation in regeneration schemes (see Chapter Four).

Before interviewing could begin in the two case study areas, a detailed knowledge about the research areas, including jargon and technical language used by key actors within the regeneration process, needed to be understood (McCracken, 1988). The research process can be unproductive if the researcher is unfamiliar with the research area. It is also impolite to interviewees. In addition, McCracken argues: “clearer understanding of one’s vision of the world permits a critical distance from it” (1988: 33; see Burgess, 1982). Hence, interviewing began close to the end of year one of the research programme after familiarisation with the research areas and regeneration policy. Interviews with key actors within the regeneration process did not take place until half way through the second year. The timing of these interviews enabled some issues that

residents had raised about the regeneration process to be clarified, and explained further by key actors, with a more detailed knowledge of the regeneration process. This research design had the advantage that it also allowed the researcher to return to residents with information on the regeneration planned or underway. Interviews with community activists took place at the end of the fieldwork to prevent them assuming a gate-keeping role of their neighbourhoods within the regeneration process and withholding access to residents or information (see Burgess, 1982; 1984).

### **2.4.3 Choosing interviewees**

Within qualitative research it is almost impossible, and not desirable to have a representative sample, as sample sizes are smaller than in quantitative studies, and generally focus on certain groups. Four groups of interviewees were chosen (table 2.4): local residents (women aged 18-25 years and 45–60 years<sup>3</sup>); key actors within Sheffield's regeneration process, and community activists. This broadly corresponds with Beresford and Croft's approach to research: "we have been concerned with what we see as the *three* central and overlapping perspectives and role involved: of users, workers [regeneration officers] and local people" (1986: 21). A key factor in selecting women as the interview group was because of a general lack of research into the issue of gender and regeneration, whereas children and older residents have both been researched in relation to regeneration (see Taylor, 1995). It has also been recognised that there are a number of issues surrounding the gender of the interviewer and interviewee. In particular, how women interviewing women may be favourable (see Finch, 1993; Oakley, 1981; Fielding, 1993). Key actors within the regeneration process were interviewed to explore how SRB was seen to be tackling issues of social exclusion,

community participation and empowerment. Community activists were expected to have a more informed and real perspective of the regeneration process, as they were simultaneously both inside and outside the regeneration process.

The number of individuals interviewed for each cohort was decided when sufficient understanding of the various perspectives of each group had been gained (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Table 2.4: Summary information of 3 cohorts interviewed:

Cohort interviewed	Number interviewed	Description
Local residents	19 (38)	Women-only and split by age group.
Community activists	9	Men and women.
Key decision-makers	14	Men and women, local politicians and SRB workers.

One of the main disadvantages of qualitative research may be the difficulty faced in gaining access to the people to be studied (Burgess, 1982). Different approaches have to be made according to the prevailing institutional setting. But Burgess warns, it: “is not a straight forward procedure” (1984: 45). However, gaining access to local residents was a relatively straight forward process, albeit time consuming. As mentioned earlier, JISER conducted a large quantitative study in NWICA and Norfolk Park during the summer of 1997. As part of the process a household survey questionnaire was employed. The last question of this survey was: “we are hoping to carry out some further in depth interviews to explore in more detail some of the issues arising in the

local area. Would you be willing to participate in a further interview or meeting to discuss local issues?" Access was granted to completed questionnaires, although this had an obvious influence on who initially was contacted. These questionnaires were first sorted by positive responses to the final question and by gender and age group. Applicable women, in terms of age group, were subsequently contacted by post. The processes of contacting people, arranging interviews, interviewing, transcribing and primary analysis ran for four to five months in summer 1997 and then again in summer 1998. There was a significant level of non-response. Interviews were rearranged in some cases or cancelled.

Glaser and Strauss promote simultaneous data collection and analysis. They stress: "joint collection, coding, and analysis of data is the underlying operation. The generation of theory, coupled with the notion of theory as process, requires that all three operations be done together as much as possible. They should blur and intertwine continually, from the beginning of an investigation to its end" (1967: 43). Key actors within the regeneration process comprise local politicians responsible for either of the two SRB areas, housing officers and representatives from the SRB Board, TEC, Chamber of commerce and SCCAU (Sheffield Co-ordinating Centre Against Unemployment). All these interviewees were contacted through their place of work. Local women or key actors identified community activists from the two SRB areas. They were generally contacted through their tenants' or residents' groups. In the case of NWICA, contacts were made through the Community Alliance (see Chapter Three).

#### **2.4.4 Pilot interviews**

Piloting of interviews with local residents was undertaken: “to provide invaluable insights for altering question wording, adding questions about issues that were of particular concern to respondents but which we had not thought of, omitting or changing questions, and altering the order of questions to provide a more logical flow” (Arber, 1993: 40). Three pilot interviews were conducted with women (contacted through the JISER questionnaire) in the two research areas. These proved successful, in that they were used in the final analysis. Several minor changes were made to the interview guide, in the form of question wording, question sequence, and the omission and addition of several questions. New, although relatively minor issues, emerged continually throughout the interviewing process which were subsequently incorporated into interview guides. Similarly, Beresford and Croft argue: “the questionnaire we used was not piloted in the usual way, but rather grew out of the schedule that developed from and formed the basis for group discussions, and was thus significantly affected by issues and concerns emerging from these” (1986: 24). The semi-structured nature of the interview guide allowed questions to be added or deleted through the interviewing process. As only small numbers of key actors and community activists were interviewed, it was decided not to pilot these two groups. Instead minor changes to the interview guides were made as and when necessary.

#### **2.4.5 The interview guides**

The interview framework is often called the ‘interview guide’ which, according to King (1994), should consist of main and subsidiary questions, and prompts. None of these

should lead the interviewee to respond in a particular way. Four interview guides were drawn up. Two guides for interviewing female residents, one used in 1997 and a follow up used in 1998. A third interview guide was used with key actors, and a fourth guide was used when interviewing community activists. While there were certain similarities between the four interview guides, they differed overall in the complexity of issues they dealt with (see appendix for guides 1-4). In general, all interview guides were designed to establish a necessary 'rapport' with interviewees. Marshall and Rossman (1989) argue if rapport is not built up between interviewer and interviewee, there may be data loss and misinterpretation (see: Fontana and Frey, 1994). In all cases, the researcher began interviews with straight forward questions (Burgess, 1984) and attempted to finish the interview on a positive note by allowing the interviewee to ask questions (King, 1994).

Interview guides were divided into sections, which explored different issues. For instance, the first section of the guide used with local residents explored biographical data, in order to help with the analysis of the data (McCracken, 1988). In particular, for the second year of interviewing, biographical data was needed to see how personal circumstances might have changed in the previous twelve-month period. A second advantage of beginning interviews with biographical data is to build up rapport between the interviewer and interviewee (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). However, this information was not seen as necessary for key actors and community activists. Therefore these interviews began with a description of their roles within the regeneration process.

The next section of the interview guides for residents interviewed in 1997 addressed the

degree to which interviewees were aware of regeneration and changes in their area and how these changes impacted on their lives. The final sections explored the nature of involvement or engagement in changes taking place as a result of the regeneration schemes.

In the follow up interviews in 1998, the women were questioned on their engagement with the regeneration process and in particular about ways in which they were or would like to be involved. This was followed by a discussion of the barriers women felt they faced in becoming involved or which prevented them from being involved. The following section in this interview guide examined what the women thought they could achieve by being involved and to see what benefits they themselves might receive. The final section discussed if and how their engagement had changed in the previous twelve months and whether this was related to changes in the area. Interviews with local residents in 1997 and 1998 lasted approximately an hour. Burgess states: "I have found that one-and-a-half hours is the optimum amount of time for me in conducting unstructured interviews" (1984: 120). However, fewer women may have been prepared to be interviewed if interviews were to last one-and-a-half hours.

The interviews with residents were arranged around the above framework to allow flexibility, yet at the same time to maintain a structure between different issues. More complex issues were placed towards the end of the interview guide to ensure a certain level of trust was built up between the interviewee and interviewer (Burgess, 1984). The open-ended nature of the interview allowed discussion of further issues to be developed.

The interview guide used for key actors was more formal than the other guides in order to keep the “conversation” focused. This guide dealt specifically with the SRB, in terms of exploring what the regeneration officers saw as its important features within the Sheffield context. Section three examined the concepts of involvement, empowerment and exclusion in relation to the SRB. The influence gender may be having on the regeneration process was examined in section four. A final question asked who else they thought was important in the regeneration process. In some cases contacts that they mentioned had already been interviewed for this research. Others were generally followed up. Again these interviews lasted approximately an hour.

The final interview guide, for interviewing community activists was divided into four sections. The interview began with a brief introduction about their role in the regeneration process. This was followed by questions specifically about involvement in the area. Section two questioned them on what they received from being involved, and asked them to discuss whether they believed they were being “empowered” by the regeneration process. Next, community activists were asked for their opinion on who they thought was excluded from the regeneration process and the reasons for this observance. The final section of the interview allowed them to describe the decision-making processes in the SRB to shed light on where local residents were involved. These interviews generally lasted about an hour and a half. In some cases they were significantly longer.

The research design allowed unexpected themes to emerge during the research process, which had not previously been considered (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). Consequently the more flexible the research design is, the more it can respond to being

increasingly refined and developed. The 'interview guide' was modified during the interviewing process by: "adding probes or even whole topics which had originally not been included, but have emerged spontaneously in interviews" (King, 1994: 19).

#### **2.4.6 Location of interviews**

To make the interview as productive as possible, it was also important to choose a research setting likely to be regarded as comfortable by both the interviewer and the interviewee. It is often assumed research participants can exercise more control over the research in their own homes (Ford and Reutter, 1990: 188). Finch suggests: "in the setting of the interviewee's own home, an interview conducted in an informal way by another woman can easily take on the character of an intimate conversation. The interviewee feels quite comfortable with this precisely because the interviewer is acting as a friendly guest, not an official inquisitor" (1993: 168-169). Local residents were initially given a choice of location: their home, researcher's department (CRESR), or a mutually convenient location, such as a public house. Primarily most interviews took place in interviewee's homes as this is what interviewees favoured. However, due to safety concerns, after several interviews, this was reviewed and interviews were conducted either in CRESR, or in a mutually convenient location. Expenses were paid to interviewees where necessary. For the second round of resident interviews it was decided interviews would take place in their homes as it was more convenient for them and increased response rates. However, another person always accompanied the researcher. It is unlikely that the presence of another person had an influence on the interview, as they generally sat in another room or in the garden. Community activists were interviewed either at their place of work, or in their homes, where again the

researcher was accompanied. Interviews with key actors took place in their place of work, usually in meeting rooms to facilitate tape recording.

#### **2.4.7 Interview recording**

Several commentators have noted problems associated with recording interview data (e.g. Whyte 1982; Burgess, 1984: 121). Whyte outlines three methods available to the researcher: tape recording, taking notes while the interview is in progress, and making notes after the interview has finished. Each method has its own merits and disadvantages. As Whyte concludes, while tape recording is both formal and very time consuming (transcribing tapes) it offers the fullest recording of data (1982: 118). Burgess argues: “without a tape-recorder much important data would be lost ...Even when a complete tape-recording is made of an interview there is still the problem of transcribing and analysing the data” (1982: 121-122). Furthermore, Fielding notes: “you may not know what will be the most significant points of analysis when you are doing the transcription; doing it verbatim means you have not lost any data that may later become significant...[the]...advice is to tape-record whenever possible” (1993: 146). McCracken adds: “interviews must be recorded on tape ... a verbatim transcript of the interview testimony must be created” (1988: 41). Strauss and Corbin are less certain of the need to transcribe all interviews. They suggest: “the general rule of thumb here is to transcribe only as much as is needed. But, that is not necessarily an easy decision to make, nor can it be made sensibly until you are well into the course of the study itself” (1990: 30). However, there are a number of ethical and confidentiality issues surrounding the recording and transcription of interview data (see Fielding 1993: 145-147; Fontana and Frey, 1994: 372). In all cases of this research interviews were

recorded, without anyone objecting and then fully transcribed.

#### **2.4.8 Qualitative data analysis**

Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest patterns and processes may be isolated in the first wave of research, which can be taken up in later stages thereby creating topics for analysis. The first stage of the research in June/July 1997 highlighted the patterns, processes, commonalities and differences in the interview transcripts. These emerging patterns were researched through the second stage of interviewing in June/July 1998.

The data was analysed according to the framework Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest above, in terms of defining 'facts' and 'concepts', developing 'categories' and generating theory. Following transcription, the next task involved going through each interview transcript and highlighting issues in order to generate theory (see section 2.1). Each interview transcript was read thoroughly and as themes emerged these were named and noted alongside the transcript. Following the identification of themes in several transcripts, some common threads and categories were noted, such as: "influence in decision making", whilst others, which were less relevant were rejected, such as: "the issue of parked cars". This process of analysis is, however, influenced by the judgement of the researcher, which can make it complex for contradictions in the data to become apparent, rather than concentrating only on the commonalities in the data. The nature of these emergent themes, which were those featuring in multiple transcripts, became more complex and detailed following a review of all of the transcripts. At this stage, several overarching considerations, such as participation, empowerment, and exclusion were developed. As these broader themes developed, these were integrated into a wider

theoretical debate concerning regime theory.

However, there was concern over prioritising the data, in terms of working out which 'concepts' and 'facts' were most significant for the emerging theory (McCracken, 1988). It is this prioritisation of the data by the researcher which explains which material is included, and which is excluded from the analysis. In this research, some themes, as is noted above, were rejected as they were not thought to be as significant as others. This method of analysis was based on a grounded theory approach which allows theory to emerge from the data as it occurs, without forcing the latter to fit emergent theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 41). By definition this involves making decisions concerning the rejection of some data, which do not fit. This supports the approach towards data analysis used by Burgess (1984: 177). In his research into schools he recalls: "coding took place throughout the research period using a procedure recommended by Glaser (1965)". Following coding of the data, categories are devised from themes arising in the data (e.g. Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The next challenge was to combine these concepts and facts together to provide understanding of the data.

Due to the amount of cross-referencing of transcripts, it was decided not to use a computer aided qualitative data analysis, such as nu\*dist or ethnograph. However, this meant there was much mechanical handling of the data. At times this made it difficult to identify commonalities and tensions in the data. The data was analysed using analytical frameworks, built up from the emerging 'facts', 'concepts' and categories, as illustrated in table 2.2. There was a general framework for each of the three main categories: participation, empowerment, and exclusion. These frameworks were designed to reject or accept findings based on the extraction of all relevant quotations

from transcripts into certain sections, such as on the barriers that prevent involvement. It is from these frameworks, that substantive and formal theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) developed (see Chapters Four - Seven).

## **2.5 DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.5.1 Problems with grounded theory**

While Glaser and Strauss provide a useful insight into the generation of theory from empirical data, what they ask of researchers is not always possible. Most proponents of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998) share a common recognition of the constant interplay between data and theory: data should be gathered in a systematic way, and theory should be revisable. However, Bryman argues: “grounded theory has provided qualitative researchers with possible frameworks for attending to theoretical issues, but that these approaches to theory are often honoured more in the breach than in the observance” (1988: 91). In addition, Burgess, referring to Bulmer (1979), argues: “their [Glaser and Strauss] suggestion that researchers should ignore the theoretical literature on an area of study and avoid presuppositions or prior conceptualisation in areas that have been well researched is exceedingly difficult for researchers to achieve” (1984: 181). In fact this study did not ignore the theoretical material on the research area, but rather integrated it into a grounded theory approach, to produce a refined, regime theory, which is grounded in the data.

Grounded theory might be judged as valid on the generality of the theory and its specificity. Some commentators (Fielding, 1993) prioritise the data analysis stage after

the data collection and before theory is generated. Others (Geertz, 1983) examine how studies may be biased towards theory development. In these cases, problems are seen to arise concerning the priority given to theory production over data collection. It is necessary to strike an even balance between the development of theory and the empirical material, although the precise point of balance may not always be obvious. A characteristic of qualitative research is that it allows theory to be developed simultaneously with the data collection, hence allowing each to inform the other (see Glaser and Strauss. 1967).

### **2.5.2 Limitations of qualitative research**

Although, Marshall and Rossman (1989) state the strength of qualitative research is in its validity, transferability or generalizability to other settings, they also add: “the generalisation of a qualitative study to other populations, settings, and treatment arrangements - that is its *external* validity - is seen by traditional canons as a weakness in the approach” (1989: 146 original emphasis).

For almost every advantage of qualitative data there is a potential disadvantage. Qualitative research has the advantage that it takes up: “issues that are considered crucial by the informant” (Burgess, 1982: 109). Pragmatically it is a quick way to retrieve a large amount of data that may be clarified through follow-up interviews, and/or observation at the time of interviewing. Empirical data for this research was clarified through the longitudinal element, which necessitated repeat visits to the same interviewees to follow up what was said and what was meant.

A further issue, which could make qualitative research problematic, is can results be replicated? However, by its nature, qualitative research may not be exactly reproduced, because, as Marshall and Rossman (1989) argue, the real world is constantly changing and concentration is more likely to be on recording the complexity of situations, such as the difficulty in achieving and recognising social regeneration. Marshall and Rossman (1989) advise that multiple case studies are used amongst other methods to improve the generalizability of the research. In addition: “the use of ‘feedback loops’ - returning to the interviewees with interpretations and developing theory” (King, 1994: 32) may be used to test the validity of the research. The use of two research areas - Norfolk Park and NWICA- helped with the generalizability of the data. Repeat interviews tested the validity of the research findings and the use of different perspectives, local residents, community activists and key actors, helped with interpreting issues.

Further criticisms levelled at qualitative research methods concern the dependability of the researcher. For instance, how well: “the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study as well as changes in the design created by increasingly refined understanding of the setting” (Marshall and Rossman, 1989: 147).

### **2.5.3 Influence of the Interviewer**

Burgess argues: “the age of an interviewer may influence the roles that are used and the status that the individual has as an interviewer” (1984: 105). Whilst, some commentators, such as Fielding (1993: 145), suggest women may only interview other women because of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, Burgess

more usefully states: “researchers who conduct interviews in field research need to consider the extent to which their personal characteristics will influence the practice of interviewing” (1984: 106). Differences between the interviewer and interviews with local residents were as limited as possible (not taking into account different social backgrounds) because of the concentration on women and the younger age group. However, there were many differences between the researcher and the key actors and community activists, which needed to be taken into account during interviews. Furthermore, interviewing only female residents, may have resulted in misrepresentation of the area, that may be further problematised because men and women value conversations differently (Kane and Macaulay, 1993: 4). However, concentration only on female local residents, while not representative, provides a useful and in-depth insight into how one gender, in general, engages with the regeneration process. Fielding comments: “in fact, as well as race, characteristics such as age, sex, social class, and religion have proven to have an impact which has to be allowed for” (1993: 145). The research design in this study has aimed to minimise these characteristics by concentrating on one gender, though there are other social characteristics, which may never be totally eradicated. The nature of interaction between the researcher and the researched can become more insightful when concentration is made on one gender (Finch, 1993). As Finch discovered in her research many women involved in research projects can open up to the researcher and discuss personal issues as a rapport develops between them and the researcher. This issue of ‘intimacy’ was particularly significant in the second year of interviewing where the nineteen women generally felt totally at ease with the researcher.

The revelation of new topics during the interviewing process posed problems about how

comparisons could be made across responses (Burgess, 1982: 109). A flexible research design also has the potential to research something totally different to the initial research question. The maintenance of a structure to the interview attempted to overcome this issue, by ensuring enough similarity existed across interviews for comparisons and contrasts to be made.

Whyte highlights a further problem associated with qualitative research: “what factors may influence an informant’s reporting in the interview situation?” (1982: 115). He cites various idiosyncratic and extraneous factors, which may effect what an interviewee says in an interview setting. These may be summarised here as: mood of interviewer or interviewee, the telephone ringing, individual peculiarities and the baby crying. These, and other, factors were of crucial importance to this study because many interviews were conducted in people’s homes where there was no control over the conditions of the interview. Some of these factors interrupted the flow of the interview and were distracting. However, a detailed field diary (Burgess, 1982) was kept during the interviewing process to note down these situations.

Furthermore, Fielding discusses how qualitative interview data may be distorted by respondents who: “give those answers they anticipate the interviewer wants to hear” (1993: 139 (see Fielding for a fuller discussion)). However, in this Sheffield-based research, interviews were semi-structured, and the researcher did not air her views, which allowed interviewees to speak freely and openly without knowing what the researcher thought. Furthermore, Denzin (1970: 133-138, cited in Silverman, 1993: 97) lists several ‘problems’ that may distort an interviewee’s response. These range from the roles of the interviewer/interviewee to the different contexts in which the interview

is conducted. As interviews for this research were conducted in a number of settings, this may have influenced some responses. However, all interviews were conducted in the same political and social context of Sheffield (see Chapter Three).

As in all research, findings are spatially and temporally specific. As a consequence, the local culture of Sheffield needs consideration to discover how this has a part to play in the interpretation of results (see Chapter Three). Findings in Sheffield have highlighted the engagement of women in the regeneration process. Although, it would have been desirable to have a comparative group of women, living in another SRB area, out of Sheffield, this was not possible owing to the time constraints posed by the longitudinal element of the research. If the research were to be repeated it would be useful to leave a larger than twelve month gap between stage one and two of interviewing the local residents, to allow more time for changes to develop and for residents to be more aware of social regeneration. However, a larger gap may have also made it more difficult to maintain contact with respondents.

In short, this chapter has outlined the methodology that the research adopts. A longitudinal, qualitative research methodology has been used in order to generate data concerning how women relate to the regeneration process in Sheffield. The use of a grounded theory approach to aid the data collection and analysis was considered appropriate because of the lack of existing knowledge on women's participation within urban regeneration. However, the data were also used to inform regime theory, in order to attempt to produce a gendered understanding of power relations in cities (see Chapter Seven). The following chapter establishes the context for the research, in order to help provide a greater understanding of the research findings.

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-eight women were interviewed in 1997, of which nineteen were followed up. Nine community activists and fourteen regeneration officials were also interviewed in 1998.

<sup>2</sup> However, as Fielding notes, caution had to be taken when probing as it: “can easily lead to bias” (1993: 141). King devotes a lengthy discussion to ‘difficult’ interviews and proposes some techniques to handle interviewees who are either not prepared to talk, talk too much, or talk on irrelevant topics (e.g. King, 1994: 22-24). There is a critical issue within qualitative research of bias, although this may be partly controlled (see Marshall and Rossman, 1989: 147- 149). There are a number of ways bias may be introduced into qualitative research, such as the influence of the interviewer and the research setting (see Fielding, 1993: 147-148).

<sup>3</sup> Although two age groups were interviewed, this division was not seen to significantly influence the findings and does not therefore feature much in the analysis, apart from to highlight the circumstances of residents.

## **Framing the context: The process of regeneration in Sheffield**

As stated in the previous chapter, research for this thesis was conducted within the first two areas of Sheffield to be designated for SRB funding. The two research areas were selected in part because of their geographical location, enabling the researcher unconstrained and frequent access to the two SRB areas and interviewees, a particularly important issue in respect of the longitudinal element of the research. A second reason for viewing Sheffield as an appropriate research area is its success in the first two rounds of the SRB Challenge Fund competition (see Shaw and Harvey, 1997; Hall et al., 1996). This significant attraction of SRB funds is particularly notable in contrast to Sheffield's previous failures to attract such public investment, other than through the property-led Urban Development Corporation 1988 to 1997. "Sheffield has not received any of the other major 'urban prizes' such as Enterprise Zones, Task Forces or City Challenge" (Lawless, 1995: 1122). Therefore, both NWICA and Norfolk Park were considered to be highly appropriate research areas because they are both in receipt of significant SRB funds. Finally, JISER (see Chapter Two) are compiling a quantitative research base in the two areas.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the regeneration process in Sheffield, in order to frame a context for the research findings. The first part describes

the economic and political climate of Sheffield. In the second, the granting of SRB funding in the city is discussed. This is followed by an examination of the two research areas. Part four examines the participation structures for local residents in Round One and Two SRB areas of Sheffield.

### **3.1 ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF SHEFFIELD**

#### **3.1.1 Political Context**

In the early 1980s, Sheffield was frequently referred to as the ‘Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire’ (Seyd, 1993). The political base of the city had, until 1999, remained securely within Labour party control (Thorpe, 1993)<sup>1</sup>. Labour had a stronghold on the city from 1926 until May 1999, with one period of Conservative control in the later 1960s<sup>2</sup>.

Labour councillors, who held control of the City Council at the end of the 1970s were generally male, from blue collar backgrounds and “moderate” in their political views. Almost three-quarters of local councillors at that time were Labour. During the early years of the 1980s, the composition of “traditional” Labour councillors began to change. A new group of more highly educated and more radically thinking councillors began to emerge (Seyd, 1993). At this time ‘socialism’ strengthened in Sheffield City Council, perhaps because of the move by, the then Conservative, Central Government to restructure Local Government (Cochrane, 1988).

Throughout the first half of the 1980s Sheffield, was noted as having a radical approach to local governance (Lawless, 1994). Loftman and Nevin comment on this 'radicalism': "the city [Sheffield] council's radical stance was particularly focused on its local economic development policies, which placed emphasis on supporting local industries and encouraging enterprise via worker's co-operatives; campaigning on issues relating to low pay and equal opportunities; municipal enterprise via mechanisms such as contract compliance; and local employment and economic development" (1996: 1002). These more radically thinking councillors tended to adopt an antagonistic stance towards Central Government. Sheffield City Council's decision not to apply for Enterprise Zone status in 1981 was indicative of its attitude towards central policies (Seyd, 1993). In addition, the establishment of a major office of the Department for Employment and Economic Development (DEED), also in 1981, further indicated local council's animosity towards Central Government (Seyd, 1993). DEED provided: "an alternative economic strategy" in contrast to Central Government's economic policies (Bailey et al., 1995), seeking to preserve a manufacturing base in the city.

### **3.1.2 Economic context**

Lawless and Ramsden (1990) argued that DEED, as a department of the city council, was an economic and political tool, which served to retrain the unemployed, help alleviate unemployment and potentially to guide, and to inform, national economic policy within the city. DEED was established as a consequence of the economic decline, which the city began to experience at the start of the 1980s. Increased

unemployment resulted from the streamlining of manufacturing industry, and the decreased world demand for steel, coupled with increased foreign competition (Raco, 1997; Strange, 1997). One of the consequences of this economic decline was a labour force in need of retraining (Seyd, 1993: 180). In the period from 1978 until 1988 there was a loss of approximately 60,000 manufacturing jobs in Sheffield (Dabinett, 1990). At the height of the manufacturing industry recession, more than a thousand jobs were being lost each month (Lawless and Ramsden, 1990). Since this slump during the 1980s in the manufacturing and related industries, unemployment in Sheffield has been equal to or higher than the national average (Sheffield City Liaison Group, 1995: 5). The unemployment rate in Sheffield for June 1999 is 6.9%, compared with 6.3% nationally (Labour Force Survey, Dec 1998 to Feb. 99, NOMIS Crown Copyright).

A further outcome of the economic recession of 1979-1983 was its influence on political shifts in central-local government relations (Watts, 1991). Adsetts, Chair of Sheffield Insulation's, commented on the situation at the start of the 1980s: "there was no communication at all. Both sides [council and business] took a stand-off position" (1989: 6). Strange suggests this apparent conflict arose because: "each [was] blaming the other for the demise of the city's economic fortunes" (1993: 5). Sheffield had a reputation for being a city of: "total non co-operation between City Council and business" (Carley, 1990: 206). During the early 1980s, Labour politicians were dismissive of any substantial involvement of the business sector in the governing process (Raco, 1998), and were opposed to several Central Government initiatives, such as the Right to Buy policy for council homes (Seyd, 1993: 163).

However, during the mid-1980s as economic problems in the city became more acute, central-local government relations, and relations with local-business began to change. Strange attributes the change in political relations in the city to the economic decline. He comments, economic decline was: “a significant factor in the development of a more open and participatory dialogue between the local business community and the City Council” (1997: 5; see Raco, 1998). In encouraging a more open dialogue, an increased number of governmental actors, including the Training Enterprise Council (TEC), and the Sheffield Development Corporation (SDC) became involved in city politics between 1988 and 1997 (Raco, 1998).

By the end of the 1980s, Sheffield had been renamed ‘the partnership city’ (Carley, 1990: 206). Lawless and Ramsden explain: “within a few years Sheffield moved from governance rooted in a radical, public sector driven ethos to one in which many of the key leadership issues were being formulated within, and implemented by, the private sector” (1990: 202). Cochrane suggests why this transformation came about: “it was no longer possible for SCC to pretend that it could stand out on its own against all the pressures from above” (1994: 14 cited in Raco, 1998). Seyd expands on this shift in attitude towards the end of the 1980s, and outlines the rationale for this change towards public-private partnerships in city politics: “central government’s powers to intervene and direct local services, to force local authorities to contract services out to private tender, to reduce grants to local government, and to set local authorities’ rates were so extensive that Sheffield was unable to resist” (Seyd, 1993: 168).

As a summary of the situation, Raco suggests that: “Sheffield is often cited as being a

good example of a British city in which the politics of partnership have emerged from a backdrop of conflict between the local state, the interests of big business and the ideological and economic agendas of central government” (1997: 395). The change in public-private relations during the 1980s led to the foundations of Sheffield Economic Regeneration Committee (SERC) in 1986 (Raco, 1998). SERC was formed in response to this growing recognition of the necessity for collaborative working between the city council and the business community. Summing up SERC’s impact on the city, Strange argues it: “represented new found spirit and co-operation between the public and private sectors” (1997: 5).

### **3.1.3 Sheffield Economic Regeneration Committee**

SERC formed in December 1986 as the driving force behind public-private partnerships and signalled the “normalisation” of public-private collaboration (Seyd, 1993: 170; see Lewis, 1992). SERC involved representatives from the council, the private sector, the development corporation, trade unions, higher education and community groups (Fogarty and Christie, 1990: 94). Together they helped inform and guide the economic agenda for Sheffield. Lawless and Ramsden suggested that SERC was primarily dominated by the local authority and business sector (1990: 205).

SERC was important as it initiated *Sheffield 2000*, which was a council-led strategy, to carry the city forward beyond the World Student Games (see 3.1.4). Fundamentally, SERC was important since: “it recommended that the city should diversify the local

economy and create five distinct growth networks around manufacturing, information technology, environmental protection, public services and leisure” (Seyd, 1993: 181). In addition, *Sheffield 2000* also argued that social regeneration was to play a major part in Sheffield’s overall regeneration strategy.

#### **3.1.4 The World Student Games**

Another significant development in the regeneration of Sheffield was the staging of the World Student Games (WSG) in 1991. This event was a controversial venture, which required co-ordination and co-operation between public, private and voluntary sectors. The City Council entered into the competition to stage the Games without apparently receiving reliable advice on the full economic and social costs of the event (Seyd, 1993: 176).

The WSG, second in size only to the Olympics, failed to attract many spectators or commercial interest. Consequently, this led to a major burden for City tax payers who will have to bear the costs well into the next century: “the debt charge payments commenced in 1992. Since then every adult has paid an additional £25 in local tax, to be paid yearly until 2013, for the facilities” (Seyd, 1993: 177). However, Fogarty and Christie argue: “for all its financial problems, the World Student Games has been a significant catalytic factor in bringing private sector resources into infrastructure renewal and community projects” (1990: 97-98).

Furthermore, Lewis argues Sheffield is an: “example of a city which has spent considerable pains and energies in planning the development of the area, in spite of the poor press it has received over the staging of the World Student Games in 1991 and its previously poor set of relations with industry and commerce” (Lewis 1992: 54). The WSG did, however, result in the refurbishment of Hyde Park flats, the construction of the supertram and the Ponds Forge leisure development, which are all important factors in the regeneration of Sheffield. From 1988, national urban policy began to have a significant impact on the city, with the establishment of an Urban Development Corporation.

### **3.1.5 Sheffield’s Urban Development Corporation**

In 1987, Coopers and Lybrand were employed to advise Sheffield, Central Government and the private sector on how to regenerate the Lower Don Valley area of the city. A strategy was agreed between the parties, but Central Government did not assign Sheffield City Council the responsibility to deliver it (Financial Times, 29th Feb. 1997). As a result, the Sheffield Development Corporation (SDC) was seen by the City Council as being imposed on the city. Initially the UDC was opposed by the City Council, despite the additional funding, which came with it. The SDC Board was established with representation from business leaders and the city council, but it was not always a harmonious relationship. Mike Bower, the then leader of the City Council admits: “we did not agree there was a need to establish the development corporation, but once it was imposed on us we agreed to co-operate with each other. We have disagreed about some things, but we have agreed on about 97 per cent of what has happened” (Financial

Times, 29th Feb. 1997: 13). However, Sheffield City Council realised: “government funds would not be made available to redevelop this part of the city unless it compromised” (Seyd, 1993: 173). Business investment was needed to regenerate the Lower Don Valley, which had suffered from the collapse of the steel and engineering industries. Thus, many SDC projects were economic rather than social based.

At times, SDC projects were controversial. For example, SDC proposed to develop further retail space in the area, close to the Meadowhall development and the M1. However, the City Council believed subsequent retail developments would further detract customers away from the already declining city centre. The emphasis on property-led regeneration was also perceived as failing to benefit the lives of Sheffield residents.

Although, the SDC was a centrally imposed initiative, the City Council had some influence over its management. A Community Director was appointed and three council members took positions on the management board: “there was considerable overlap between membership of the Sheffield Training and Enterprise Council board, Sheffield Partnerships Ltd, Universiade GB Ltd, Sheffield Science and Technology Park Boards, Sheffield 2000 and, more significantly, SERC” (Dabinett and Ramsden, 1993: 130). Raco points out: “SDC was set up to regenerate 2000 acres at the bottom of the valley. Given a £50m budget, and a seven year time scale, it had the target of creating 20,000 new jobs and ‘levering’ in as much mobile capital investment as it could attract” (Raco, 1997: 387). SDC concentrated mainly on physical and economic regeneration, rather than social or community regeneration, because there were very few residents in the

SDC area.

When Sheffield Development Corporation ‘wound up’ in 1997, it had created 18,000 new jobs and stimulated £638 million of investment with £108 million of public funds (SDC regeneration statement, 1997; Financial Times, 29th Feb., 1997). However, with the number of “new” jobs in mind, the regeneration statement for the development corporation admits: “a development corporation cannot itself create jobs. Instead it must provide the conditions for others to do so” (SDC, 1997: 4). The emphasis on mainly physical regeneration within the SDC highlights a greater need for a more co-ordinated approach to the regeneration of the city. The remit of the SRB was to provide this.

### **3.1.6 The City Liaison Group**

In 1992, the most important agency in the city was no longer the City Council, or SERC, rather it was the City Liaison Group (CLG) (Lawless, 1999: 222). Raco (1998) proposes that SERC represented the forerunner to the City Liaison Group. However, in contrast to SERC, the CLG: “does not, and cannot, represent every single interest in Sheffield. We have deliberately remained a small group, with a focus on action” (CLG, 1996: 4). One of the aims of CLG was to cement the evolving partnership between the council and the private sector. The group is an informal alliance of key representatives from the authority, two universities, health authorities, TEC and Chamber (Lawless, 1999). Formed in 1992, the CLG came together with a determination to take the

partnership approach in the city forward in a way, which would lead to more co-ordinated action. A second role of the CLG was to provide leadership, to set the framework within which regeneration in the city could accelerate (CLG, 1996).

As a group, the CLG has produced a number of documents. "The Way Ahead" in 1994, and in 1995 "Shaping the Future" which outlined plans for social regeneration initiatives and improving the quality of life for Sheffield residents. In 1996, "Sheffield Growing Together" was published. This was viewed as the first integrated social and economic regeneration strategy and plan for Sheffield. It set out targets for the regeneration of Sheffield as a whole, in policy areas such as transport, health, education, employment and community safety. Sheffield's SRB bids have recently built their schematic framework around the CLGs economic and social regeneration strategy (Growing Together, 1996).

With this increasing experience of working in partnerships, such as through SERC, CLG, and the SDC, Sheffield City Council decided to compete for City Challenge money in 1991. This bid failed perhaps due to a lack of a fully developed and coherent partnership approach. It did, however, signal a weakening of the City Council's objections towards central policies. By the mid 1990s, Sheffield's newly established SRB Board applied for SRB funding. Dave Child, now chief executive of the SRB Partnership Board, commented: "after the two previous failures of City Challenge bids, success in SRB was vital to increase confidence for future development in Sheffield" (Child, 1996a).

### 3. 2 THE SRB CHALLENGE FUND PROCESS

In 1993, the SRB Board was established as a city-wide partnership in order to submit bids for funding. In 1996, the Board became: "Regenerating Sheffield". However, following concerns about accountability, all members agreed that: "Sheffield City Council should act as the accountable body (having responsibility for the receipt and use of SRB funds and for the realisation of the Delivery Plan)" (Delivery Plan, 1995). The Board has a number of responsibilities. It manages scheme performance against agreed delivery plans, appraises, approves and monitors projects, authorises and arranges payments for projects, works with local community groups, and sets out the rules and responsibilities for SRB staff.

The SRB Board consists of representatives from Sheffield City Council (SCC), Sheffield Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), Sheffield Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS), the Black Community Forum (BCF), and since May 1998 a local resident from each of the four Local Management Boards (LMBs)<sup>3</sup>. The secretary of the City Liaison Group acts as an advisor to the Sheffield SRB board, but not as a voting member (NWICA delivery plan Y3 97/98, 1997: 3). It is interesting to note that SCC and the TEC hold the decision-making power, with 3 votes each, while other partnership members are granted only one vote. This might indicate that the local residents' voice might not initially have been noticed prior to the attendance of local residents on the Board, despite, the fact that: "the partnership has agreed to involvement of local community groups and those to whom the scheme will be directed. It proposes that there should be ongoing involvement of Voluntary Action

Sheffield and the Black Community Forum” (NWICA Delivery plan, Year one, 1995). It is also of interest that the SRB Board is male dominated. All members of the Board, except the leader of the City Council, since May 1998, are men.

In 1993, at the start of the SRB process in Sheffield, three key problems were often perceived as hindering regeneration initiatives:

- “a narrow economic base, and low growth rate coupled with a low rate of new business formation.
- high level of unemployment (11.2%), resulting from major job losses in traditional manufacturing (35,600 since 1981), creating a skills mismatch city-wide.
- inner city areas locked into a vicious circle of unemployment, deprivation, poor housing and lack of commercial and business opportunities”

(Sheffield’s bid to the Single Regeneration Budget Round One, 1993).

In 1993 a seven year integrated regeneration plan: ‘The North West Inner City Action Plan (NWICAP)’ was launched, funded 35% by the council and 65% from Estate Action. In 1994, this Plan (NWICAP) was put forward as a bid to the SRB challenge Fund in an attempt to integrate social and economic improvements with large-scale housing regeneration. The Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside approved the SRB bid for NWICA on 6th December 1994. SRB funding specifically dedicated to NWICA was £15.093m over 7 years and this was to be matched by private leverage of 1:8 (see table 3.2).

The bid indicated that: “the regeneration of Sheffield must proceed on three fronts simultaneously - economic, community, and infrastructure. Economic regeneration without community development could lead to a growing sense of inequity and

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exclusion amongst significant parts of the population. Only by achieving progress on these fronts can the regeneration of the city become robust and self-sustaining” (Sheffield’s bid to the SRB, 1993). Consequently, SRB money for Round One, in Sheffield is concentrated on three key themes of regeneration. SRB funding in Sheffield aims to address: enterprise; infrastructure development and, community development. The SRB board recognised that regeneration in Sheffield depended in part on the creation of stable and empowered communities equipped to influence development in their areas (Sheffield’s bid to the Single Regeneration Budget Round One, 1993).

Table 3.1: Match-funding in NWICA

(Source: Sheffield’s Bid to the Single Regeneration Budget, Round One, 1993)

One of the main problems facing physical regeneration initiatives is deterioration in the housing stock. “The council faces the obsolescence and premature structural decay of the pre-1939 stock; the structural weakness of the post war stock which was built to non-traditional designs; disrepair in the early post-war traditional stock and; the social and physical failures of the high rise blocks and deck access” (Stewart et al, 1980: 10 cited in Carley, 1990: 207). Consequently a large proportion of SRB funds in Sheffield is being spent on housing renewal. This is not, however, the case for the national SRB programmes (Cole and Shayer, 1998).

In 1995, the SRB Board put forward a second bid for funding in the Norfolk Park area. This again was successful. For the first two rounds, Sheffield was the second largest recipient of SRB funding outside London. Only Birmingham was able to secure more (SRB Newslink 2, February 1996). These first two bids were seen to be successful because of a winning combination of: appropriate strategies and programmes, clear and effective partnership, quality delivery mechanisms, the support of business, the involvement of different communities, the voluntary sector and innovative and imaginative leadership (Sheffield SRB Newslink 1, autumn 1995). The first two areas in Sheffield to receive SRB funding in Rounds One and Two are the North West Inner City Area, known as NWICA, and Norfolk Park respectively.

### **3.3 ROUND ONE AND TWO SRB AREAS IN SHEFFIELD**

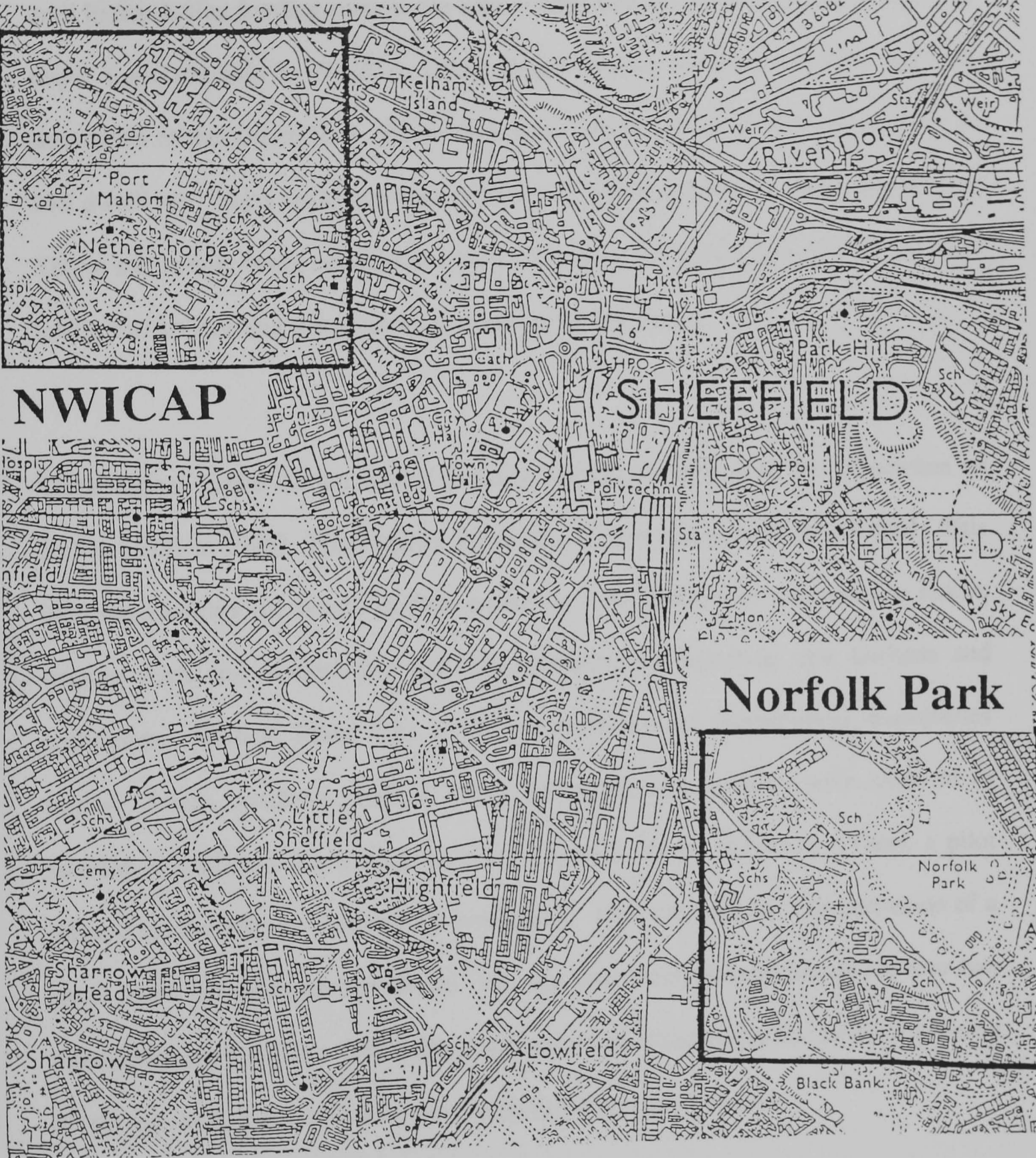
#### **3.3.1 NWICA**

NWICA was selected as the first SRB area because it: “complements both the enterprise development programme and wider mainstream initiatives. This area of high deprivation also has the second highest concentration of manufacturing industry in the city (after the UDC area) and the highest concentration of small scale ‘end product’ manufacturing companies. The development of Kelham’s industrial base alongside increasing the ratio of private to public sector housing and complementary social initiatives in the Upperthorpe and Netherthorpe residential areas will break the spiral of unemployment and deprivation in NWICA” (Sheffield’s bid to the SRB Round 1, 1993).

With this in mind: “Sheffield has set itself the task of becoming Britain’s best performing local economy, and at the same time significantly ameliorating social divisions” (Sheffield’s bid to the Single Regeneration Budget, Round 1, 1993: 1).

NWICA is situated about a mile to the North West of the city centre close to the University of Sheffield (Figure 3.1). At the start of the regeneration programme in 1993, the area had a population of 7,100 (Delivery Plan, 1995). It has a higher proportion than the City average of both single parents (7.9% compared with 4.2%), and also council tenants, (80.3 % compared with 33.5%) (Central Policy Unit, 1993). It consisted then, in 1993, mainly of two large public sector estates, Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe, which included 11 tower blocks (with 541 flats); 1,300 medium rise flats/maisonettes and; 878 more traditional type housing, including 234 properties built in the 1970s. The Ponderosa area, a large, open, space, is perceived by many NWICA residents as the division between Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe. The area also comprised Kelham/Riverside, a non-residential run-down industrial area. However, it attracts visitors to the Kelham Island museum and offers scope for future redevelopment. There is some commercial activity in the area: Norwich Union and Midland Bank are located in the area, along with a large supermarket chain and some manufacturing industries.

Figure 3.1 Location of NWICA and Norfolk Park



Previous regeneration programmes in NWICA had generally been housing led. In 1983, the Priority Estate Programme had begun work on improving the housing, but it was not until Estate Action funding came to the area in 1993 that developments took place. One major transformation in NWICA, under Estate Action, occurred in 1993 with the demolition of the Kelvin flats. These deck access flats housed around 3,000 people in 945 dwellings. Many residents were rehoused in Upperthorpe and Netherthorpe. The Kelvin site is now being essentially used for family and disabled persons housing built jointly by two Housing Associations and a property developer.

Three further Estate Action funded projects ran concurrently with the demolition of Kelvin (1993 to 1996). First, Martin Street flats (Upperthorpe) were refurbished. This involved cladding the blocks of flats externally with aluminium insulation to reduce heating costs and modernising the flats internally by installing new kitchens and bathrooms. Second, Phase One of the refurbishment of Netherthorpe maisonettes began. Roofs, windows, internal doors, bathrooms and kitchens were renewed in addition to replacing the heating system to increase energy efficiency. Third, a pilot scheme for the SRB in Upperthorpe took place. This involved the transformation of a small block of eight one-bedroomed flats and four three-bedroomed houses into two three-bedroomed and two four-bedroomed houses by creating pitched roofs and slicing off the top deck, which created more family residences on the estate.

Regeneration of the NWICA estate is divided into phases, comprising refurbishment, remodelling or demolition. Refurbishment normally involves the replacement of bathrooms and kitchens and is done with residents in situ. Remodelling necessitates

residents to be temporarily rehoused as former maisonettes are converted into houses, as in the pilot scheme under Estate Action, described above. In addition, several blocks of maisonettes are being demolished due to structural problems. Tenants can receive up to £1500 rehousing allowance for decorating and moving costs, if they are forced to move and can generally chose their new location (interview data). The success of the SRB bid has also helped to fund five city wide schemes<sup>4</sup>. SRB funding for the first two rounds in Sheffield is primarily concentrated in the NWICA and Norfolk Park areas, however the SRB Partnership Board has also identified five cross-cutting themes, such as young persons “at risk” in the city, which have received SRB funding.

### **3.3.2 NORFOLK PARK/ SHEAF VALLEY**

The Norfolk Park/Sheaf Valley area is located about a mile to the South East of the city centre (see Figure 3.1). It consists of the Norfolk Park estate and more traditional terraced housing in the Heeley and Lowfields/Highfields areas. However: “even though the bid area contains three fairly different communities, with most of the first year funding allocated to housing developed on Norfolk Park, there was a clear commitment from local people to work together to identify the needs and strengths of the whole area and the best way of allocating future resources within the communities” (SRB Newslink 2, Feb 1996: 4).

Norfolk Park comprises deteriorating housing stock, which in 1994, consisted of fifteen tower blocks, 699 maisonettes and 111 ‘T-Type’ low-rise flats, which are normally two-

bedroomed flats contained within a block, which is shaped as a T. According to the Sheffield Star, the estate has been used as a “dumping ground”, and has a notorious drug abuse problem (Sheffield Star, 12th June 1997). Park and Sharrow wards, which cut across the SRB boundary were amongst the 5% of most deprived wards in the country (DoE Index of Local Conditions, 1991). 74.8 per cent of Norfolk Park’s population were council tenants and 41.3 per cent were single parents (CPU, SCC 1993).

Previous attempts to attract money into Norfolk Park have generally been unsuccessful, despite it being declared as an area of acute poverty in 1987 (SCC Housing Department, 1997). There have been four failed attempts at gaining Estate Action funding, as well as a failed bid to the Housing Action Trust scheme. In 1993 Norfolk Park received Estate Action funding to install security target hardening measures into seven of the tower blocks. In 1995, a bid for SRB funding to support the regeneration of Norfolk Park was submitted to the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber.

The bid for the Norfolk Park area to the Single Regeneration Budget: “Growing Together: Youth and inner city regeneration through successful partnership in Sheffield” attracted £36.2 million into Sheffield (Sheffield SRB Newslink 1, autumn 1995). The Norfolk Park scheme was to run in tandem with the launch of Sheffield “Growing Together,” the City Liaison Group’s first integrated social and economic regeneration strategy (Sheffield’s SRB Round Two bid, 1995). The bid had the specific aim to target the high proportion of young people in the area, and highlighted how 15,000 out of a 1995 cohort of 60,000 young persons (14-25) in Sheffield were “at risk” through exclusion from the labour market and education system, long term experience of

unemployment and alienation from cultural, social and community life. Funding received in Round Two also contributed significantly to the Youth city wide scheme (see endnotes to Chapter Three).

One of the aims of the Norfolk Park bid was to develop a local joint stock housing company to take over the housing stock and provide appropriate investment (Sheffield's SRB Round Two bid, 1995). In 1993, a Joint Study on Stock Options, supported by the DoE was conducted in Norfolk Park. The study looked at the transfer of the housing stock from the council to a local housing company. The outcome from the joint study on stock options resulted in Norfolk Park receiving £19.5 million towards the cost of regeneration from the Estate Renewal Challenge Fund (ERCF) in June 1996. However, this ERCF money was conditional on the housing stock being transferred to another social landlord. Following a stock transfer report in 1996, it was found that a local housing company would be economically impractical (Tupling, 1996, HP/96/67). Consequently, ERCF money was lost (Sheffield Star, 25th February 1998), and other ways to regenerate the estate needed to be explored. This delayed the start of the regeneration process in Norfolk Park by six months from April 1996 until October 1996.

As is the case for NWICA, the regeneration of Norfolk Park primarily consists of demolition with some refurbishment. Fourteen tower blocks are in the process of being demolished and 50-60% of existing tenants has opted to stay in Norfolk Park. The remaining one tower block will probably be refurbished to a high standard with a concierge and security system, although this had still not been decided in August 1999. All 699 maisonettes are being demolished due to structural faults. T type flats are

generally being refurbished, apart from those that are owner occupied (interview data). The involvement of local resident in both SRB schemes was seen to be crucial to the delivery of the regeneration: “the partnership has agreed to involvement of local community groups and those to whom the scheme will be directed” (Sheffield’s Bid to the Single Regeneration Budget, Round One).

### **3.4 STRUCTURES FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Overall, there are three levels of decision-making for local residents in the SRB. There is the SRB Management Board, with responsibility for the overall management of the SRB schemes and which provides a strategic overview of projects, as described above (see section 3.2). The Local Management Boards (LMB) then decide priorities for each SRB area, report to the SRB Board, and oversee, devise, and implement projects. The grassroots Community Alliance in NWICA and Community Forum in Norfolk Park, report to their respective LMB, propose projects and consult with the wider community.

The SRB Management Board in Sheffield also identifies three levels where residents can participate:

- people who just want to be kept informed and up to date
- people who want to participate in wider regeneration strategies and are interested in exchanging ideas, good practice and lessons to be learnt
- people who are prime strategic movers (SRB unit, 1996: 8).

Although, a structured approach to community participation has been introduced into

the two areas, local residents have expressed concern over four issues: residents' representation on the SRB Board; the operation of the SRB Board; salaries of SRB officers; and political infighting. Tensions arose first between local residents in NWICA and officers on the SRB Board because at the start of the regeneration process in 1995, there were no local residents represented. As a community activist in NWICA explains: "they [council employees and SRB workers] have been protecting their own jobs and their own power base because they didn't want to lose power to the local community" (NWICA Community Activist 1, 1998). Effectively, decisions were being made without local consultation. As another community activist in NWICA comments: "all the major partners of the SRB were making the decisions, they were all being made behind closed doors" (NWICA Community Activist 2, 1998). Nonetheless, in 1998, this lack of community representation was successfully challenged by community activists: "we said the community has a right and the community has a voice and there has got to be consultation because otherwise you'll get confrontation. We [community activists] threatened them and said if we can't have representation on the Board, we'll go to the media" (NWICA Community Activist 2, 1998). However, the Sheffield Star reported on 19th May 1998: "the regeneration body which has attracted Government grants of £98.4 million to the city has opened its board meetings to the public. But at the first public board meeting board members decided to discuss in private why some of the projects would have to be deferred!"

As a result of campaigns by community activists, it was decided that there would be a seat on the SRB Board for one local resident from each LMB. But, as Brownill and Darke point out: "a seat at the table does not necessarily translate into power and

influence as some voices are more powerful than others and styles of power within partnerships can exclude full participation” (1998: 37). In Sheffield, an SRB officer recognises: “community representatives get frustrated with the bureaucratic process” (SRB Officer 3, 1998). Equally, at times community activists feel peripheral to the decision-making process. As a male community activist in Norfolk Park suggests: “we didn’t set the brief, but we are going to make a decision on the brief that has been set, so again we are being asked to give support to a decision that has been made by officers at an earlier stage” (Norfolk Park Community Activist 4, 1998). This issue is explored further in Chapter Five. Lowndes and Skelcher suggest this happens in the formation of partnerships: “in the process, the voluntary and community sectors were often relegated to the periphery” (1998: 325). Nevertheless, Mayo et al. point out, “partnerships cannot be effective if they involve local people at the margins” (undated: 6).

A second issue, which has angered local residents in NWICA and Norfolk Park, concerns the operation of the SRB Management Board. In its first year of operation, the SRB board received ‘yellow cards’<sup>5</sup> for not meeting performance targets set out in the delivery plans and local residents felt they were not receiving benefits of SRB funding (The Sheffield Star, 5th December 1996). A third concern for local residents was over a 2.9% pay rise offered to SRB staff because they had reached most targets (The Sheffield Star, Sept 15th 1997: 1). Some community activists expressed concern that SRB money should be going direct to the community rather than paying SRB staff. As a Community activist comments: “when SRB started, they [councillors and members of the TEC] set themselves up in nice little jobs so they could double their wages, and all we [Community activists] were interested in was getting the money out of it, and the first

lot of money was all carved up” (Norfolk Park Community activist 1, 1998). Fourth, the political infighting between the Labour party and the Liberal Democrats in NWICA has made some local residents feel uncomfortable at meetings: “it has been a strongly fought war between the Lib Dems and Labour and I am sure that this has had an impact on the local community involvement” (NWICA Community Activist 3, 1998). The chief executive of the SRB board has even commented that the local politics of NWICA have often made SRB projects be kicked around like a “political football” (Child, D. in Sheffield Star 12th December 1996b).

In each SRB area, Local Management Boards (LMBs) have been established, consisting of local residents, council employees and SRB workers. The SRB Board proposed that:

“Local Management Boards (LMBs) for Norfolk Park/Sheaf valley (NP/SV) and North West Inner City Areas (NWICA) will be springboards for the further development of community involvement and participation in regeneration activities. Board members will play a crucial role in helping Sheffield’s [SRB Board] partnership understand the wide range of people with different characteristics, needs and interests within their local communities and in the identification, design and running of their local regeneration projects” (Sheffield SRB Unit, Sheffield News Link 2, February 1996: 5).

The remit of LMBs is mainly to act as mediators between the local residents and the SRB Management Board. As a male community activist in Norfolk Park explains: “I was in a position where I was not quite in the community and not quite in the council and therefore both sides were happy to talk with me” (Norfolk Park Community Activist 4, 1998). Another highlights: “part of the process for us at LMB is making it run smoothly and that the community are involved as much as possible” (Norfolk Park Community Activist 2, 1998). The Norfolk Park/Sheaf Valley Local Management Board was initially chaired by a councillor as an interim measure before a local resident

took over (SRB Newslink 2, February 1996: 5). Dave Child, chief executive of the SRB Board, comments: “we are here to meet the needs of the community and increasingly to pass ownership to them” (SRB Newslink 2, February 1996: 7). Local Management Boards generally consist of six neighbourhood members, three local councillors, and three local business representatives. Local residents in each area are also represented by either a Community Alliance (NWICA) or a Community Forum (Norfolk Park). They have been formed to draw together the interests from a variety of community groups. These structures for participation are illustrated in Figures 3.2 and 3.3.

### **3.4.1 Structures for participation for the North West Inner City Area**

In 1996 the SRB Board commented that: “the structure below the NWICA Local Management Board was cumbersome. Community groups and individuals experienced difficulty with the number of meetings, workshops, planning sessions, research and evaluation studies etc. necessary to establish programme/projects needs and opportunities<sup>6</sup>. The large amount of paperwork and complexities overwhelmed those involved” (SRB annual report, 1996: 5). In 1995, at the start of the regeneration process in NWICA, the consultation and participation of residents consisted of three elements.

Figure 3.2 Revised consultation and participation structures in NWICA (August 1998).

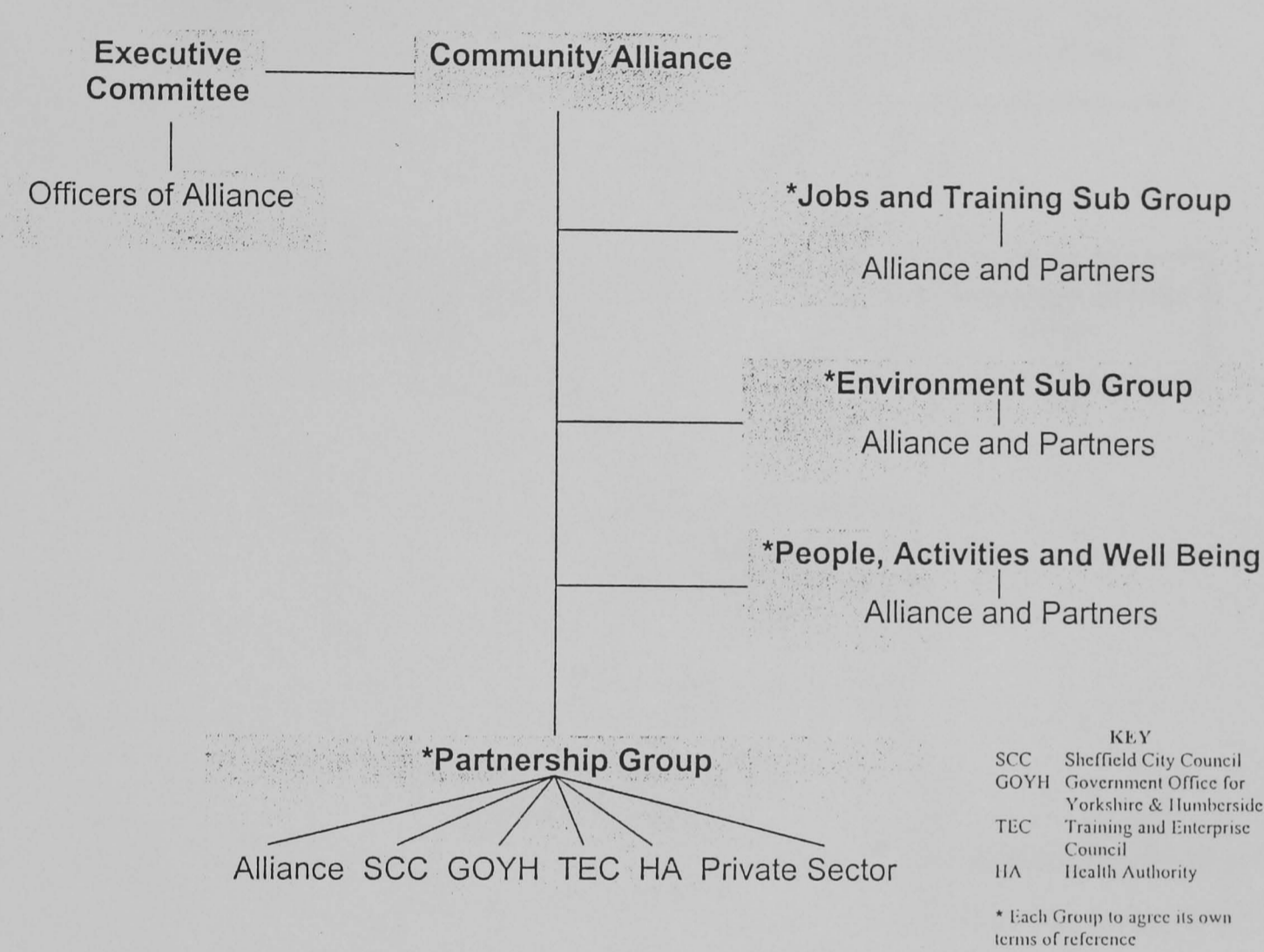
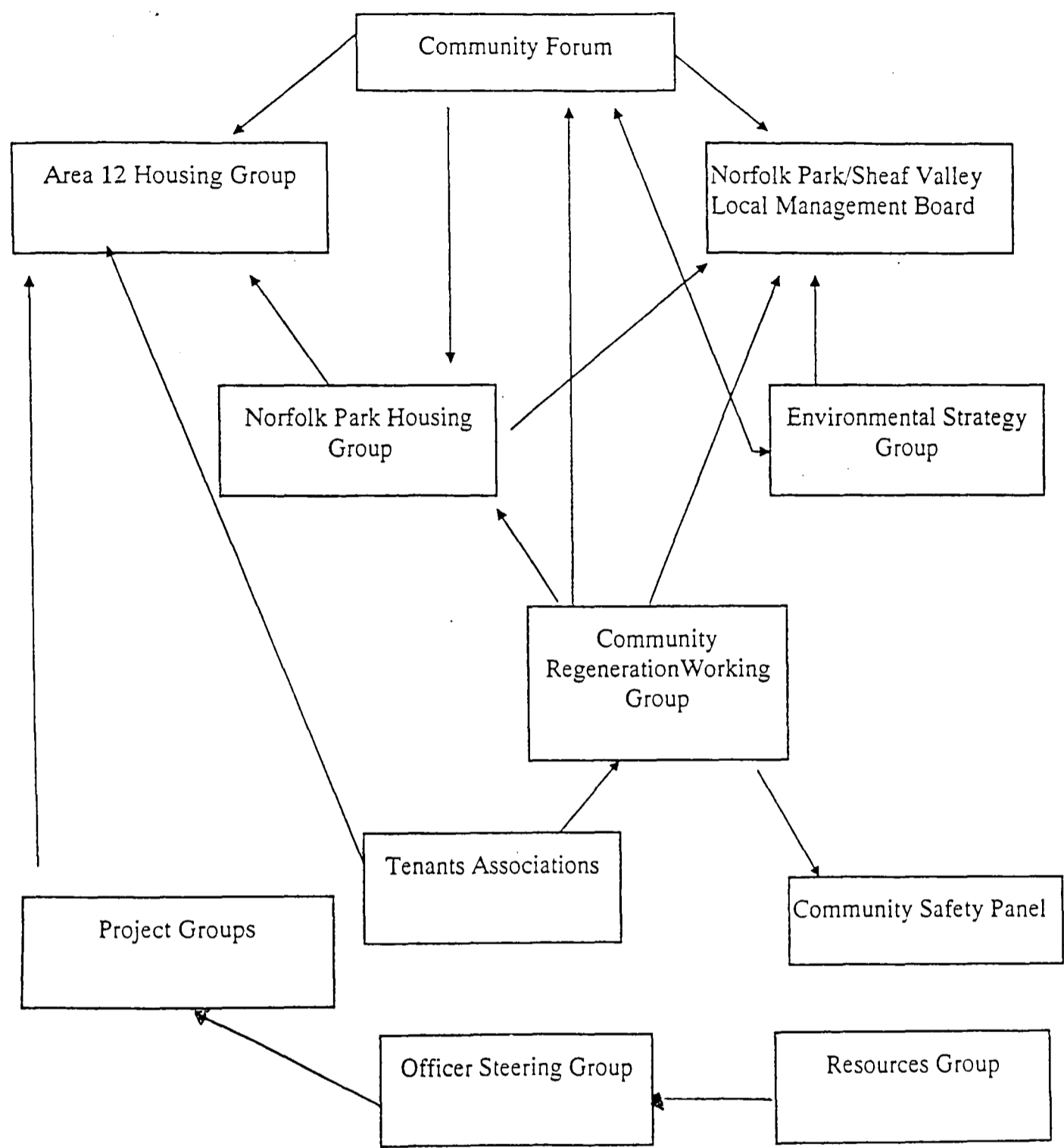


Figure 3.3 Consultation and participation structures in Norfolk Park



Source: Norfolk Park Planning Document

General public meetings were held where all residents were invited to attend. Neighbourhood (block) level sessions were used to determine the changes to particular buildings in the proposed area. Only residents in the specific area were invited to these along with council employees and SRB workers. Project groups, were also established, consisting of interested local residents and council workers, which were to oversee the overall running of planned changes and report to the LMB.

Despite these three arenas in which local residents could participate there was anger over the lack of attention council officers appeared to pay residents at the beginning of the regeneration process in 1995. For example, at most public and block meetings, residents were offered one of three choices for the future of their homes: demolition; remodelling or; renovation. However, many women point to the fact that their views were not being fully taken into account. As a female community activist in NWICA states: “we kept asking for refurbishment, you know just doing the windows and new kitchens and bathrooms and they [council] reckoned the SRB money is not available to do refurbishment, it had to be remodelling” (NWICA Community Activist 3, 1998). Therefore, although the council was attempting to give residents a choice, this was apparently constrained within a small number of possible options. Furthermore, there was suspicion amongst local residents that decisions had already been made prior to community consultation, as the following comments illustrate: “we have this thing that we are just rubber-stamping” (Norfolk Park Community Activist 2, 1998) and; “we didn’t think they were taking any notice” (NWICA Community Activist 3, 1998). Following a review at a community conference in May 1998, these participation structures were replaced (Figure 3.2).

The review was organised by the Community Alliance and Civic Regeneration Consultants, who were commissioned to produce a strategy for the future of the area. The conference was designed to find out what local residents would like to see happening in the area and to inform them about the Community Alliance. The day was split into workshops, jointly led by a local resident and a paid officer. Community transport was provided in order to increase accessibility. In addition, people with young children and ethnic minorities were catered for with the provision of a crèche and translators (Conference Report, May 1998)

The new Community Alliance was officially launched in January 1998, largely as a result of community campaigning and consultation. It consists of representatives from all community groups in the area (Community Alliance News, May 1998) and it is here that tenant associations and resident groups are represented. Each tenant's association or community group has one representative and one deputy on the Alliance, to improve the participation of residents in the area (Community Alliance News, November 1997). Community Alliance members are further divided into three areas of interest: 'Jobs and Training'; 'Environment'; and 'People, Activities and Well Being'. In writing on this subject, Kintrea found in Glasgow that tenants' associations were seen to be the "bedrock of community participation, but in practice they were weak" (1996: 296). In Sheffield, tenants' associations tend to have few (if any) powers, whereas some individual members of the community do yield significant influence, for instance pushing for the creation of the Community Alliance and representation on the SRB Board.

In a similar context, McArthur advocates the establishment of: “an umbrella community structure which links with the many local community organisations which exist in a locality” (1995: 66). He argues: “in this approach, existing groups and unaligned individual community activists come together to nominate, or elect, a group of local people to represent the community in the partnership initiative. The maximum number of community representatives is normally around twelve, or less” (McArthur, 1995: 66.). Interestingly, there are approximately forty members on the Community Alliance in NWICA, with regular attendance at meetings of around 15. However, as a male community activist in NWICA says: “there’s been some that have said it’s not really representative, but when we have 15 out of 40 groups in the area sitting around the table, that is a major step forward because we didn’t have this, this time last year” (NWICA Community Activist 1, 1998). In effect, McArthur et al. argue Community Alliances: “help strengthen the position of local residents. It [the Community Alliance in their research] allowed the community to participate as a separate entity, as a ‘partner’ and provided a forum in which to develop a ‘community position’” (1996: 2). The degree to which the existence of a Community Alliance augments the powers of the community in NWICA is discussed in chapter five. There are five community delegates from the Community Alliance on the LMB for NWICA and one community delegate on the main SRB Board (Community Alliance News, December, 1997 issue 2).

### **3.4.2 Structures for participation in Norfolk Park/Sheaf Valley**

Ostensibly, in Norfolk Park there appears a more complex approach towards community involvement. Several Boards have been established with the aim of informing the

community and promoting its involvement. Priority Estates Programme (PEP) was employed with a remit to disseminate impartial advice to tenants about the local housing company transfer. Project Groups have been established in Norfolk Park to oversee individual development schemes. They consist of tenants and residents affected by the schemes, officers and local councillors (Warrington, 1996: 8.). At a topic group meeting in 1996, it was concluded there should be a variety of ways of communicating with residents on the estate: project groups, local advertising of meetings, links with other topic groups, newsletter delivered to every resident, posters, presentations, displays and, wherever possible, local media presence (Warrington, 1996). Although the participation structures for Norfolk Park appear different from that established in NWICA, there is actually a degree of similarity, with a Community Forum, bringing together groups in the area, rather than a Community Alliance<sup>7</sup>. The other main contrast is the existence of two paid community workers in Norfolk Park, which NWICA does not have.

However, from the outset in 1995, conflicts have arisen partly over the issue of local residents obtaining construction jobs on the estate. The demolition contract for the tower blocks was secured by a Leeds based firm, which bought in a scaffolding contractor from Barnsley (The Sheffield Star, 14th December 1996). There were also other objections surrounding the regeneration of Norfolk Park. As a male community activist in Norfolk Park explains: “there had been a lot of failure and people got very disillusioned and people weren’t very happy to be involved in the SRB as they thought it was going to be another scheme that failed” (Norfolk Park Community Activist, 1998).

Similarly, feedback from the planning weekend (see 3.4.3), indicated that: “much has already been promised and not delivered on Norfolk Park and the rules have changed again [following the failure to establish the local housing company]” (Norfolk Park Planning Weekend, 1998: 1). There was hostility from some residents, including a tenants’ association. “It is all these new [SRB] people and this new activity and it has taken away their little power bases” (Norfolk Park Community Activist 1, 1998). This community activist is referring to those traditional leaders, who have been opposed to the SRB as it has encouraged new community members to be involved, which as a result limits the influence they can have on the regeneration process. Previous failures and the loss of Estate Renewal Challenge Fund (ERCF) monies have resulted in particularly low morale on the estate (Shayer and Cole, 1997: 11). Nevertheless, following the loss of ERCF money, a community planning weekend was held in February 1998, which potentially offered hope to local residents to have an influence over the future development of the estate. This parallels what O’Riordan found in Vancouver: “even during the evolution of a programme, the participation procedures may have to be changed” (1977: 169).

### **3.4.3 Community Planning Weekend**

A “community planning weekend” held in late February 1998, proved to be a significant milestone in the evolution of community participation structures in Norfolk Park. Over 250 people attended. BDP Consultants was employed to identify problems, opportunities and solutions. Workshops were held on the estate and were well attended by members of the community on both days. One key concern raised by local residents

was that of the local road layout. Norfolk Park was built in the late 1960s according to Radburn principles, designed to segregate pedestrians and traffic. The Consultants favoured a strategy based on a road through the estate. This raised concerns about children's safety, and residents successfully opposed it. One further issue raised at this planning weekend was the lack of awareness in relation to both developments on the estate, and the policy arenas where residents may participate.

One output from the "community planning weekend" was a "master plan", prepared jointly by residents and Consultants, which outlined a comprehensive regeneration strategy. This was subsequently distributed to groups on the estate for approval (Norfolk Park news, issue 21, March 1998). Key activists hailed the "planning weekend" as a major success in achieving interest and support: "it was brilliant, it was 250 people who attended and they really got into it. It was sleeves up and a lot of drawings and different workshops. It was like a fair" (SRB officer 2, 1998).

Following the "community planning weekend", a Community Resource and Information Centre (CRIC) opened in May 1998 to provide information, advice and training opportunities for Norfolk Park residents. The Centre is designed to encourage more involvement on behalf of local residents and for them to find out what is happening on their estate. It also has the aim to inform residents who do not attend meetings about projects and events on the estate (The Sheffield Star, 21st May, 1998).

Interestingly, many of the projects, which have developed in Norfolk Park, may be seen

to reflect 'women's' interests and activities, such as childcare, and catering. A local councillor comments: "on Norfolk Park the activities have mostly been centred around women's issues, so it is women and child care and FEDs [Norfolk Park Food Enterprise Development] and the training element, a lot of it has been taken up by women rather than men" (Local Councillor 3, 1998). Three projects in Norfolk Park specifically target women.

First, FEDs is a Norfolk Park Food Enterprise Development project. Its aim is to contribute to the social and economic regeneration of the area by providing employment and training to local people and offering them healthier eating choices. Training and job opportunities are also available in the catering industry through FEDs (Norfolk Park news Nov 1996 issue 4).

Second, the Women and Children's Centre was established to provide a social meeting area for women living in the high rise flats and maisonettes. The women can also take along their children to meet and play with other children. The centre applied for funding, outlining the need for a new Centre to be built. This new Centre was considered necessary: "for the well being both mentally and physically of both women and children living on the Norfolk Park estate" (Women and Children's Centre, Annual Report, 1993: 1). The centre opened in 1992, after receiving £54,602 of funding to design and construct a new building with a housing manager. It offers a number of activities for women, including a shopper's crèche, fitness classes, and a mother and toddler's group (Women and Children's Centre, Annual Report, 1993: 1).

Third, the Maypole Centre is a childcare resource, which provides a breakfast club and an after-school club for children. Maypole has received funding from the SRB to employ more staff, most of whom are women from the Norfolk Park estate. Maypole is represented on the Norfolk Park forum (interview data).

Two further initiatives aim to promote the involvement of local residents in Norfolk Park. A Community Chest has been established, which helps to facilitate the formation of new groups in Norfolk Park. It is a pot of money, which is available to support the development of new, not for profit, small community projects and to allow existing community organisations to expand or to develop new activities and services. £15,000 was available for April 1998-March 1999, and the maximum for one application per group is £500 (New Heeley Voice Spring 1998, issue 2: 3). In addition, there is an environmental community chest, supported by Sheffield Wildlife Trust, which donates twenty small grants of up to £500 each year to fund environmental projects in Norfolk Park and Sheaf Valley (New Heeley Voice, Spring 1998, issue 2: 3).

## **Conclusions**

In short, the regeneration of Sheffield has been a contested and conflictual process. Attempts in the 1980s were limited, partly as a result of the City Council's hostility towards Central Government. There was a growing move towards a partnership style of working by the end of the 1980s, which has paved the way for the emergence of what appears to be a successful SRB partnership Board.

The main difference between the two research areas being examined is the timing of the regeneration programmes. As NWICA is a year ahead of Norfolk Park, the structure for community participation has been developed more by the community, than is the case in Norfolk Park. This may help explain why it appears that more residents participate in the regeneration schemes in the NWICA area rather than Norfolk Park (see Chapter Four). A further potential hindrance to local resident's participation in Norfolk Park is its more failed attempts to attract money into the area, which has caused low morale on the estate. However, the two areas share similar socio-economic characteristics. There are high concentrations of unemployed, single parents, and council-rented residents in both areas. In addition, both areas suffer from a poorly developed social infrastructure. Neither NWICA nor Norfolk Park has many local shops on the estate. However, NWICA does have more community buildings where local community groups can be established.

This chapter has provided the context for the research and illustrated structures for participation in the first two SRB areas in Sheffield, in order to provide greater understanding of the research findings, which are presented in the following three chapters.

<sup>1</sup> 1993 saw the loss of two safe Labour seats to the Liberal Democrats: Walkley and Brightside. In 1997 Mike Bower (Labour) also lost his seat as leader of Sheffield City Council. In 1999 Labour lost control of the Local Authority.

<sup>2</sup> The Liberal Democrats have now gained control.

<sup>3</sup> Additionally SDC was represented on the SRB Board until it was wound up in 1997.

<sup>4</sup> Sheffield's SRB city wide schemes, 1993:

<b>City wide scheme</b>	<b>Enterprise Programme</b>
Funding	£1.8m
Managed by	Sheffield TEC
Projects	Encourages new business start up and those with 10 to 200 employees to expand
<b>City wide scheme</b>	<b>The Community Enterprise Programme</b>
Funding	£1.3m
Managed by	Sheffield Community Economic Development
Projects	Stimulates, develops and sustains community enterprise throughout Sheffield. Prioritises communities with high levels of unemployment and indicators of poverty
<b>City wide scheme</b>	<b>Ethnic Minority Programme</b>
Funding	£5.64m
Managed by	Ethnic Minority Panel (members from Black Community Forum, Sheffield TEC, Sheffield Racial Equalities Council and Unit, SRB)
Projects	Develops community generated initiatives which increase skills, jobs, and new business opportunities and community facilities in Ethnic minority areas
<b>City wide scheme</b>	<b>Young people and community safety<sup>4</sup></b>
Funding	£0.63m
Managed by	Sheffield Safer Cities, Council Education department
Projects	Engaging young people in projects which promote personal development and reduce crime and the fear of crime
<b>City wide scheme</b>	<b>City Infrastructure</b>
Funding	£2.5m
Managed by	Council Department of Planning and Economic Development
Projects	1) City Centre Revitalisation (£2.2m) - the newly paved Fargate Civic centre and Environmental improvements, including Heart of the City plans <sup>4</sup> And CCTV along Fargate and Pinstone street to help reduce crime and will extend down the Moor and West street super tram route 2) City Centre Management Initiative - funds a city centre manager promoting Sheffield's shopping facilities and brining major events into the city which animate the city and attract shoppers.

(source: Sheffield Telegraph, Regenerating Sheffield supplement, October 24th 1997)

<sup>5</sup> Yellow cards are warnings given to SRB partnerships, which fail to keep up with

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## Government spending targets

<sup>6</sup>In 1994 the Priority Estates Project (PEP) conducted a community audit of NWICA, which involved surveying all community groups and activities in the area, including local membership groups, local service groups, area wide groups, such as community centres, and Sheffield wide groups. Subsequently, this has developed into a community atlas (Hoogevelt, 1999), which provides a comprehensive directory of all the community groups in the area. It is in a web-based format to provide information on groups and events in the area.

<sup>7</sup> As the Norfolk Park scheme covers three distinct areas, all have their own community participation structure: Norfolk Park Forum, Heeley Development Trust, and the Sharrow Forum. All these report to the LMB. It is Norfolk Park, where the study is based, as this is where the majority of SRB funds are being spent.

## Participation

Chapter three outlined the context for the research findings, which are presented in the succeeding three chapters. This is the first of the three empirically based chapters exploring the concept of participation. Section one of this chapter provides an insight into the rationale underpinning community participation in regeneration and illustrates where local residents can be involved in the two case study examples (see Chapter Three). Section two analyses the engagement of women in the regeneration process and discusses factors influencing their participation. The third and fourth parts discuss incentives encouraging participation and the positive outputs which participation may bring.

### 4.1 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN URBAN REGENERATION

Current debates recognise the role of the community in urban regeneration. Hastings et al. propose: “the need for active involvement of residents has now become an integral part of the language of regeneration policy and of local authority and housing association governance” (1996: 5). In part this is premised on the perception that 1980s urban policies failed to benefit local residents (Hugh and Carmichael, 1998: 202). Additionally, Croft and Beresford, having been actively involved in their own community, strongly support community participation based on the belief that: “who

knows better than they [local residents] what they want, and who but they should speak for themselves” (1988: 84). Many residents defend this argument: “I mean who knows better what an area needs, than the people who live here?” (Janet, 1997). Sheila, another older resident in NWICA, favours community participation because: “any problems there might be, you live there and you see them and you think ‘oh yeah that needs doing or whatever’, and you are the only people in the area who really know them. It’s like you need to be a council tenant to know what sorts of problems council tenants have” (1998). Booth, using her case studies of community consultation, adds a gender dimension to this: “it is the women themselves who best know their areas, their needs and the issues that concern themselves and their families” (1996a: 157). Similarly, a female community activist in NWICA comments: “they [council employees and SRB workers] don’t know what communities need, but communities know because they are here and they are full of intelligent people who can make their own choices **if** only they were allowed” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998; interviewee’s emphasis).

There are two further reasons for the promotion of community participation within regeneration initiatives. There is the argument that community participation may promote more inclusive regeneration because different partners may begin to influence the regeneration process. Brownill and Darke state: “studies show that an important success factor in getting race and gender on the strategic agenda is *involvement in and influence over the partnerships and networks* which have been shown to be so key within current regeneration policy and practice” (1998: 18; original emphasis). Inclusive regeneration, through involving more groups is significant as it can help to combat social exclusion and to promote citizenship (Atkinson, 1997). An SRB officer

makes a similar point: “I think it [regeneration] is around social exclusion as they [local residents] are more included in the community” (SRB officer 3, 1998).

A third rationalisation for participation within regeneration schemes is proposed by Amos: “involving the community in regeneration is a vital aim in itself because it guarantees a stake for ordinary people in the society and the environment around them” (1998: 132). This stakeholder society idea is seen to be important in the delivery of social and sustainable regeneration and to promote social inclusion. In general community action gives economic value as it can promote the sustainability of the regeneration (e.g. Taylor, 1995: 14). Richard Caborn, Minister for the Regions, states: “it is important to the success of regeneration programmes to involve as many people as possible. This can lead to better decision making, enhanced programme delivery and improved sustainability” (1997: 1). Similarly, an SRB officer also comments: “if people want to remain in that community, and they are involved and make decisions, then there is an ownership in that community and then there is pride, and I think you get a stake in it and in a sense they become stakeholders in that community and they ensure things happen and are maintained” (SRB officer 3, 1998). In addition, Hugh and Carmichael state: “by identifying local people as stakeholders in the efforts being made to improve their lot, it is more likely that they will respond positively and adopt a more responsible and active role than if they were simply presented with a *fait accompli* over which they have little input” (1998: 210; original emphasis).

Amos continues: “one reason why they [community and voluntary groups] can be so successful in regeneration projects is the added value they bring through the voluntary work which supplements contracted services” (1998: 132). The additional value that

residents can provide regeneration schemes is highlighted by Kintrea (1996: 290): “resident involvement [in Glasgow] explicitly was seen as a way of making individuals more responsible for their own actions” and taking the onus of responsibility away from the Government and service providers. A local councillor states: “I think they have got to have a sense of ownership, but I think they have got to get to the point where they understand that with rights, comes responsibilities” (Local councillor 1, 1998). A male community activist in NWICA also underlines this: “it becomes their area and it is like trying to take some responsibility themselves for what is going on” (NWICA community activist 1, 1998)

The assumption that community participation may lead to community ownership, is important because: “nothing will succeed unless it has got ownership of the community” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998). Kintrea develops this idea. “Community involvement can help local people articulate their interests in the face of politically inspired and bureaucratically-defined programmes. From the view point of politicians and officials, it can help improve services by providing better information, and sustain them in the long-run by creating a sense of ownership of public investments and services by the community” (1996: 288). Furthermore, Hastings et al. propose: “where a community is given a sense of ownership in a regeneration initiative and its outcomes, it is [also] argued that local people will be more likely to guard and protect the improvements which take place. In this way, regeneration becomes more sustainable and cost-effective” (1996: 6). Similarly, an SRB officer points out: “by getting community ownership, people are less likely to trash something they have had a hand in designing” (SRB officer 2, 1998).

Although a number of observers have highlighted the benefits of community participation for both residents and regeneration programmes, some commentators are rather more critical of the role of community engagement in urban regeneration. Collins argues local residents' participation is crucial to the sustainability and delivery of social regeneration as it reflects contrasting perspectives of economic, environmental and social constituencies (1996: 16). He, however, claims: it is time consuming, may involve a loss of control for decision-makers; and can be a potential for local conflict (Collins, 1996). The main thrust of his argument is that: "it [participation] can be used as a way of diffusing and diluting protest and bringing potentially disruptive communities on side" (Collins, 1996: 17). This argument perhaps does not give sufficient credence to the proposition that local residents may be involved for their own self-esteem or because of other incentives, which may draw people into local community action (see 4.4). He adds: "the fact that top down partnerships are often backed by substantial resources for regeneration makes it very difficult for community activists to reject a partnership proposal" (1996: 13). From a similar standpoint a senior council employee in Sheffield argues: "nobody is going to say, 'no, I don't want you to improve my home'" (Council employee 1, 1998). From this it may be inferred that local residents may be likely to participate in the regeneration process in order to support changes in their neighbourhood, rather than actually to implement and propose any changes. However, Colenutt and Cutten argue: "City Challenge nor SRB are designed to empower local communities to any significant extent but to keep communities "on side" as far as possible" (1994: 238). Community participation, as alluded to above, may be seen as a method of keeping communities 'on side' in order to avoid urban unrest as witnessed in the urban riots at the start of the 1980s.

A second criticism levelled at community participation relates to the increased bureaucracy in having 'another voice'. Despite the importance Hastings et al. attach to community participation, they raise this concern: "by adding yet another voice, does involving the community not increase the chances of disagreement and conflict in the regeneration process?" (1996: 24). Similarly, McArthur argues: "community involvement in regeneration can encompass a potentially confusing diversity of activity. It ranges from communities actively influencing and shaping policy development, to playing a role and implementing regeneration programmes" (1995: 63). However, some local residents display concern about responsibility being handed over to residents (see Chapter Six): "I think it's a good idea [to involve local residents], so the council knows what the tenants want and need, but some of them might say something right stupid, like I want to go and live in Majorca" (Vera, 1997).

Third, Atkinson recognises that there are obstacles to effective participation. He argues that: "genuine community participation requires a fundamental rethink of attitudes by politicians and officials in central and local government. They need to recognise the legitimate right of local people to participate as an equal partner in setting the regeneration agenda" (1997: 9; Clarke and Stewart, 1992; Atkinson and Cope, 1997). According to Routledge, "community involvement in the SRB moved from being an optional extra to a desirable component of projects according to the bidding guidance from 1995. Between 1994 and 1997, the proportion of SRB partnerships involving community and voluntary groups rose from 15 per cent to 60 per cent of successful bids" (1998: 246). However, this apparent increased involvement of the community sector, does not necessarily suggest they have been granted more power in decision-making processes. For example, Routledge points out:

“some community and voluntary groups have been named as partners on bids and informed of their involvement only after the bid has succeeded” (1998: 246). Yet, despite obstacles to community participation, Abbott observes that “when it [participation] is practised successfully it transforms programmes” (1996: 4).

In summary there are three rationalisations for why urban regeneration initiatives have developed community participation approaches. First, local residents are thought to “know best” what their area needs. Second, community participation is thought to promote inclusive regeneration and third, through participating in regeneration projects, local residents may gain a stake and ownership in their area and provide added value to regeneration schemes. However, against these positive reasons for promoting community participation there are two main criticisms levelled at it. First, it can create conflict within communities. Second, it increases the bureaucracy involved in urban regeneration. The literature also highlights a major obstacle to effective community participation, which is that it requires a complete change in attitudes and working practices by politicians, officials and local residents.

## **4.2 EXPLORING PARTICIPATION**

In practice it is likely that there may be distinct variations between how an individual participates in the regeneration process and how groups and organisations, for instance tenants’ associations or umbrella community groups, such as the Community Alliance (see Chapter Three), are involved. However, individual participants tend mainly to be members of participative groups. Lowndes et al. suggest there are two main arenas for

local residents to also be involved in: “the particular urban regeneration initiative itself and the longer-term process of developing new forms of governance drawing on the benefits of networking” (1997: 342).

A further debate in the literature concerns the factors, which may influence a person’s ability to participate. Barlow suggests there are: “a wide range of factors, such as socio-economic position, education, language ability, confidence and mobility” (1995: 2), which may all have an influence. In similar vein, Beresford and Croft view: “infinite patience, a commitment to interminable meetings and a high threshold for boredom” (1993: 16) as being essential prerequisites for those considering community participation. In a similar context, O’Riordan deduced from his Canadian case studies of community participation, that: “the same types of people participated. They are members of relatively small corps of public spirited citizens who hold visions of an ideal community and of a responsive political process” (1977: 166).

Within the literature on community participation, several models have been devised to illustrate levels of involvement and community action. A leading typology comes from Arnstein (1969). Arnstein conceptualised how citizens may participate in the decision-making process by using a ladder of citizen participation. In similar vein, Thomas uses a ladder to illustrate how a community may participate in their area (Figure 4.1)

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Figure 4.1 Arnstein's (1969) ladder of community participation (left) and Thomas' (1995) ladder of community interaction (right).

The ladder, as a combination of Arnstein's and Thomas' typologies, illustrates increasing community control towards the higher rungs.

Burns et al. (1994) have expanded Arnstein's ladder (Figure 4.2) to illustrate four differing spheres of citizen power: the individual; the estate, neighbourhood programme, or site of facility; local government and administration; and national governance. Of relevance here is the ladder that they have developed.

Figure 4.2 Burns et al.'s ladder of citizen participation

The ladder broadly represents that developed by Arnstein, in that it illustrates the transition between consultation and citizen control, albeit in a more comprehensive manner.

In order to reach the top of the ladders of community participation (Arnstein, 1969; Thomas, 1995; Burns et al., 1994) there can be a number of steps to take. To this end,

Power (1987) suggests there are a number of principles, which need to be acknowledged in order to promote “effective” participation. These principles are:

- Adequate timescales.
- Support and training, including community development.
- Resident’s access to good independent advice.
- Adequate information and clear communication.
- Access to resources that can be controlled locally.
- Real commitment from power holders.
- A willingness to hand over power and to work with residents as equals.
- Results.
- Opportunities for informal as well as formal participation.
- Accountability and controls to prevent abuse.
- The ability to remove an unrepresentative clique.

In Sheffield, there are a number of examples, which may illustrate “effective” participation. In Norfolk Park, a community chest (see Chapter Three) has been established to provide funding up to a maximum of £500 to small groups to help them develop. Priority Estates Project (PEP) was also employed to offer Norfolk Park residents impartial advice about the proposed transfer of council stock to a Local Housing Company (see Chapter Three). However, there are also examples in Sheffield, which may be preventing what Power (1987) labels as “effective” participation. For instance, there was a six-month delay in starting the regeneration process because of the complications surrounding the Local Housing Company in Norfolk Park (see Chapter Three).

In a similar manner, King et al (1998) have distinguished a dichotomy between “authentic” and “unauthentic” participation (see table 4.1). This distinction may be applied to explain the differences in the attitudes of women interviewed between 1997 and 1998.

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Table 4.1: Comparison of Authentic and Unauthentic Participation

(Source: King et al. 1998: 321)

Examining table 4.1 it can be argued that during the first two years of the SRB process in Sheffield, participation in the regeneration process has moved from being “unauthentic” towards being “authentic” as local residents have increased their influence. For example there has been an apparent increase in trust between partners as residents and officers are learning how to work with one another:

“the regeneration process has always been a bit top down in that area [NWICA] and the locals would like it to be bottom up as well. So we have got to find a

happy medium where it is both, and I think we are getting there because people from local projects are coming out to explain it to the local people. So people now are more aware and we're getting a bigger attendance at meetings and things are generally picking up" (NWICA community activist 1, 1998).

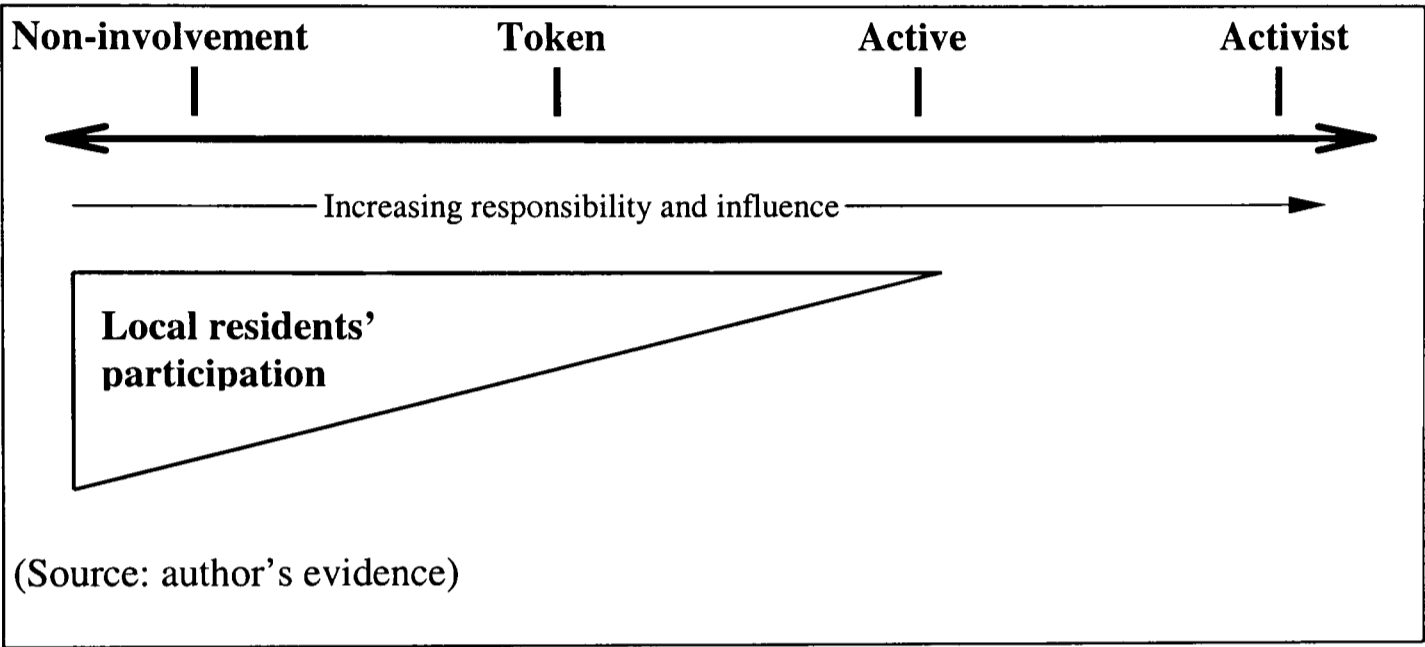
#### **4.2.1 Research findings**

Although these typologies of community participation generally represent a linear progression from token to more active levels of participation, findings from Sheffield illustrate there can be movement both backwards and forwards between levels of involvement, as people gain and lose interest in the regeneration process, or for other reasons.

Initially, it is important to characterise different types and levels of participation (Figure 4.3). O'Riordan identified some people in his research as 'hard core' community activists and suggests that these are the only residents who: "will survive the process of attrition usually experienced in most participatory experiments" (1977: 166). While he does not define the roles of these community activists, a number of individuals in Sheffield could be described as 'hard core' activists. For example many of the activists interviewed had been active in their neighbourhoods for a number of years and had experienced previous failures to effect changes in the area (see Chapter Three), yet were still willing participants in the SRB process. In addition, other levels of participation may be recognised in Sheffield (Figure 4.3). In particular, there are some residents who have a very informal, or no commitment to the regeneration process, but maintain an interest in the changes. Alternatively, there are those residents who actively engage with the regeneration process through attending meetings and talking with other residents. The different levels of participation observed in Sheffield may be categorised

as none, token, active, and activist. It is significant to characterise these types of participation because of the different levels of influence that they can bring.

Figure 4.3: Continuum of participation



It may be argued that **token** involvement is when a resident shows interest in the area and changes, but has no formal commitment to participate regularly. They are likely to attend locally based meetings on an ad-hoc basis. These meetings probably consist mainly of local residents, where decisions are not made, but discussed. **Active** participants will be present at these meetings. They are regular attendees and can generally have an influence over the participation structures for other residents, for instance deciding the timings of meetings. Active members aim for positions of responsibility, but few appear to commit the time and energy needed for an **activist** role.

Community activists hold dominant positions such as 'Chairs' on committees. They attend locally held meetings, but are also invited to meetings outside the area. For

instance, community activists are seen by key officers as representing the 'community's voice at SRB board meetings. Over half of the community activists interviewed in Sheffield view "community work" as their full time occupation and tend to be active in a number of projects (Figure 4.4).

It has also been recognised by various commentators that there are differential levels of participation. Smith argues: "some forms of participation are clearly more participative than others. They do not all permit the same level of citizen involvement and influence" (1988: 202). In a similar manner, Smith and Jones propose: "participation embraces many different levels of involvement ... direct involvement or power sharing, where community representatives are full members of the decision making body; community action, where groups put forward their own demands; and community self-management, where groups have control of facilities or resources" (1981: 28). A male community activist in Norfolk Park offers his perception on the different levels of participation:

"People pick what level they want to get involved in. I suppose the levels that I see are people who are not interested at all, they want to get out or their whole life is just surviving to make ends meet ... The next level is people who want to know what is happening and so newsletters ... I suppose the next level from that is people who actually want to do something.... And so people become involved at a low level and the next thing is I come along and ask do you want to be on the management for project X and once you are there you are on a slippery slope because the next thing you know is that you are the delegate to the LMB [Local Management Board] and you are really into the treadmill of the whole thing" (Norfolk Park community activist 1, 1998; emphasis added).

Similar to the typology presented earlier, this activist also recognises four levels of participation, from non-participation to community delegates. What is interesting to note is his surprise concerning how quickly ("slippery slope") someone can become an activist, although implying that activists have control over which residents reach this

position. He sees himself as providing the opportunity for other residents to become involved, which is perhaps indicative of the power relations in the community (see Chapter Five).

Figure 4.4: Typology of participation

Characteristic <sup>1</sup>	Token	Active	Activist
Leader			✓
Organiser			✓
Regular attendee		✓	✓
Ad-hoc attendee	✓		
Helper	✓	✓	
Committed		✓	✓
Seeks responsibility		✓	✓
Full time role			✓
Contact with officials			✓
Few or one project	✓	✓	
Many projects			✓

These different levels of participation relate to the typology of participation (Figure 4.4).

The circumstances of the nineteen women interviewed in 1997 and 1998 in NWICA and Norfolk Park varied quite considerably, from a single young mother of four children (Lisa) to older, married childless women (Dorothy). Four of the women, such as Sharon and Emma amongst others, have pre-school aged children. However, other women, including Barbara, Mavis and Maureen, have grown-up children. Certain women (Margaret, Barbara, and Karen) experienced some period of full-time employment over the twelve-months, whereas others, such as Tracy, Charlotte and Vera remained unemployed. Some (Mavis, Maureen, Margaret, Maria, Jenny, Dorothy, Barbara and Melanie) have partners, whereas the others are single and live alone. It is

these, and other, differences in the women's lives, which may account for their varying levels of participation within the regeneration process of Sheffield. It is clear from the research findings that amongst the nineteen women, the level and depth of participation varies between none, token and active involvement. This information is summarised in Figure 4.5.

In 1997, twelve women did not participate in the regeneration initiatives. The reasons for this non-involvement are explored in chapter six. In five cases local residents generally felt their attendance at meetings was to support decisions made by other partnership members. As Tracy comments: "I started getting involved, but it was the same as the tenants' association; they didn't take you seriously. It was a meeting about the last meeting, it was just really boring, it was just like we were wasting our time" (1997). A further illustration of token participation comes from Lisa, a younger Norfolk Park resident: "I've been to some meetings, granted not many, but I've been to a couple" (1997). From this it may be inferred that in 1997, she did not have a formal or regular commitment to being involved in the regeneration process. These comments may imply that some women only attend meetings when they feel like it, rather than at every opportunity. They do not appear to have a formal commitment, in that they do not hold positions, such as the Chair, on committees, which would require them to attend all meetings, and consequently they may be described as tokenly involved.

Figure 4.5 Women’s engagement with the regeneration process

1997		1998	
NONE			
Mavis	Sharon	Sheila (A)	Janet (A)
Emma	Vera	Sharon	Emma
Margaret	Jenny	Maureen (T)	Tracy (T)
Dorothy	Karen	Helen (T)	Vera
Melanie	Michelle	Margaret	Maria
Maria	Barbara	Jenny	Dorothy
		Barbara	Melanie
		Michelle	
(12)		(15)	
TOKEN			
Charlotte	Lisa	Mavis (N)	Karen (N)
Maureen	Tracy		
Helen			
(5)		(2)	
ACTIVE			
Sheila	Janet	Charlotte (T)	Lisa (T)
(2)		(2)	

**Bold** means they have moved categories  
N- From Non involvement in 1997  
T- From Token involvement in 1997  
A- From Active involvement in 1997  
Evidence from NWICA and Norfolk Park appears to suggest two residents ‘actively’ participated in their area in 1997. Janet reveals her experience of community participation in Netherthorpe: “we went along to see what was happening and then we went to another one to put some ideas forward ... And I was a ‘community rep’ [laughs] on the committee for a short while” (1997). Sheila also comments on her participation in Netherthorpe: “If I’ve known of a meeting and I’ve been able to attend, then yes I

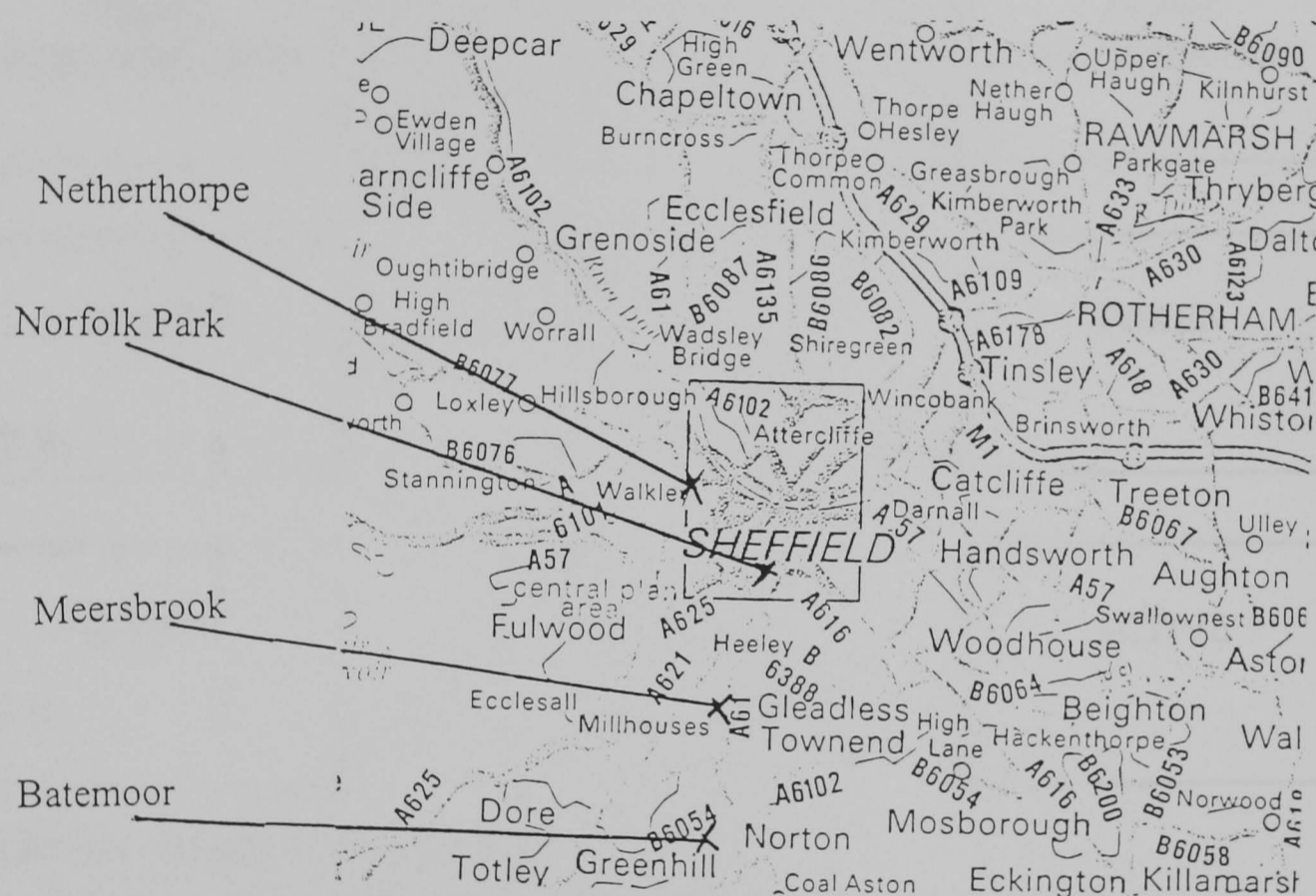
have attended meetings quite happily” (1997). She suggests that she does attend meetings when she can which implies she has more than just an “interest” in the regeneration process. The main distinction between a token and active participant is how likely they are to take up the opportunity to participate. An active participant will tend to use every available chance to be involved, as Sheila implies above, whereas other residents, such as Lisa suggest they participate when they feel like it, and not necessarily at every possibility.

In 1998, fifteen women did not participate. Two women, Mavis and Karen, appeared to participate in a token manner, despite the fact that they did not participate in 1997. Charlotte and Lisa were active in the regeneration initiatives, having been involved in a ‘token’ manner in 1997. It is interesting to note here that Sheila and Janet did not participate at all in 1998 despite being active in 1997, but this is probably because they both moved from the Netherthorpe area.

Findings from Sheffield illustrate there can be movement between the categories of none, token, and active involvement (see Figure 4.6). As a senior council employee points out: “if you have been moved out and you are waiting to move back in, you are unlikely to turn up to a monthly meeting to find out the progress” (Council employee 1, 1988). Other women who participated in 1997, but not in 1998 offer similar explanations for their lack of involvement. Tracy explains: “when I was living in Netherthorpe I was always bothered about the area instead of being bothered about what I was going to do and I am more concentrating now on what I want to do with my life, because they [regeneration officers] don’t generally listen anyway” (1998). By 1998, Tracy had moved from a maisonette in Netherthorpe to another part of Sheffield, had

completed her college course and begun work. She no longer had the time or inclination to be involved in the regeneration changes, as she was no longer living in the area. Similarly, Janet and Sheila who were both actively involved in NWICA in 1997, moved due to the demolition of their maisonettes. Janet moved to Meersbrook and Sheila to Batemoor (see Fig. 4.6).

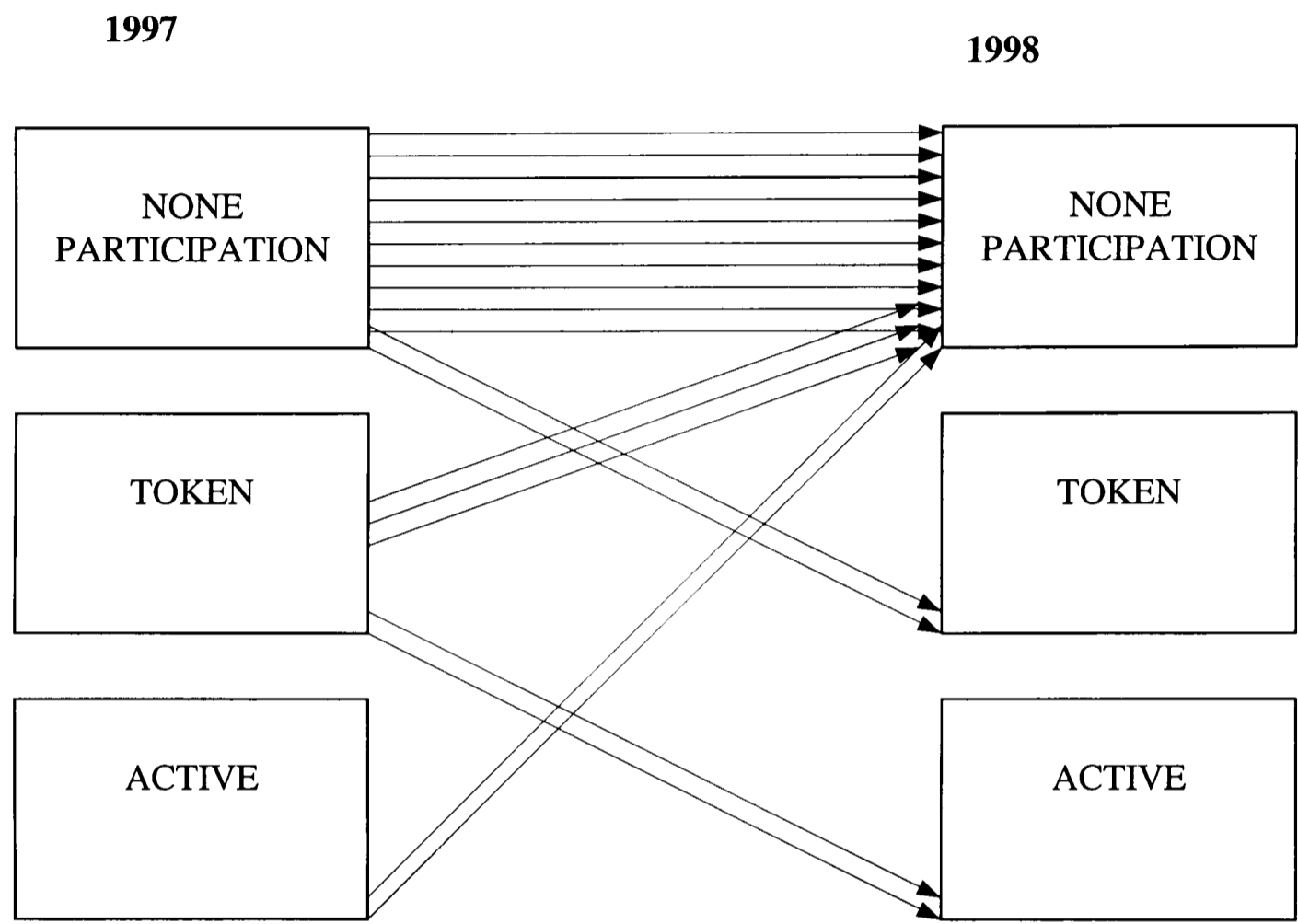
Figure 4.6 Map showing re-location of interviewees 1997-1998



Lisa who was involved in a token way in 1997 became actively involved by 1998, which she explains was because: "I am not going through ante-natal depression anymore [laughs]" (1998: 1). Figure 4.7 summarises how women changed their involvement between 1997 and 1998. Figure 4.7 emphasises that there are both movements forwards and backwards between none, token and active participation. However, it is of interest to note that none of the women who were passive in 1997 participated in an active manner in 1998, although Mavis and Karen became involved in a token manner. Overall nine of the nineteen women interviewed participated in some

way (token or active) within the regeneration process, in contrast to ten women who had no engagement over the twelve months.

Figure 4.7 Summary of change in women’s involvement



Each line represents one individual

These findings therefore indicate that generally there is more of a tendency towards non-participation rather than participation over the twelve month interview period. A male community activist in NWICA, explains: “within the community side of SRB it has been very hard to get tenants who are committed to get themselves involved, you finish up with about four people and they are the ones that are elderly, unemployed, disabled or they are in a position where they are bored, fed up and it is something for them to do” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998). A few women, such as Charlotte and Janet, actually fit into the categories that the community activist outlines above, of being unemployed and bored. However, this research suggests that there are other

factors, which may explain women's participation or lack of it.

Low participation rates have the potential to cause problems of legitimacy in local decision-making and frustration for Local Authority officers. For instance, one senior council employee explains: "you always have this nagging doubt, well I do, I don't feel comfortable getting a decision passed where there might be two officers and three residents" (Council employee 1, 1998: 7). Contrary to this, other commentators have argued for fewer representatives from various sectors to improve the efficiency of regeneration: "greater citizen participation increases inefficiency because participation creates delays and red tape" (King et al., 1998: 319). Brownill and Darke also point out: "it is [also] important to avoid burning out the most active" (1998: 9), particularly if the most active are elderly.

The findings on participation appear to support previous research. Mingione describes how: "a relatively high spatial concentration of very poor conditions of existence together with a considerable feeling of dissatisfaction (marginalized social groups) does not necessarily lead to collective mobilisation and organisation" (1991: 430). Amos proposes a similar view: "local people - the ones to whom all development plans and regeneration projects are ultimately aimed - will care little about whether projects are development plan led or led by 'task forces' and 'action plans'" (1998: 132). As Margaret, an older NWICA resident, who was not involved in 1997 or 1998 states: "as long as it [regeneration changes] doesn't affect me personally, then no I don't think so [I'll not get involved] because as I say when you are at work all day, you don't really get much time" (1998: 2). Margaret, however, lives with her husband in a flat renovated with Estate Action funding. She does not think that the SRB money is

going to benefit her further and therefore sees no point in participating, particularly as she is employed and does not have much spare time.

Croft and Beresford, using their experience of community action in inner city London, argue: “most people still just don’t want to get involved. Most ‘community initiatives’ have a very small and limited involvement that tends to be biased against poor people, members of ethnic minorities, women, old and young people and others facing particular discrimination” (1988: 82). This observation implies that women may find it more difficult to participate as actively as men may. However, evidence from research in Sheffield, tends to suggest the opposite. Charlotte, who is an older NWICA, resident, with no childcare responsibilities, comments: “more women have got the time to attend committees. Women that don’t work are available during the day. I would think that more women [participate], because of their availability” (1997: 4). Charlotte worked full time until she resigned due to ill mental health in 1996. She took up community work as a way to meet people in her neighbourhood following a recent separation from her partner. By 1998, she still did not work, lived alone and was helping to run the group she became involved in and was actively searching ways for future funding from the SRB.

#### **4.2.2 Explaining women’s participation**

The role of women in community action has received attention from commentators researching community participation both in the First and the Third World contexts. Dominelli argues: “without women’s work in the community, life as we know it could not exist” (1995: 133). Stansfield also remarks that women: “form the warp and weft of

communities, usually being the ones to take on work in community groups, and with informal support networks with other women” (1997: 10). In addition, Christie argues: “who are the people better placed to say what is required than the women who live in the area?” (1997: 3). Others, including a wide feminist literature (Lister, 1998; Bondi and Peake, 1988), offer a similar view. Emerging from this literature there appears to be two main explanations for why women participate in community action: as a continuation of their domestic role and because their circumstances may enable involvement.

#### 4.2.3 Domestic role

Lister argues that through women’s participation, private domestic issues may find their way on to the public agenda, thereby: “bridging the public-private divide” (1998: 230). Mavis, an older married Norfolk Park resident, with a grown-up daughter suggests: “I mean as a single mother at home bringing up her children, where is she heard? Only by the children, if she is not involved in anything else” (1997). The rationale for women’s participation appears therefore to be linked to her domestic role. This parallels what Schübeler found in her exploration of community participation in the Third World: “because women normally organise the household’s access to drinking water, sanitation, and waste disposal services they are more concerned with problems of infrastructure services than men ... As a result women will often initiate pressure for an improvement in service access ... women also play crucial roles as **producers** and **managers** of community affairs” (1996: 24; original emphasis). Although, in Sheffield, the context is different, a number of women offer similar explanations. Sheila, a single mother of two, who was active in her neighbourhood in 1997, suggests

that:

“Some men don’t seem to be bothered for some reason ... a lot of men think, ‘oh I will let them do it, let them do the housework’ and I think it is the same sort of attitude. It depends on the man and obviously some men do get involved, they are liberated, broad minded and forward thinking. They are thinking they should get involved because it affects me so I will go, or it might affect me so I will go. But, a lot of men seem to think that it is down to the women to go [to community meetings]” (Sheila, 1998).

Although this comment moves away from the division of domestic duties more towards the differences in attitudes between men and women, it still illustrates why women are more likely than men to participate. Margaret, an older NWICA resident who works part time and lives with her husband, makes a similar point: “I would say that women are more involved than men because mostly men go to work come home have their tea and then watch telly or go out. They don’t care do they what’s happening around the environment as long as house is all right” (1998). This view is also propounded by May: “it seems to be women’s traditional role to be active in the community, therefore men do not engage so readily” (1997: 24). A local female councillor explains:

“Two things: If they [men] are working, they are usually in manual jobs, which are usually quite demanding physically, so I think they want to just relax. If they [men] are not working, quite a lot of their time is engaged in trying to find employment or they then seem to go completely to the opposite end of the spectrum and tend to give up. I find the difference in men and women mostly is that women are concentrating on the children and the welfare, but then they want to do the two things [community work and childcare] and they perhaps find it easier if there is childcare in place to do that” (Local councillor 3, 1998).

Brownill and Darke also recognise this relationship: “community organising can be seen as an extension of women’s traditional concern with issues outside the world of work, making men reluctant to become involved” (1998: 6). Certainly, it appears common for women to view community action as their domain. For example, a leader

of a Tenants Association in NWICA comments: “we are mostly women in ours” (NWICA community activist 3, 1998). Tracy, a young single woman who has some experience of participating in Netherthorpe, explains why women participate more often than men: “I think it is probably more likely to be women, because they are the ones that form a lot of single parent families and they will be the ones that will want to get something moving” (1997). In a similar manner, Riseborough acknowledges: “women often provide the informal support networks for neighbours and relatives, they are often the key members of grass roots community groups” (1997: 30). Likewise, some women regard community work as a continuation of their domestic responsibilities. Sheila defends her reason for participating: “it’s a woman’s thing, like a woman’s thing is looking after the children. The woman is the one who does the childcare and the child rearing and the housework and that is her traditional role, so she is the one who goes to these meetings” (1998).

#### **4.2.4 Domestic circumstance**

Other commentators see community action as being more suitable for women who are around the home during the day because of its flexibility, in terms of location and timings of meetings (Bondi and Peake 1988: 35). Several interviewees in Sheffield also share this view. Charlotte, who does not have any children states: “probably easier if they [women] are at home with children because they can go to meetings during the day and they can be involved during the day if there are childcare facilities available” (Charlotte, 1998). This comment underlines the importance an individual’s domestic circumstance may have on participation. Another older Norfolk Park resident comments: “It depends on whether they [women] work or stay at home. If they stay at

home... I suppose if their housing is improved it may make cleaning a bit easier. I don't know what the percentage of women to men at these meetings is, I presume there are probably more women than men because some of them might have a bit more time to go" (Barbara, 1997).

Childcare arrangements may directly encourage or inhibit participation. Maria, an older Norfolk Park resident with two grown-up children, comments: "I don't think women are that bothered because they have the children to see to" (1997). Of the nineteen women, interviewed in 1997, four had pre-school children, Sharon, Lisa, Emma and Karen, and only one of these women (Karen) went out to work. However, by 1998, Sharon and Emma, who only had one child each, had also taken up full time employment leaving only Lisa, with four children at home. Interestingly, it was Lisa who was becoming active in her community. In 1997, she says: "I mean like for me, I mean if there were actually childcare and that, I'd be well away, I'd get really involved in all that" (1997). However, she continues, in 1998: "I normally have to pay for a sitter, but some meetings they provide a crèche and that, but when they provide a crèche I ask them for a sitter instead and they usually do" (1998). This view is not typical of other tenants. Several women highlight childcare as a barrier to their participation (see Chapter Six). Moreover, Karen who has always worked full time began to take an interest in her area in 1998 because her daughter was about to start school in the area, which was about to directly reduce her direct childcare responsibilities. However, Karen has a husband who can help with childcare arrangements, whereas the other three women are single.

Evidence suggests there is a tendency for women to participate for their children. Lisa,

a mother of four, comments: “I got involved really because we just didn’t know where we were ... I wanted to know where we stood and basically safety for my kids” (1998). In similar vein, Lister argues: “a mother of teenage children might join a campaign for decent facilities on her estate out of concern for her own children” (1998: 231). And, as mentioned earlier, women tend to care for children more than men do (Stansfield, 1997). Sheila, a mother of two, comments on how she sees why women participate more because of their children: “sometimes women want to know what’s happening. They seem to think more about the children, how it’s affecting the family and the children” (Sheila, 1997). Findings from other studies illustrate similar points. Rohe and Stegman, citing Cox (1982), highlight: “children tend to induce involvement because their parents are concerned about the impact of neighbourhood change on them” (1994: 158).

Not all commentators see the relationship between domestic work and community activity as automatic. May argues that the emphasis on women’s participation becomes a ‘triple burden’, which ironically may prevent women’s participation. They may already be engaged in looking after the home and the children and therefore may not have time for community work. Moreover, Riseborough explains that like men, women’s time is finite, simply meaning they may not have time to participate (1997). In short, while a woman’s domestic role may appear to support their participation, involvement is also mitigated by their particular domestic circumstance.

Although many commentators suggest women are much more involved than men in local community action, several also argue: “there is some evidence that men take the leadership role while women do the donkey work” (May, 1997: 24). Dominelli also

describes how there is a tendency for a division of duties to occur in community action. She argues that this division of tasks creates different roles, which seem to replicate those found in the home or work environment. Men tend to dominate decision-making positions, whilst women appear: “relegated to the servicing roles like making tea and writing minutes” (Curno et al., 1982 cited in Dominelli, 1995: 134). Dominelli uses feminist theory and principles to explain how roles in community work appear to be gendered. She establishes that men and women contribute different qualities to the participation process and argues for: “a world not bound by patriarchal social relations, but guided by non hierarchical ways of women organising with each other” (1995: 135). This issue of patriarchal forces is examined in Chapter Seven to help explain the varying positions men and women adopt in community action.

The different roles that men and women are seen to assume within community action may stem from their varying motivations for seeking involvement. Men are seen to participate: “for ulterior motives related to personal prestige, promotion of their business interests and/or direct profit, women were found to be more directly concerned with improving the living conditions of their families” (Schübeler, 1996: 25). Although this work is based on research from the Third World, it appears to correspond with the nature of community involvement observed in Sheffield. Women generally tend to participate, as they want to help change their environment for their children’s benefit, as Karen and Sheila amongst others illustrate. Helen, a young NWICA resident, without children, adds her view: “I think probably there would be more women getting involved than men because women care more about what happens. And women are like more maternal and they have got kids or they worry about what happens to the kids, whereas men are just like ‘oh let them play out’. I am

not saying that all men are like that, but I think it just goes without saying that women are usually more caring than men” (1998). The rationale for women’s participation may explain the level of participation that they can achieve.

In Sheffield, there is a tendency for women to be involved in community action at a token level with relatively few becoming community activists. Charlotte and Lisa actually moved from a token position in 1997 to an active position in 1998. Lisa says: “I tell them what I want and what I don’t want basically and I let neighbours know; the people who can’t come to meetings and that. And I let them know what I know to date and if they’ve heard rumours I take them back to the refurbishment committee” (1998). This comment from Lisa illustrates how she has become a community informant through her attendance at community meetings and may be described as actively involved. However, it appears from the research that men are still dominant as community leaders in Sheffield.

As soon as community action becomes a force for change, in Sheffield, it appears from the number of influential male community activists that it is the men who begin to organise. In addition, the following observation by Vera, an older married woman in the NWICA area, indicates who appears to organise and control the meetings: “I think it is the men that sit at the front and the women that sit in the audience” (Vera, 1997). The number of male community activists who also represent the “community” interest on the main SRB Board also illustrates this: “the main board is totally male and white, with the exception of a representative from the BCF [Black Community Forum]” (SRB officer 3, 1998). Chapter five examines the composition of the SRB Board and how decisions are made.

In summary, the rationale for women's participation advanced by the literature is contradictory. Their greater domestic role does appear to affect motivation for participation, but not necessarily facilitate their ability to participate in a significant role, if at all. However, from an analysis of the interview transcripts (see Chapter Two) there are other factors, which also appear to influence resident's participation.

### **4.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION**

#### **4.3.1 Age**

There is a common perception from many women interviewed that young people are not interested in community action. As nineteen year old Helen, using her own experience of attending meetings highlights: "a lot of the young people aren't interested in being involved, but why should they because it's not appealing, it is right boring" (1998). However, there is evidence suggesting that some younger residents are becoming involved. As a community activist in Norfolk Park comments: "I think the majority of us are forty plus, there are not many young people, but it is getting younger because we have got the radio station set up and the youth council" (Norfolk Park community activist 3, 1998). This concurs with findings from Hastings et al. Although they do not analyse community activists along age terms, they found: "engaging a local community in a regeneration partnership can also, over a fairly short period, lead to changes in the group of people who are active" (1996: 14). In Sheffield, new younger community activists, such as Lisa appear to be replacing some of the older residents, like Maureen, who have eventually lost interest in the area. The

importance of younger people participating is illustrated by a community activist in NWICA: “I am quite willing to pass over the responsibility that I have got, I want somebody younger who has got a number of years on their backs to follow this through because in 2002 SRB is going to finish and that is not the be all and end all and there are other ways of funding” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998).

However, community action is still seen to be dominated by middle aged residents as Mavis, an older Norfolk Park resident, comments: “it is mixed male and female, but it’s the same people, it is generally the older ones, fifty upwards probably” (1997). Over 70s were not seen to participate in the regeneration process, although may be active in their tenants’ association or residents’ group. As a female community activist in NWICA states: “some of the Tenants Associations we have never managed to get, basically because most of them are quite elderly on the management committee and they are struggling to hold the tenants’ association together” (NWICA, community activist 4, 1998).

#### **4.3.2 Employment status**

It appears from the research undertaken in Sheffield that those residents who are in employment do not seem to participate in the regeneration schemes, whereas those residents that are not in paid work, but may be engaged in childcare, such is the case for Lisa above, tend more likely to participate. Maureen, who works locally in her mother’s shop, explains: “I think a man’s time is took up a lot because he is working, so I think women are the ones trying to sort things out for children” (1998).

Of the fourteen economically inactive residents in 1997, four, including Charlotte, Janet, Mavis and Dorothy were either long term sick or retired. Table 4.2 relates socio-economic position to involvement. In short, from the seven women who participated in a token or active manner in 1997, five were not in employment. By 1998, three (Lisa, Charlotte and Mavis) of the four women who participated were not in paid employment. The composition of community activists consists of those who do not work and those employed on the estate, such as in a paid position on the Community Alliance. There appears, therefore, to be an inverse relationship between employment and participation.

An SRB officer points out: “a lot of tenants’ associations were effectively staffed and organised by people who had retired or been made redundant from industry...” (SRB officer 1, 1998). The same SRB officer goes on to explain: “if you look at some of the core activists, they are almost inevitably people on welfare benefits, who have usually got a long term disability. Because if you have left work on ill health grounds you have then got a lot of time on your hands. If you look at people like [names removed] and so on, and I don’t mean this in a negative way at all, but getting involved in community activity is what keeps them mentally alert and keeps them engaged (SRB officer 1, 1998). This finding reflects those of Kintrea: “in 1992 of about 5000 people in the area, [Ferguslie Park] 150 or so were involved in running community organisations of whom 10 per cent were heavily involved. This leading group of volunteers comprised about six people, all of whom were unemployed. Most of the leading activists played several roles simultaneously, and some had been involved for many years, supplemented by a few more recent recruits” (1996: 297).

Table 4.2: Involvement and employment in 1997 and 1998

Involvement	Employment status			
	None/ student		Employed on estate	Other employment
None	(9) *	11	(0) 1	(3) 4
Token	(4)	1	(1) 0	(0) 1
Active	(1)	2	(1) 0	(0) 0

\* 1997 figures are in brackets.

Similarly, community activists may perceive community action as a way of spending their time if they are not in employment: “I got involved in this [SRB]. I had my accident and so I am registered disabled so instead of sitting in here [flat] and looking at four walls I have got involved” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998). Another community activist justifies the participation of one of his colleagues: “ he was a lorry driver and had an industrial accident and so is registered disabled and he is very active and he is waiting compensation and all that and he can’t work, so I think one of his motivations is that it actually gives him something to do” (Norfolk Park community activist 1, 1998).

4.3.3 Locational difference

The research in Sheffield illustrates how an individual’s location within the regeneration area may also influence participation. As Charlotte comments: “I don’t think I will be affected because I am just on the outskirts and because I don’t go down there [into Upperthorpe] it won’t affect me, because I don’t think there is going to be any money spent in this area” (1997). However, Charlotte still participates in her neighbourhood. In 1998 her participation is more active when she realises some of the SRB money can be spent on social regeneration projects, such as the mental health

project where she participates. In a similar context in Norfolk Park, Emma comments: “we are supposed to be starting to get involved when they start to do these Vic-Hallams up to like find out whether rents will go up or anything like that and then we’ll get involved. But, until it’s our turn then no, we’re just like I say we’ll keep ourselves to ourselves” (1997). Not surprisingly, the closer a resident is to the core of the regeneration changes, such as Lisa, the more likely it is that they will participate. As a female community activist in NWICA explains: “people get involved when it affects them personally” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998). In addition, a Tenants’ Association leader, resident for over twenty years in NWICA, describes who she sees as participating: “people who are concerned about the area who have lived here for quite a while get involved, more than people who have just been here a year or two, and people who are concerned about what is going to happen to the area because they are still going to be here when all remodelling and whatever is done” (NWICA community activist 3, 1998). This suggests that not only the location of residents in the regeneration is significant, but also that the length of residence in the area may also be an important factor in encouraging involvement.

#### **4.4 RATIONALISING PARTICIPATION**

It is generally recognised that participation may not simply be expected to happen and therefore there are some incentives, which can encourage participation. Mayo found in her research: “community participation and community management did not just arise spontaneously” (1994: 191). In addition, Smith argues: “it would be politically naive to conclude that all forms of participation are always beneficial to the participants, but it would seem to be possible to ensure that participation is never purely exploitative”

(1988: 202). Beresford and Croft add: “people’s involvement may primarily serve the agency’s interests, not theirs. It can be used to manage people more closely, transfer responsibility to them, or obtain their information” (1993: 126-127). SRB officers and council employees may in essence benefit from local residents’ participation. However, many residents in Sheffield also talk about the benefits that participating in the regeneration changes may bring to them.

Mayo proposes: “people have tended to come together not just because they shared an interest or a problem (which may have been the case for some time anyway), but because they have recognised that there could be, or at least that there urgently needed to be, some change” (1994: 160). In this context it could therefore be that residents in Sheffield may be coming together partly as a result of SRB designation. As Janet notices in Netherthorpe: “people do tend to talk more to each other now in the street I’ve noticed. Because there is something to talk about, even if it’s, ‘I’m sick of all this muck, I’ve just cleaned my windows’” (1997).

Despite there being generally low participation in Sheffield, participants tend to give one of the following reasons for being involved:

- to influence general improvements
- to receive personal benefits

Although, these two reasons for participation relate separately to the environment and the individual, Lister (1998) recognises, individual motivations to participate, such as increased self confidence, may result in community gain and vice-versa. O’Riordan highlights: “personal ideology, professional advancement, political aspirations or simply genuine public spiritedness” (1977: 166) as some incentives and motivations

behind participation. He adds: “participation, when it is most effective, is educational, therapeutic and consciousness-raising” (1977: 170 - 171). These two reasons are discussed next.

#### **4.4.1 General improvements**

Many of the women interviewed are aware of the inconvenience of living with the physical changes associated with regeneration. They believe they are supposed to be the main beneficiaries from the regeneration projects and for some this provides an incentive to participate or, at least, find out what happens. Emma, a younger Norfolk Park resident explains why she thinks local people should be involved, although she does not participate herself:

“I suppose it is a good idea because the local tenants are the people that’s got to live in these houses day in day out. I mean it’s like a complete stranger walking in and saying well this house is going to be this colour and carpets are going to be that colour, and you say ‘well hang on a minute I don’t like it’.... I live in this house day in day out so I’ve got a right, I pay the rent, I pay the council tax, I’ve got a right to know what’s goin’ on” (1997).

The comment above highlights that people from out of the area, generally SRB officers and council employees, may not be fully aware of local or individual’s priorities. Tracy, another younger resident in the NWICA area is encouraged to participate, as she states: “it’s not fair that they bring people from out of the area and get paid for doing stuff that people in this area can...” (1997). In some cases, the belief local residents ‘know best’ provides enough encouragement for some residents, such as Tracy, to participate.

Other participants offer similar reasons for their participation, in terms of promoting

environmental improvements. As a male community activist in NWICA comments:

“well I have always turned around and said in about three years time when SRB is finished and I can look out of this window and all those maisonettes have been modernised and people could turn round to me and say it’s a lot better living in my house now than it was and I can see that the Ponderosa [open green] looks nice and I can read about people getting jobs after training, that is my brownie points and that is when I will be able to turn around and say, ‘ I did that, I was involved in that and I ensured that the money was spent in the way it should be, to benefit these people’s homes and the standard of living’” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998)

Another justification for why residents and activists participate relates to the assumption that they may be able to influence developments through their involvement, as alluded to in the above quotation. Sheila presents the reason she was involved when she lived in Netherthorpe: “you can’t grumble about something happening, if you’ve not tried to prevent it and you can’t grumble about something not happening if you’ve not attempted to get it to happen, which is what you get with some people; they grumble about things but they don’t do anything about it. They have not tried to stop it or get it going” (1998). These findings parallel what Desai found in his research on community participation: “community workers work hard, sacrificing their time, energy and money for a public cause. In return, they have the power to make decisions” (1996: 233).

However, it appears that the ability to exert an influence on decisions may be reserved only for community activists. For example, Maureen, an older resident, who irregularly attends community meetings in Norfolk Park explains:

“if you don’t bother then you can’t say can you? Y’know what I mean? If you don’t go to these meetings and you don’t have your say then you can’t argue about it because you’ve just not bothered have you? You’ve left it just to council, so if you don’t have your say then you can’t do anything about it. That’s why I think you’ve got to, if you feel that way you do have to say something even if they don’t take notice of you y’know?” (1997).

Whilst pointing to the influence participation may bring, she also implies from her own experience that the opinions of residents, may not be taken into account. However, Michelle, who does not have much direct experience of the situation because she does not participate reflects optimistically that: “ultimately if it is going to affect their everyday life then they have got every right to be informed and involved and I think their opinions should count to a final decision somewhere along the way” (1998). Although Michelle thinks opinions “should” count, she does not suggest how they necessarily will or will not. This issue of influencing the decision-making process is explored in more depth in chapter five.

#### **4.4.2 Personal benefits**

In Sheffield, those that participated pointed to a number of benefits they received from participating in their local area. However, these benefits do not appear to flow freely to all residents. Whilst, a male community activist in NWICA outlines the benefits he receives from participating, he also recognises that not all participants receive them:

“I keep getting sent off on conferences, I got back jet lagged from America and I was immediately sent to Brussels to try and sort the European funding out for the community. There are four Community Alliance reps and at the moment we get sent on everything and we go back to the Community Alliance each time and say that anyone else is quite welcome to go, they are quite capable” (NWICA community activist 1, 1998).

Certain local residents may not only forego these limited opportunities for foreign visits, but many women, especially single parents, such as Lisa or Sheila, would, in any case, be unlikely to take up these opportunities. Ward (1986) explains: “for women there is [also] the acute problem of childcare. Not every child wants to go to a crèche

for a week. If they do, the parent, usually the mother, has to finance getting the child there, feeding and entertaining him or her for the rest of the time outside the conference hours” (1986: 37).

Mayo et al. propose monetary incentives and benefits, such as tax relief, or offering supplementary payments or service vouchers to unwaged helpers to encourage local residents to be involved in community action (undated: 20). However, some women in Sheffield, such as Sheila, show no interest in being paid for community work: “the money doesn’t interest me. I enjoy what I’ve done. I have enjoyed the involvement of it and trying to help people. So, to me it is not an incentive, it might be to some, but, it isn’t to me” (1997). However, a few residents, including Janet and Lisa, recognise financial compensation may encourage participation, as Charlotte comments: “I mean even if it’s just the £15 a week that you’re allowed to earn whilst on benefit, then of course it would be a great incentive, no question” (1997). This issue of incentives is explored further in Chapter Seven. Other women suggest that payment for community work would be a greater incentive for men. Lisa thinks: “most women don’t expect to be paid for stuff and men do, don’t they? Most men tend to think, ‘oh, I’m not doing that unless I get paid” (1997). Other incentives may, however, encourage women to participate.

Although, Charlotte comments that there could be a financial incentive to encourage participation, she also sees attending community meetings as a social occasion. Charlotte, who lives alone, explains why she is involved in Upperthorpe: “I used to work full-time, and I didn’t know anybody. And then I haven’t worked for eighteen months and now I’ve got into working with the community I know quite a lot of

people” (1997). Likewise, Janet, who also lives alone, explains why certain people like herself go to the community meetings that she has attended: “some of them [participants] are widowed and they have got time on their hands and they want to be involved in something and to them it is like a social occasion” (1997). Similarly, a female community activist in NWICA states: “it is something I do all the time, it stimulates me I think. I was free because I was ill for a long period of time otherwise I probably would have been working but I had time on my hands” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998). From a similar standpoint, Rabrenovic (1995) argues that women can also through their children be involved in activities in their areas, which may encourage further participation in the neighbourhood. Some women share this view, for instance Lisa explains why she participates: “it [community action] stimulates your mind, you learn a lot about people and you need to know about people. You need to live in the real world and not be isolated and find out what it’s like” (1997).

In a study of North Tyneside, Gallant finds: “as individuals, and as a group, their confidence has grown and all have learned new skills. Each area of work has been the responsibility of a different member of the group and all have had to be actively involved” (1992: 44). Several women, such as Lisa, realise how participation may provide expertise, along with other benefits. Michelle, who does not participate offers her opinion on what she sees as driving others to participate:

“I think they [participants] probably get a sense of well-being or doing something positive. And it probably makes them feel good, especially if their ideas are actually put into action and used down the line. Their ideas progress and they become reality and that probably stirs them on to do a lot more. I imagine... people do it for all sorts of reasons. It might help in the kind of job that you want to go for perhaps and if you have got a list of things that you have done, it is all experience isn’t it? It could help you boost your confidence, it could help people just to meet people in the community as a social thing as well” (1998).

This view of community work as ‘training’ for the job market is held by a number of women. Participation, in this sense, also appears to be an important incentive in promoting social regeneration. As a community activist explains:

“it’s all about invigorating the community and getting people more involved in the process and also trying to give them the confidence and building skills so they can get a job. If people get involved in voluntary work then they build up their CV and hopefully as they get more akin to doing voluntary type work, then they can use some of the skills they have learnt to do other courses, or find a job or whatever” (NWICA community activist 1, 1998).

Lister argues: “collective action can boost individual and collective self-confidence, as individuals and groups come to see themselves as political actors and effective citizens. This is particularly true for women for whom involvement in community organisations can be more personally fruitful than engagement in formal politics which is often more alienating than empowering” (1998: 232). From the research in Sheffield, it appears some women are participating to try and increase their self-confidence and general well being. As Sheila states: “you get respect, you get taken notice of and you get listened to” (1998). Lisa reveals her incentive for participation: “there’s a lot of self satisfaction and stuff like that and then one thing leads to another, and then it gives you more confidence to go out and do other things” (1997).

Alternatively, there is the suggestion that some people are only becoming involved to try and inflate their self-confidence. Charlotte has noticed from her experience of community participation that: “you do have to be careful because there are a lot of committee junkies around that join every committee, and they do it for their own self esteem. But if you are doing it for the right reasons then it makes you feel good to be part of a new group” (1998). Several residents admit to participating largely for

personal reasons. A male community activist in Norfolk Park confesses: "I would probably maintain that there is some sort of self interest, but quite what my motives are I don't know. I think there must be some hidden power trip or some inadequacy or something that I don't know, I actually don't know what my motives are" (Norfolk Park community activist, 1997).

Although some residents recognise that incentives and benefits may be received from community participation, others are less convinced. An older resident who has attended a few meetings in Norfolk Park as a result of being told her maisonette is due to be demolished provided the following answer to the question:

**"ZA: What do you think you would get out of going to meetings?"**

Mavis: nothing, people here have gone to the meetings and it has made no difference, because we still have got to be rehoused" (1998).

This is reflected in other work on community participation. As Hayton points out: "most residents are quite happy as long as a service or jobs are provided and see little need to become involved in policy issues which may appear to have little relevance to them" (1995: 174). Moreover, Kintrea recognises: "involving the community is time consuming" (1996: 304). In similar vein, a community activist comments on his experience of community participation:

**"ZA: What do you personally get out of being involved?"**

Community Activist: hard work, a lot of frustration...on the whole I would say from my point of view it has been especially irritating and hard work, rather than a joyful thing"  
(Norfolk Park community activist 4, 1998).

## Conclusions

In summary, four brief conclusions may be drawn from this chapter. First, in Sheffield, some women do tend to participate in the regeneration schemes. However, only a small proportion of the women interviewed (four from nineteen) participate in an active manner. In comparing these different levels with those observed by other commentators, it could be suggested, from the residents' point of view of those interviewed for this research, that some of the residents participate at levels 4-6 on Arnstein's (1969) ladder. However, key actors interviewed give the impression that participation in Sheffield is moving towards the top of the ladder presented by Thomas (1995), or by rung seven in Burns et al.'s (1994) ladder.

Second, different 'types' of participation, token, active and activist may be observed, which appear to describe and explain the role men and women adopt in community work. Third, the incentives and motivations bringing about participation can also help in explaining the position women have in community action (see Chapter Five). Fourth, the research conducted during 1997-1998 in the two SRB areas in Sheffield, affirms some of the determinants influencing participation, which have been outlined by other commentators (e.g. Barlow, 1995; Bersford and Croft, 1993). It also suggests, amongst others, that age, loyalty to estate, spatial, and temporal factors, may also influence participation.

The next chapter goes on to consider the concept of empowerment. Schübeler, argues: "the issue of empowerment is of central importance to participation" (1996: 33).

## Endnotes to Chapter Four

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<sup>1</sup> It is likely that these characteristics are valued differently. However, they illustrate in general terms, the differences between token and active participants and community activists.

## Empowerment

In the previous chapter, the participation of women within the regeneration process was examined. This chapter explores the degree to which local residents are being empowered through having an influence in decision-making within two of Sheffield's SRB schemes.

Part one of this chapter defines community empowerment and illustrates how the SRB is attempting to achieve this. Part two conceptualises empowerment. The third part considers the relation of local residents to the regeneration process in terms of the different roles, which may be observed. The difficulties of promoting empowerment are discussed in part four.

### 5.1 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT: TOWARDS A DEFINITION

Stewart and Taylor identify four dimensions to empowerment:

- “the *process* of empowerment (how?)
- the extent or *degree* of empowerment (how much?)
- the *focus* of empowerment (where?)
- the *ownership* of empowerment (who?)” (1995: 13; original emphasis)

Stewart and Taylor argue that community empowerment developed from the mutual aid traditions of the last century, which formed building societies, housing co-operatives

and workers' movements (1995: 3). Other commentators recognise the novelty, and liberal use of the term, empowerment, whilst also acknowledging its lack of definition and meaning (Barr, 1995: 122 -123; Karl, 1995: 14; Atkinson, 1999: 59).

Emerging from the limited literature on empowerment, three main views have been proposed. Some observers see empowerment as a concept relating to participation (Abbott, 1996). Others suggest that empowerment is a continual process (Karl, 1995; Andersen and Larsen, 1998), associated with a steady acquisition of decision-making powers (Atkinson, 1999). A further literature sees empowerment as a potential outcome of urban regeneration policy, such as the SRB (Nevin and Shiner, 1995).

### **5.1.1 Empowerment and participation**

Abbot defines empowerment as “the only possible form of participation” (1996: 40). He suggests that, in the 1970s, empowerment emerged as an objective to community participation designed to encourage meaningful change in society. He argues it was driven by world bodies, such as the ILO, UNICEF, UNCHS, and UNRISD (Abbott, 1996: 20). Another proponent of empowerment, Schubeler, makes a similar association between empowerment and participation: “the issue of empowerment is of central importance to participation ... managers may consider empowerment to be the main purpose of participation” (1996: 33). The main thrust of this debate is that empowerment may occur through increasing participation. Abbott further argues: “conventional theory situates empowerment at the end of a continuum of increasing community involvement” (1995: 163). It may therefore be posited that some of those residents who participate in SRB projects (see Chapter Four) may become empowered

by the regeneration process. As an SRB officer comments: "I think in the SRB, the assumption is that 'partnership' is the best way to develop, and the various partners [SRB Board members] need to have equal abilities to make decisions" (SRB officer 4, 1998). However, this does not always seem to happen in Sheffield, particularly at the start of the regeneration process. As observed by an SRB officer: "we started off with a process that was officer led and we are now at a process that I think is fairly evenly split between officer and community, and it is now going towards the community" (SRB officer 4, 1998).

### **5.1.2 Empowerment and decision-making**

A second perspective suggests empowerment is a process revolving around increased decision-making powers. For instance, Andersen and Larsen, studying the feminisation of poverty in Danish society, claim empowerment is brought about by: "processes through which people attain greater control over and come to participate in the decisions affecting their lives and the circumstances which influence their fate" (Andersen and Larsen, 1998: 243). Some interviewees involved in this study view empowerment in a similar way. As a local male councillor comments: "empowerment is about giving them the resource and allowing them to do it, but clearly monitoring that resource because it is public money" (Local councillor 2, 1998). From this comment it may be inferred that officials within the regeneration process are managing the empowerment of local residents. In a similar manner King et al. see empowerment as being brought about through someone else: "designing processes where citizens know that their participation has the potential to have an impact, where a representative range of citizens are included, and where there are visible outcomes" (1998: 323). However, King et al., do

not recognise that there are possible limits to empowerment.

Other justifications for why empowerment may be seen as related to the decision-making process have been debated. Karl argues: “empowerment is a process and is not, therefore, something that can be given to people. The process of empowerment is both individual and collective, since it is through involvement in groups that people most often begin to develop their awareness and the ability to organise to take action and bring about change” (Karl, 1995: 14). She goes on to outline a number of interrelated stages of the ‘empowerment process’ of which some stages relate to much more than simply increased decision-making:

- “awareness building about women’s situation, discrimination and rights and opportunities as a step towards gender equality. Collective awareness building provides a sense of group identity and the power of working as a group.
- Capacity building and skills development, especially the ability to plan, make decisions, organise, manage and carry out activities, to deal with people and institutions in the world around them.
- Participation and greater control and decision-making power in the home, community and society.
- Action to bring about greater equality between men and women” (Karl, 1995: 14).

The emphasis on the notion of empowerment as a process is on its apparent relationship with the articulation of power, which increasing participation may bring. As residents become more involved in their local area and its regeneration, it is possible they will assume more of a decision-making role, and perhaps become empowered (see Chapter Four on token and active involvement). Atkinson suggests: “empowerment has largely been defined in terms which reflect the ‘power’ of individual consumers in a market place” (1999: 63). Schübeler also suggests that empowerment concerns: “the expansion of power and not only its redistribution. As a constituent function of social systems, the

exercise of power (in the sense of governance) depends on communication, shared values, and organisation ... participation may expand power by enhancing the integration, productiveness, and problem solving capacity of a society” (1996: 34). This point relates to whether power is a zero-sum concept (see Chapter One, endnotes). However, an SRB officer defines empowerment as: “having a say in what is happening in their areas and also management of some of their facilities, such as the heritage park” (SRB officer 2, 1998). It is interesting to note here that the emphasis is on “some” facilities, rather than all community facilities, which again suggests officials do, in part, “control” the regeneration process, which appears to place community empowerment within limits.

However, viewing empowerment as a process with increased decision-making abilities may ignore those residents who do not see themselves as part of the regeneration changes and may be empowered by deciding not to participate. Stewart and Taylor identify groups in society with no access to power that they define as disempowered. They claim this results from:

- **“Isolation** - reinforced through the personal internalisation of ‘failure’ and by negative images and stereotypes from outside.
- **Dependency** - on services and income planned, provided and managed by others, who themselves may be demoralised and controlled by distant bureaucracies.
- **Marginalisation** within schemes to regenerate or rehabilitate the area. Power flows around and over the community not through it.
- **Exclusion** - from the basic rights and access to income, housing, employment, and services, an exclusion that is often enshrined in political inaction and administrative practice” (Stewart and Taylor, 1995: 64).

Other observers argue that empowerment may represent: “the organised efforts of disempowered groups to increase control over resources and regulative institutions” (UNRISD, 1979: 8). As a result, commentators who share this view of empowerment,

define it as: “the organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control” (UNRISD, cited in Abbott, 1996: 20)

A second criticism levelled at this idea of empowerment as a process is that achieving empowerment within urban regeneration may not necessarily, but in most cases probably does, require residents to participate. This Sheffield based research highlights how empowerment has been perceived as different from simply increasing the participation of residents in regeneration schemes. An SRB officer comments: “the first part of community empowerment is for them [local residents] to understand the process. Knowledge is part of empowerment and then they have got to have the skills to understand things like appraisals, systems, finance and so training is going on as well. And ultimately it is the ability of the community to collectively decide their priorities” (SRB officer 4, 1998).

### **5.1.3 Empowerment within regeneration**

A third perspective on empowerment is that it is a potential outcome from regeneration policy, such as the SRB. Recent debates in the urban regeneration literature concern the significance of empowerment in promoting social and sustainable regeneration (Colenutt and Cutten, 1994; Nevin and Shiner, 1995ab). Some commentators argue here that empowerment is not new within regeneration. Stewart and Taylor date the first developments of empowerment within urban regeneration to the Urban Programme and the Community Development Projects of the 1960s and 1970s (1995: 4; see Thomas, 1995: 3). They suggest the oil crisis of 1973 prompted the end to economic prosperity,

which had provided the backdrop to the community development initiatives advanced in the previous decade (1995: 5). However, the notion of empowerment has increased in prominence within regeneration initiatives and remains as a central theme, despite its apparent lack of definition (Stewart and Taylor, 1995: 7; Colenutt and Cutten 1994: 237; Burns et al., 1994: 154).

One of the key formative impulses in the embedding of “empowerment” within the regeneration debate was the City Challenge initiative of 1991 (see Chapter One). Nevin and Shiner, two proponents of community empowerment, argue that through an empowered community a sustainable and more long-term regeneration strategy may be achieved. They base this argument on the premise that if people become involved through participating in their area, they are more likely to become committed to it, and in turn want to stay, within it (1995b: 309). Likewise, Mayo argues that: “if communities are to be involved in partnerships for urban renewal which are genuinely empowering, rather than disempowering, governments need to set this in the context of longer-term strategies for community development” (1997: 23). This suggests empowerment may not simply happen: rather conditions for empowerment have to be established.

In 1994, the SRB progressed the concept of community empowerment further by attempting to utilise empowered communities to regenerate their areas (DETR, 1997a). SRB partnerships potentially encourage more actors, including local residents, to take part in the regeneration process and in decision-making (see Chapter One). Brownill and Darke recognise: “each partner brings to the table different assumptions about other partners and different styles of power” (1998: 16). Furthermore, Mayo argues:

“partnerships *can* be empowering, but they can also be disempowering for communities and for the professionals who work with them” (1997: 3; original emphasis).

As a CLES report points out, empowerment is: “used by different actors - often politicians - in a variety of contexts, and thereby risks being meaningless” (1992: 3). As a result of this lack of clarity, different actors in the regeneration process may expect different outcomes from empowerment initiatives. Hence, local residents or key decision-makers may experience disappointment with the outcomes of programmes designed to boost or enhance empowerment (Barr, 1995; DoE, 1995a: 80). However, empowerment remains as one of the desired outcomes of the SRB, for reasons explored below.

Commentators examining empowerment within regeneration have proposed three reasons as to why it has assumed significance within the SRB. First, the DETR contends that: “local people or particular interest groups may generate ideas for tackling a particular problem, that would not have been thought of otherwise” (DoE, 1995a: 22, also DETR, 1997a). Several local residents make similar observations. Charlotte comments: “well, because it’s your community, you should have a say in what happens. I mean you might rent a house, but while ever you are paying the rent that’s your house. Without a doubt, you should have a say in what happens to it, and it would be an ideal situation that, in the ultimate meetings where it’s decided how money’s spent, that a representative from the community committee could be there” (1997). Second, Lund et al. suggest empowerment is important to be achieved through urban regeneration as: “in principle, City challenge and SRB offer hope for local communities that regeneration plans for their area can be part owned by local people” (1996: 221). A third reason to

support the development of community empowerment and participation is proposed by Croft and Beresford who argue that people participate in their neighbourhood in order to exert an influence and to be able to make changes. They continue by suggesting some of the features that are associated with this desire are:

- “-influencing decisions and outcomes
- changing the distribution of power
- ensuring equal access to marginalised and oppressed groups and constituencies
- providing for broadbased involvement, moving beyond the creation of new leaderships.

That is why terms like ‘having a say’ and ‘empowerment’ have become synonymous with involvement in people’s minds” (1992: 37). The main thrust of Croft and Beresford’s argument is that residents will desire empowerment so they can influence and implement changes in their own lives.

#### **5.1.4 The SRB: a top-down or bottom-up approach?**

A further debate in the literature on empowerment and regeneration revolves around the degree to which the SRB presents a top down or a bottom up approach to regeneration. Urban policies, of the 1980s, are commonly recognised for being top down, with key officers making decisions and deciding priorities (e.g. Turok, 1992; Brownill, 1997). However, City Challenge and the SRB are ostensibly designed to offer a more community-led approach to regeneration.

Bottom-up approaches tackle regeneration from the community base and they may be more beneficial to the community as they potentially offer an opportunity through which to identify needs and problems (Lund et al., 1996: 226). However, bottom-up

approaches do raise the question of who in the local community identifies with, and who represents, the needs of others. This research in Sheffield illustrates the difficulty of the SRB being regarded as fully bottom-up in its approach. Most key actors recognise that there are always some decisions, which require top-down approval. As a male SRB officer suggests:

“so, the important thing is to identify those things that really have to be top-down, like you have got to have strategic partners engaged to sort out common things across the board and be committed to working at a local level, in terms of directing resources and then have as vibrant as possible organisations at a local level, as much as people want to, in terms of taking responsibility for prioritising and identifying how things should go in the future and delivering projects that they want to deliver and the trick is how much central power there is and how much delegated responsibility there is” (SRB officer 1, 1998).

This perspective suggests regeneration may require a balance between top-down, decisions made by key officers, and bottom-up, decisions made by the community (City 2020, 1994; Barr, 1995: 129). This parallels Barr’s observation that: “... there is a legitimate role for both the “top-down” process of policy development and the “bottom-up” process of community organisation and response. However, it is contended that only a “bottom-up” empowered community can satisfactorily enter partnership with “top-down” initiatives. “Top-down” approaches should seek to create the conditions for disadvantaged people to influence those things that matter to them as well as engaging them in a debate about wider issues” (1995: 129).

Some commentators have criticised the assumption that empowerment can emerge through the regeneration process. One argument is that business and central government interests empower communities only to further their own interests. Barr argues: “professionals and politicians need honestly to appraise their attitudes and consider whether in their strategies for empowerment they only accede to notions of partnership because this approach secures their own power” (1995: 128). Other observers suggest

the partnership approach may exclude the interests of certain groups, such as women (Riseborough, 1997) (see Chapter Six). It is reasonable to suggest that those residents who do not make it to the partnership Board level or equivalent may be disempowered (Stewart and Taylor, 1995). Some interviewees also recognise ways in which the partnership approach may be ignoring their interests. As Sheila experienced when having to move from her maisonette in Nethethorpe: “they [councillors] don’t seem interested, they don’t seem to care” (1997).

Further criticisms of regeneration programmes attempting to achieve community empowerment are outlined by Brownill and Darke. They argue that the partnership approach, embedded within SRB, may actually disempower local residents because of the: “*speed of operation*: tight bidding timetables and short-life agencies means that speed is often the essence ... *Output driven*: partnerships are concerned about meeting the targets that have been set in terms of output and performance ... *The ‘can-do’ culture*: the need for speed and to meet targets can often promote a culture within organisations of being focused and getting on with the job ... *Different cultures*: partnerships bring together partners with a range of different cultures” (1998: 16; original emphasis). Many of these issues are relevant to this research. For example, a community activist from the Norfolk Park area explains the reasoning behind renouncing his involvement: “the community has got a lot of information to come to terms with and little direction as to how to make decisions. This is my big worry, when I was chair of the Local Management Board, I didn’t know what the implications of the decisions were likely to be, and I didn’t know the consequences ... it is very demoralising and you feel you are letting everyone down because you don’t really know why you are making the decisions” (Norfolk Park community activist 4, 1998).

Although the partnership approach has been perceived as a way to empower local residents (Nevin and Shiner, 1995a), it may not actually be empowering residents in two of Sheffield's SRB schemes. As Tracy comments: "I just think they've got it [Community Alliance] there, so they can say, 'we've got the tenants'. But really they have already got the ideas in their heads and they don't try to persuade you to think of your own ideas, they try to persuade you to like their ideas" (1997)

## **5.2 CONCEPTUALISING EMPOWERMENT**

From the research findings it can be argued that there is differential engagement and empowerment with the regeneration schemes between residents in Sheffield (Figure 5.1). This complements Stewart and Taylor's findings: "residents can be given (or take) varying degrees of power - as expressed in ladders or scales of participation, such as those initially developed by Arnstein (1969)" (1995: 14).

Figure 5.1 illustrates and describes the situation of residents, in terms of their empowerment in the SRB within the city. By any definition, most residents, in particular women, do not appear to be empowered and, as a result, are at the base of the triangle. This cluster of residents is generally not involved in either the regeneration process, or participates in a non-decision making capacity (see Chapters Four and Six).

Figure 5.1: The empowerment triangle (based on interview data)

“the higher up the hierarchy you go, there are more men” (Norfolk Park Community  
Activist 1, 1998: 8)



(Author’s evidence)

Smith discovered similar findings: “as participation is about power and the control of power is surrounded by mystification, obviously most participation that the local authority offers of its own volition is tokenism on Arnstein’s ladder” (1981: 17) (see Chapter Four).

The next step up the triangle represents those residents involved in either a ‘token’ or

‘active’ manner (see Chapter Four). These residents make ‘semi-decisions’, in that they support or oppose decisions taken. Towards the apex of the model, empowerment is seen to increase and numbers of women (and people generally) tend to decrease. Barr argues: “as communities obtain more influence or control over the definition of their needs and more influence or control over the response to them, so it is assumed that they are increasingly empowered” (1995: 123). Consequently, participants towards the top have increasing responsibility and are seen to be empowered within the local setting. This group of residents is generally community activists, in particular those (men) who sit on the SRB Board. Key actors tend also to be male, who are generally seen as empowered. This is explained by a female SRB officer: “my own feeling is that the people in positions of power in this city are male” (SRB officer 3, 1998). The triangle describes different levels of empowerment, which are now analysed in the following sections.

### **5.3 EMPOWERMENT IN TWO OF SHEFFIELD’S SRB SCHEMES**

The SRB introduced a new decision-making process in Sheffield: “SRB forced corporate working” (Council employee 1, 1998), which appears to be empowering local residents and community activists, in terms of providing them opportunities to participate at a variety of levels. However, revised working practices may also be disempowering by imposing bureaucratic procedures and restrictions on their activities (see Chapter Six). A female SRB officer remarks on how the SRB may be seen as: “systems and processes that tend to disempower them [residents and officials], it empowers them at one level and disempowers them at another level” (SRB officer 3, 1998). On the one hand, the SRB may be seen to be overloading local residents with

information and responsibility, but on the other hand it does not seem to allow them to make decisions. As a male community activist in NWICA remarks: “we submitted requests for projects and they were getting sent back to us saying they don’t fulfil criteria, but they weren’t telling us where they weren’t fulfilling” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998). In similar vein, Brownill and Darke point out: “for regeneration professionals to accept the validity of local agendas may be empowering for local people, but can be experienced as disempowering for project workers. They are no longer in control of the process and must live with a high degree of uncertainty” (1998: 8). In the light of this short critique concerning the ability of the SRB to promote empowerment in Sheffield, it is reasonable to infer that there are both difficulties in achieving, and indeed in recognising, empowerment.

### **5.3.1 Recognising and achieving empowerment**

Baistow raises the question: “how do you know if you are being, or have been, empowered?” (1994: 42). Some commentators, such as Brownill and Darke recognise that there may be different routes to regeneration and propose: “for others, paid work may not be what is needed and economic empowerment through increasing incomes in other ways such as credit unions and energy efficient homes may be more appropriate” (1998: 6). However, Colenutt and Cutten point out that: “to simply assert that by following the principles of x, y and z will lead to empowerment within all communities would be a complete fallacy: each community will reach a different level of empowerment over time, as a direct result of very distinctive approaches which reflect the unique nature and dynamics that govern that particular community” (1994: 247). In

a similar manner, Barr notes: “it is necessary to recognise that, ultimately, agencies can only create the conditions in which people can empower themselves and cannot do it for them” (1995: 130).

Debates in the literature recognise difficulties in achieving empowerment. Barr points out: “the multiple character of the disadvantages experienced by many of the interest groups on who empowerment might be focused should also be recognised in any analysis of the nature and implications of poverty...Empowerment needs to address them all and the interaction between them” (1995: 125). In this context the empowerment of local residents in a regeneration area may be a difficult aim to achieve as some residents, in particular women, may already be marginalised from political, social or economic arenas (see Chapter Six). However, the literature suggests there are three main ways of empowering the community: increasing confidence, capacity building, and encouraging community ownership. Each is discussed below.

### **5.3.2 Confidence building**

Stewart and Taylor have suggested: “the first step in empowerment, [therefore], is to build the confidence of the people who live on the estate, to realise the assets that already exist there but which are undervalued, and to energise the networks (and potential circuits of power) that are latent within the estate” (1995: 65; Taylor, 1995).

An SRB officer in Sheffield also relates increasing confidence with increased empowerment: “as their confidence grows and their ability grows they will have a greater and greater say in the whole process” (SRB officer 4, 1998). In addition, Robinson and Shaw acknowledge: “empowerment has to be seen as a long-term process

initially concerned with building confidence in communities which are unused to being informed, let alone asked to draw up alternative plans” (1991: 71).

Other commentators have distinguished between self-confidence and self-empowerment issues. Brownill and Darke suggest: “this [confidence building] may be more effective if individuals can initially work with others similar to themselves. However, unless the gains in confidence can be sustained in wider settings their value will be limited” (1998: 10). Increasing the confidence of local residents to influence decisions may be important in promoting empowerment, however, capacity building and community ownership are also seen as significant in helping to promote empowerment.

### **5.3.3 Capacity building**

The DETR recognise:

“In contrast to community representatives, other partners are likely to have greater back-up resources than the community. If the community is to make a full and equal contribution to the strategic management of the partnership and its programmes, then the partnership will need to ensure that its procedures assist community representatives to undertake their role effectively. This may include providing specific support to build the capacity of the community, through, for example, training for representatives; providing support workers to help community groups to develop skills; or access to administrative resources, such as office equipment” (Annex E, 1998a, para.3).

Norman illustrates the second main way of achieving community empowerment: “an important goal of community development is capacity building, without which empowerment is impossible” (1993: 193). The importance of capacity building is also highlighted by a local female councillor: “well, to support the emerging community groups so they can engage with the council, the TEC, or whoever on equal terms you

need to build their capacity. Otherwise they are coming in as the poor relation” (Local councillor 1, 1998). As this comment implies, capacity building can be seen as significant in terms of ensuring a more even playing field within the regeneration game and is seen to be about recognising and accepting diversity between different partners of the regeneration process (CURS, 1997 cited in Brownill and Darke, 1998: 25; *opcit.*: 7).

Capacity building, promoted through establishing an even playing field, may be: “assisted by the deployment of community development staff within a team setting (where they are supported and managed by community development staff rather than by staff from other professions), in which they also have access to the central policy making areas of the Council” (Booth, 1997: 158). This assertion underlines the importance of providing professional support for community development and empowerment. In addition, Norman recognises from his research on a United Neighbourhood Council in Southern California that: “because empowerment cannot be given or donated, an environment must be created in which people learn to develop and use effective self-help techniques. Simply stated, this means that the pace of development must be dictated by the community and not the businesses...” (1993: 191). This suggests that not only do local residents require encouragement to be empowered, but that certain conditions may have to be created.

Another commentator, who recognises the significance of capacity building in achieving empowerment, argues: “capacity-building [also] has a more general aspect that aims to develop the confidence, skills and knowledge of individuals and community organisations not directly involved in the partnership board. This may also have the added bonus of increasing the number of participants and avoiding participation

becoming dependent upon a few active individuals” (Atkinson, 1999: 67-68). He adds: “training and capacity-building are clearly key aspects of the empowerment process” (Atkinson, 1999: 68). However, interviewees vary in how they view capacity building. A female community activist in NWICA comments: “there was £38 million spent on housing and a few million left to spread around community groups for a bit of capacity building and SRB is failing miserably in NWICA because it doesn’t do any capacity building and hasn’t got any structure to deliver it” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998). However, key actors in the two Sheffield SRB schemes believe they are encouraging community empowerment by providing the support and building the capacity: “you are looking at small community groups that have been used to a few hundred quid from a jumble sale suddenly being put in charge of houses and particular projects. And now that is a very steep learning curve and people need a hell of a lot of support for that and we try and provide that, but it is never adequate simply due to resources” (SRB officer 3, 1998).

Contrary to the significance some commentators place on capacity building, Mayo using her research on community participation in Deptford City Challenge, argues that: “despite the focus upon capacity-building in government policy discussions, one critic had commented in the first evaluation report [that] the community was actually ‘pretty bloody capable already’” (1997: 20). This has some parallels with the situation in Sheffield: “we can be on the panels that choose what it is, but it is not us who are doing all the technical side because that has got to be done by officers, because I don’t think they think we have got the expertise. I think we have, there is a lot of expertise” (Norfolk Park community activist 2, 1998). In a similar manner, Helen, a younger NWICA resident comments: “how do they know that there aren’t people in the area that

are trained and they may be unemployed just because they can't get a job because there is no jobs out there" (1997).

### **5.3.4 Community ownership**

Lund et al. (1996: 221) find from their research on the Church Urban Fund, that the third way of bringing about empowerment is through community ownership or community management. This method also concurs with findings from Sheffield. Crookesmoor training centre and Crookesmoor school, are two SRB-funded projects in the NWICA area, which key officers would like to see community managed. However, as a male SRB officer comments:

"we've got projects that ideally we would like community managed, like at Crookesmoor school, but that is a long way off. And also the cost of running it is a lot, so you could easily hand something over to the community which becomes a lead balloon in 2 or 3 years time when the SRB runs out, so part of it as I have seen in the past with the Urban programme and some of the other regimes is almost setting up people to fail by developing these grandiose projects that happen in isolation where the community are given a dollop of old council premises, which they think are an asset and in actual fact are a liability. And they have to struggle to run it for years as funding regimes change and the Council withdraws funding because it has got budget cuts and suddenly you have got a project that is going down the tubes" (SRB officer 1, 1998; emphasis added).

Again this comment highlights how officers see themselves as controlling what is community managed and who is empowered. This management by officials is seen by them as necessary so the community is not given a project, which cannot be managed, as this may result in failure (Stewart and Taylor, 1995: 17). More cynically this control by officers of the empowerment process may be so that they do not lose their own power bases.

In Sheffield, community activists willing to manage SRB projects, tend to recognise the barriers they face (see Chapter Six). A male community activist in Norfolk Park comments: “I want to finish off in a couple of years time where we have direct control of that money and the SRB company disappears, but I don’t think it will happen because the SRB company aren’t going to give up their jobs, but that would be the ideal position” (Norfolk Park community activist 1, 1998). In this context, empowerment may be seen to be more than a transfer of ownership and (possible) unwanted responsibility. It is also about making residents responsible (e.g. Tam, 1996; Popham, 1996). As a female community activist in Norfolk Park comments: “I think it is more than just a sense of ownership it is about moving the community along or enabling them to do that themselves rather than someone doing that for them” (Norfolk Park community activist 3, 1998).

#### **5.4 RESIDENTS’ RELATION TO THE EMPOWERMENT PROCESS**

Brownill and Darke illustrate that self-empowerment initiatives appear more likely to impact on women than men, although this may be because the project they refer to was directed at women. Using the example of a Women’s Design Service project in King’s Cross, London, Brownill and Darke suggest that priorities, such as improving health through diet and increasing disposable income through cutting food bills, are being met. These goals may be viewed as self-empowerment indicators, which are seen to be benefiting women more than men (1988: 22). Gilroy (1996) recognises there are several routes to power for the different sections of a community. She argues employment and training initiatives tend to be directed towards the empowerment of men, whereas women focus on initiatives, which seek to achieve empowerment, through such

activities as the local nursery school. Brownill and Darke (1998) illustrate how women and ethnic minority groups may be represented on SRB boards, but are unlikely to be lead partners (CURS, 1997). Kitchin also notes: “many women are already involved in local affairs, but they are only marginally present in decision making” (1997: 17).

Other observers researching community empowerment, such as Croft and Beresford, find that schemes leading to tenant empowerment, “tended to focus on groups facing particular disadvantage and marginalisation” (1992: 35). Through encouraging group action, ‘individual empowerment’ may be developed and vice-versa (Stewart and Taylor, 1995: 14). Stewart and Taylor continue: “collective action can deny power to others through exclusion. One individual’s empowerment can also deny empowerment to another” (Stewart and Taylor, 1995: 14). This assertion has parallels in Sheffield. For instance, the dominance of community activists in some areas is seen to exclude other residents from the regeneration arena (see Chapter Six). Equally, some female residents are of the opinion that it is men who are dominating the regeneration plans and becoming empowered.

The relationship between local residents’ empowerment in two of Sheffield’s SRB schemes appear from the interview data to fall into three broad categories: those who are community activists, and are empowered to represent the community’s voice in the regeneration initiatives; those who participate in a “part-decision-making” context; and those who do not participate and therefore are not empowered. Each of these three groups is discussed below. However, there are other residents who consider themselves to be empowered by making the decision not to participate, such as Vera. In contrast, there are other residents who participate without being empowered. In short,

participation does not lead directly to empowerment, nor does empowerment require someone to participate.

#### **5.4.1 Empowered community activists**

Community activists, tend to have decision-making roles because they were active in their area before SRB designation. As a male community activist in NWICA reflects: “I have been involved in this for a long time, so consequently I know if I am taking something on I have a good idea of what I am taking on and what it entails” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998). Another community activist in Norfolk Park comments: “I am in a powerful position in this community because I have been around a long time and I know a lot of people” (Norfolk Park, community activist 1, 1998). Other residents refer to this last group of activists as the ‘community hard core’, ‘community activists’ and ‘committee junkies’.

A community activist illustrates how he, along with other community activists from NWICA, has been able to influence the SRB process: “the first thing they did when they got the SRB money to Sheffield, was they top sliced it by 7.4% and they said that was for administration costs and then the money came in for Norfolk Park and they got another 7.4% of that and then the money came in for Manor [SRB 3] and we eventually got them to knock it down to 4.6%” (male NWICA Community activist 2, 1998). The community activists achieved this reduction by threatening the SRB partnership Board with media exposure over the amount of money they were using for administration costs.

Although community representatives see themselves as empowered and in turn responsible for voicing the interests of other local residents, they are not always seen in such a positive light by other residents. Helen explains what happened when she was at a community meeting: “there are a few and they think they own this area, they are the ones that are suggesting all these changes and they don’t like other people getting involved” (1997). Equally, Lisa comments on what happened when she first attended a meeting in Norfolk Park: “as soon as I walked in [to a meeting] it was where are you from? And they pounced straight on me and fortunately I’m quite confident and I said, ‘look I feel threatened here and I feel really intimidated’ and they said, ‘oh we wouldn’t have made you feel like that’, so they make you feel even worse then” (1998).

Many local residents believe these ‘committee junkies’ dominate what happens in the area and, to a certain extent, control who else may be involved. Lisa suggests: “you always get a few who take over and you get the other few that are like here we go again, and it is a case of some people will not be ready to take over, but they will not be walked over. It is the same people that go to meetings every time” (1998). Janet had a similar experience in Netherthorpe: “we never really got chance to put our ‘twopenneth’ in, you know the die-hard committee members were there” (1997).

Other community activists recognise: “there have been people who are more interested in the power than in what happens” (Norfolk Park community activist 2, 1998). The motivation for some community activists may be self-empowerment, which concerns several activists. One comments: “one of the problems that you do often get is little cliques and people get to like the power and then they block other people out and exclude them” (NWICA community activist 4, 1998). However, she adds her view on what the situation should be like and how she tries to promote it: “it [the participation

process] is not about individuals getting more and more knowledge and consolidating their position. It is about always sharing it and making sure that there are other people coming up and being involved” (NWICA community activist 4, 1998).

In short, this research illustrates a tendency for the SRB to empower those who may already be empowered in their area: the community activists. A female community activist in NWICA states: “I think the biggest problem may well be a conflict situation within the Community Alliance where there are power struggles going on. And it could easily end up in the hands of the same few people” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998). In the past in NWICA, there appears to have been a dominance of a certain individuals who controlled what happened on the estate. Despite the attempts made by the Community Alliance to encourage a cross-section of residents to participate in the regeneration changes, there is still concern, as alluded to above, that certain individuals are dominating the regeneration process in NWICA.

There is a conflict of views over whether the SRB process may be empowering certain individuals or the local community as a whole, and *who* in the community becomes empowered at the possible expense of the marginalisation of other local residents. Wilson argues: “the goal of empowerment is the self realisation of each individual’s own well being and potential for changing themselves, their families and their community” (1996: 622). And concludes that: “participation in community economic development [such as SRB projects] enhances individual empowerment” (1996: 627). Without individual or self-empowerment, Wilson argues, community empowerment may not be brought about. This claim is supported by the research in Sheffield, which suggests that through empowering individuals, benefits may be received more generally

in the local community. A female community activist in NWICA comments:

“it is about empowering the individuals, so for example something like Crookesmoor training centre up the road, I think this is a good example because that is a new training centre that should be moving to community management within a very short time period and there has been a lot of pressure for it to do that ... and the theory is that local people will run that, they will run the sort of services they need” (NWICA community activist 4, 1998).

This debate, that the female community activist recognises above, concerns whether the SRB is potentially empowering individuals, the community as a whole, or both individuals and the community (Fawcett et al., 1995: 678). It is a significant debate as it is seen to have wider gender implications.

Although many women perceive themselves as participating in the organising and administrative side of community work (see Chapter Four), they generally see men as the decision-makers. As a female key actor comments: “in the voluntary and community sector what tends to happen with women, is that they beaver away, doing the actual work on the ground, but seldom get into the decision-making” (SRB officer 3, 1998). This view is shared by a number of interviewees. For instance a male community activist comments: “I would say that it was still very much that men are making the decisions and women do the action” (NWICA community activist 1, 1998). Similarly, Sheila explains how she sees community meetings operating: “I think it is the men that like to make them [decisions] because it is the power and it is down to the men to make the decisions” (1998). However: “there are a lot of women at these [community] meetings and maybe they are not in positions of power because they don’t necessarily want to be” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998).

In Sheffield, men appear more likely to assume the dominant positions in meetings. As

Lisa has noticed at the meetings she has attended: “if men want to make their voice heard they do and they get heard better than any of us [women] because it is a man speaking” (1998). This male dominance seems to reflect the position of men at a city-wide level. As a female SRB officer remarks: “the main Board is totally male” (SRB officer 3, 1998)<sup>1</sup>. In this context, men may be the ones who are making the decisions and having more of an influence than the women have in the area. As a female community activist remarks: “when I have been to the local Board it has been very male and it has been very male because a lot of the officers there are male and because a lot of those workers are at a higher level you are just finding that there are more men higher up the ladder” (NWICA community activist 4, 1998).

A further example of men as decision-makers comes from Tracy, a younger, single NWICA resident: “men seem to make all the decisions everywhere so I can’t see why this is any different...women don’t generally get listened to do they? And at the end of the day women are still seen as the weaker sex” (1998). This apparent lack of women in positions of decision-making reflects what Taylor et al. (1996) discovered in their studies on Sheffield and Manchester: “one of the most striking features of these two cities in the North of England - certainly to one of the present authors, having lived for seven years in the capital city of Canada - was their irredeemably male-dominated local power structures” (1996: 226).

Indeed, some interviewees see this dominance of men in the more senior decision-making forums as influencing overall decision-making. A female SRB officer suggests: “at any meeting where you have got dominance by one particular sex it will fall into role play to some extent and it can be an all lads together sort of atmosphere and sort of

jokes that come along with that” (SRB officer 5, 1998). Furthermore, this male domination does not appear to encourage more women to participate and may actually disempower some women. As a female SRB officer explains: “if you are a single mum with many mouths to feed faced with a row of men in **grey suits** then you do feel disempowered, you feel that you couldn’t make an adequate contribution” (SRB officer 3, 1998; emphasis added).

However, it is not necessarily a problem that women are only represented at lower levels of decision-making. Some key activists suggest it is not at (the male dominated) SRB level where decisions are made, but rather at the Local Management Board level: “the Local Management Board, for example, which has a say in what projects are approved, that has got half and half [men and women]” (SRB officer 2, 1998). This implies both male and female residents may be empowered to influence or support, but not necessarily make decisions in the SRB schemes in Sheffield.

#### **5.4.2 Powerless participation**

There is a second group of residents who do not consider themselves to be fully empowered despite their participation in the regeneration projects. As an older NWICA resident, who was actively involved in 1997, comments: “you get the input, but it is not usually taken any notice of. I mean we had that meeting to decide, I mean it wasn’t even fully decided at the meeting what was going to happen there were just different options” (Sheila, 1998). In this context, although residents do not feel empowered, they believe they have some input in decision-making. Residents are either of the opinion that, despite their involvement, they are not empowered because either key decisions have

already been made, or that they can only support decisions that have already been made.

Many local residents, who participate, are of the view that it is not possible to change decisions because so many key issues are decided before regeneration bids are submitted. They do not see how any of these decisions may be reversed without losing the money. Emma, a younger Norfolk Park resident, who does not participate comments:

“They have had to go to this Government and say this is what is going to happen and this is when it is going to happen, and it is going to happen how they said because obviously if you have set a proposal and someone is giving you £60 million they aren’t going to be very happy if you change that proposal are they really? Because they have given you the money to do what you said you were going to do, so it don’t make no difference what happens, it comes back down to the fact they have made the proposal and so whether 100 people go and speak to them, the council are still going to do what **they** want to do” (Emma, 1998; emphasis added).

This may indicate that many local residents are only supporting decisions made by key officers. This complements the work of Burns et al. who write: “influence implies the ability to have an effect on decisions which have an impact on local communities. Authority carries with it the ability to take action without prior confirmation from a higher level” (1994: 174). Some residents may have an influence on decisions, but not necessarily the final say. In Sheffield it appears there was no community consultation at the critical time of the regeneration process, in terms of deciding the aims and objectives of the overall regeneration programmes.

There appears to be a tendency for several local residents to have what may be termed, “part decision-making” powers. This means they may have to: “decide between a, b, and c, but whether what a, b, and c are being asked to do is right or not, we do not really get

an opportunity to say” (Norfolk Park community activist 4, 1998). He adds: “we didn’t set the brief, but we are going to make a decision on the brief that has been set, so again we are being asked to give support to a decision that has been made by officers at an earlier stage” (Norfolk Park community activist 4, 1998). In similar vein, Hutchinson (1994) argues the decision-making authority of a partnership generally rests with a Board of directors. In Sheffield it was not until three years after the announcement of the first SRB programme that local residents were represented on the main Board of directors.

However, it may be argued here that empowerment is about having the power to make decisions, which do not require approval from key officers. A male community activist in Norfolk Park states:

“well in as much as the community is involved in decision- making, which it is not really because it’s too complicated to understand. There are too many issues around and you can’t get your hands around all the facts, one is told all of a sudden that there is a change in the requirements by Government, and the deadline is tomorrow, so how can you go away and think about it and they say this is the suggestion we have got to put forward and agree it because we are going to miss the deadline otherwise and so what can we do?” (Norfolk Park community activist 4, 1998).

It seems that the tight time frames imposed by Government deadlines pressurise residents into accepting decisions key actors make, in order to prevent losing regeneration funds. Hastings et al., argue: “operating time-scales for feedback...make it difficult for the community representatives fully to consider the issues” (1996: 25). The process through which this occurs may undermine their sense of empowerment. Other respondents highlight how their empowerment may be further problematised. Karen, a younger Norfolk Park resident argues:

“I think once people have got hold of power they don’t give it up lightly. I think people can make changes, but it has to be an awful lot of people acting together and if a protest goes on long enough and loud enough it can make a difference

but it does take time and ultimately it does take a suit to say we are going to change this and that because this is what people want” (Karen, 1997).

However, as a male community activist in NWICA comments: “people were saying this project or this proposal has got to be in Central Government in four days time, so consequently you haven’t got time to sit down and consult with people and you have got to give a decision there and then so the project could be drawn up and submitted to either the Government Office in Leeds or to Central Government” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998). In a similar context, McArthur finds in Scotland that: “the community representatives are not empowered to make independent decisions when attending the various meetings of the partnership, but can act only with the authority of the community organisation they represent” (1995: 68).

Community activists also recognise this problem of having to support decisions which have already been made: “the decisions aren’t local really, we have to make decisions and it gets fed back and we are told, ‘oh by the way Leeds say you have got to do this and it has got to be approved by London’, and you still aren’t making decisions and it is very convoluted” (Norfolk Park community activist 4, 1998). In this context, it is unlikely local residents or community activists are actually being fully empowered because of the bureaucracy inherent to SRB (see Chapter Six).

Several key officers also recognise how residents may only assume a “part or supportive decision-making role”, which does not appear to constitute community empowerment. Supporting a decision may not command the same power and control as making a decision: “we are only consulting and they are only coming up with views on this refurbishment. If they said, ‘knock ’em down’, we wouldn’t because they are relatively

cheap and relatively popular these maisonettes so why demolish them, do you know what I mean?" (Council employee 1, 1998). However, in practice, some residents may have more influence than they realise. For example, Lisa expressed surprise when she realised that her comments had been listened to: "I have only made one or two suggestions to the Project Group and they responded to them and I was a bit gob-smacked because someone had actually heard me" (1998).

In practice residents may be unaware of the power they can exert over decision-making. This finding parallels what Breitenbach found in her study of the Pilton Partnership in Edinburgh: "the 'community representatives' possibly underestimated their influence on decisions in the Management Committee, and one possible consequence of this perception is that strong challenges were not made to the partner organisations, particularly those which community representatives felt neither sufficiently clarified their role in the partnership, nor contributed enough to the area" (1997: 164). This research illustrates similar findings. The community appears unaware of exactly how much power they may command. As a female SRB officer claims:

"the community actually have a lot more power than they think they have. They always see themselves as the minor players in the game and they may well be treated as such. Basically because they don't bring resources, money resources to the table. They bring expertise, local knowledge and resources often in terms of their own time and their own volunteer time and they are made to feel disadvantaged because they didn't actually bring large amounts of dosh" (SRB officer 3, 1998).

Although, she recognises the power local residents may potentially command, she illustrates how residents may not feel confident to challenge decisions because of their perceived unequal footing with other partnership members. The issue of resources is explored in Chapters Six and Seven.

### **5.4.3 No participation and no empowerment**

The third group of residents are generally faced by the situation outlined by a female community activist in Norfolk Park: “at the end of the day it is always someone else’s rules and regulations, I think they consult but that is as far as it goes, tenants never get 51% of the voting rights on anything and I can’t see it changing” (Norfolk Park community activist 2, 1998). Other residents offer similar opinions. For instance, Tracy, a younger NWICA resident, who was tokenly involved in 1997 states: “I think it’s like everybody else runs the area that’s got control, but not the residents. They just go along with it, you know. No one is going to turn their nose up and say, ‘no I don’t want a fitted kitchen and I don’t want this,’ they are all gonna go along with it aren’t they?” (Tracy, 1997). In other words, the majority of local residents are seen to be marginalised from key decision making arenas in Sheffield’s regeneration programmes. This parallels Dominelli’s work: “most people feel excluded from the key decisions affecting their community and powerless in challenging them” (1995: 141). Tracy adds: “everybody that’s making decisions for people in this area aren’t the ones that live here, you know and they live elsewhere and they don’t know what it’s like living here” (1997).

Equally, Collins argues participation: “is about directly involving people in decision making and requires a commitment on those with power to share it. Models of participation generally centre around the election of representatives from open community fora or from relevant non-statutory organisations” (1996: 15). Collins suggests participation and consultation are at opposite ends of a continuum.

Consultation he defines as “canvassing people’s views about decisions which are either about to be, or have been made” (1996: 15).

There is a perception from at least some residents that consultation is about making changes, and influencing decisions. Barbara comments: “I think they do listen otherwise it is pointless having meetings, so they do liase with each other” (1998). Lisa, who was actively involved by 1998 explains: “they are keeping us up to date on information and stuff like that and I think it has been really valuable” (1998). However, she believes residents cannot necessarily make decisions, but can contribute to discussions, which may eventually influence decisions: “I think at the end of the day it is the housing’s [department’s] decision. But I think they do listen hard to what people have to say and they do take it into consideration” (Lisa, 1998).

Evidence tends to suggest that only four of the women interviewed, Sheila, Janet, Lisa and Charlotte, could be seen to be consulted fully about the regeneration projects, but even Sheila states: “however much they say we would like to consult you, it basically means we will tell you what’s happening and we’ll tell you when it has all been decided and we will consult with you, we will have a nice little chat and that is all” (1998). In addition, Dominelli suggests: “power-sharing, collective working and redefining professionalism, requires community workers to be more accountable to the groups they work with, work more effectively collectively, share skills and develop more participatory mechanisms” (1995: 142). Likewise Geddes suggests that: “community organisations and representatives are normally (but not universally) represented on partnership bodies, but not as equal partners” (1997: 108).

Interestingly, some residents appear content with the council and key actors making the decisions affecting their area. For example Barbara, an older NWICA resident, who does not participate explains: “well at the end of the day the council has got the control, but they should be prepared to listen to what other people have got to say as well. But someone has got to be the final decision maker and they are the ones that own the property and so at the end of the day you pay your rent to them and they are the ones that have the final say” (1997). Other residents offer similar reasons for why they think the council is justified in making decisions on their behalf. Jenny, an older, married Norfolk Park resident who is not involved in the regeneration changes, comments: “it is the council that makes the decisions around the housing because it is their stock isn’t it? And at the end of the day they are not going to hand over anything that doesn’t suit them” (Jenny, 1998). Equally, another resident comments: “it’s the council that have final say about regeneration. The people will air their views, but they are not put into full perspective” (Emma, 1997). In a similar context other residents, such as Sheila argue: “ultimately it is up to them [the council] because they have got the money” (1998). However, the money she talks about comes from Central Government to regenerate the communities (DETR, 1997). The feelings of these residents broadly represent those of the ten women who do not participate overall and some of the women who do participate. Either they see the council making decisions because they own the housing stock, or they believe the council will not actually listen to them if they were to participate.

King et al. claim: “authentic participation involves citizens in the making of decisions instead of just judging” (1998: 321). This might suggest that if local residents are not participating in decision making roles, which in ten cases between 1997 and 1998 is the

case in Sheffield, then they are probably not becoming empowered through the regeneration process. Karen points out why she thinks tenants may not be empowered: “I don’t think we have got a lot [of decision-making powers] but I think that might be a bit self-inflicted, if you don’t go to meetings and make your opinions known, who is going to know what you want?” (1998). However, this research illustrates that there is a debate concerning whether residents actually want to be empowered.

#### **5.4.4 Desirability of empowerment**

Some have suggested: “people *want* to be more involved,” while adding: “frequently it [participation] is taken for granted, as if the desire for or commitment to participation is sufficient to ensure it will happen” (Croft and Beresford 1992: 36; original emphasis). However, Stewart and Taylor are less certain of the desire for the community to be empowered: “many residents do not wish to be empowered or involved, to participate ... Indeed, it has been a weakness of many participation exercises to assume that everyone should be involved” (1995: 17). They continue: “debates on empowerment need also to understand the barriers that exclude individual people from engaging in any kind of social life, let alone processes of empowerment “ (1995: 12). Findings from Sheffield illustrate at least, in part, this lack of desire to be empowered.

Some residents recognise that being at the apex of the empowerment model (Figure 5.1) would not necessarily be desirable. Helen, a younger resident who participated in a token manner in 1997, comments: “I don’t know about full control, because then you’d never get anything done, because someone at one house wants one thing and one thing wants another. But, they [key actors] should have meetings and listen to what they

[local residents] have to say” (1997). However, Margaret, an older NWICA resident, who does not participate at all, thinks: “they [residents] should have 90% of the say because I suppose the council wouldn’t want the residents to have 100% because they are going to lose their authority aren’t they?” (1998). In effect this argument may logically imply that local residents never become fully empowered, partly because key officers and local politicians do not seem willing to give up their positions of authority.

Those at the top of the empowerment triangle (Figure 5.1) enjoy increased responsibility, but within a time-consuming and heavily bureaucratic framework. This position may not necessarily be desirable for local residents. Evidence from Sheffield suggests there are three reasons for residents not wishing to be empowered: fear of responsibility, perceived lack of benefits for being empowered and a distrust of authority. Each is discussed below.

In Sheffield, there seems to be a tendency for local residents not to want to be empowered even for those that do participate. For example Tracy comments: “I couldn’t have that responsibility myself, but I think everyone should get their say about spending the money because at the end of the day, it’s for us” (1997). Instead, many women, most of those not involved, appear to favour other residents (community representatives or activists, not key actors) making decisions for them, as long as they represent, what they regard as the general local opinion. Charlotte, who represents the community at some meetings, recognises that this is not necessarily a negative position:

“most people just aren’t interested and really you have to respect that because you can’t force people. If every single person went on all these committees you wouldn’t have a building big enough, so you see most people aren’t bothered. I think in all communities there are certain people that take the reigns and do things. Personally I would rather see other people coming in because all you are

getting is their point of view but you can't drag people in kicking and screaming can you?" (1998).

Many of the residents interviewed point to the increased responsibility associated with participation and empowerment. Many interviewees, those that do and do not participate, talk about not feeling comfortable with making decisions for, and on behalf of, the rest of the community. A male community activist in NWICA explains:

"a lot of people fear the responsibility because you are taking a mandate from the community and when you go to the SRB board you are not talking in thousands or hundreds like you do at a TA meeting or at a housing meeting you are talking in millions, and when you think there is £98m to be spent in Sheffield plus any match funding that comes in. And when you are making decisions for projects for millions, you have got to know what you are talking about otherwise you are going to end up with a lot of egg on your face" (NWICA community activist 2, 1998).

The perceived responsibility of making decisions appears to daunt many residents, as Lisa has recognised through her involvement in Norfolk Park : "I don't know really, because I don't think people round here are quite ready for it [making decisions]" (1998). Similarly, a local male councillor explains: "you are deciding how you want your life to look and it's going forward and that's empowerment and then if you cock-up that it is your problem and you decide, within overall criteria, because that is set down by Government, but you decide" (Local councillor 2, 1998). However, there is an issue here concerning whether residents are actually being given a real choice to effect change in their area, or whether people are being asked to shoulder the responsibility of making decisions, without actually having the power to change them (Parkinson, 1996).

Several key actors also recognise how some local residents appear afraid of the responsibility of being empowered. One SRB officer remarks:

"we understand that most people don't want to be part of the decision-making process and sit at meetings and look at agendas and devise strategies. Most

people are interested in the benefit that they are going to bring and explaining them and that's their level of involvement. The people which tend to get involved at the slightly more detailed level are the people who are quite active, who have got some background in regeneration and are workers of the area or activists in the area" (SRB officer 4, 1998).

In a similar environment Stewart and Taylor found that: "many residents do not wish to be collectively empowered or involved" (1995: 17). Smith argues: "the general experience and expectation of most people militate against participation and acceptance of responsibility. Half the population have not got control of their own living conditions, they are tenants" (1981: 24). However, because local residents have never really been given a full opportunity to be involved in decision-making before SRB designation, they may not know how to go about it. As a local resident comments: "it is good when they ask you. I mean originally when we moved on Norfolk Park we weren't asked anything, we were just given the key for the dwelling and that was that" (Barbara, 1998). However, the fact that Barbara, an older married NWICA resident who works full time recognises she is being asked to participate, this does not encourage her to be involved.

A second reason for not wishing to be empowered is provided by an SRB officer:

"I would also say that some sections of the community don't really want empowerment. There are a lot of people who go to meetings who just say, just tell us what's going to happen and then we will deal with that and decide what we want to do. We don't want to be involved in drawing up the plans, we just want to know what is happening and it is the same with management of the service. We have got people saying we don't want to be involved in how you audit, how you make things happen, we just want to see the service and as long as it is a good service, we don't want to be involved. So I think sometimes people don't want to be involved in the decision making, but people want to know and people want to be consulted and receive information and they don't always want to have the responsibility of making the decisions" (SRB officer 5, 1998).

This SRB officer recognises that some residents may actually prefer to be informed rather than empowered. If local residents are informed of the regeneration changes, they can then decide whether to participate within them. However, as Charlotte suggests: “I think most people don’t [participate] because they don’t want to and it’s their decision” (1998). In some respects, deciding not to participate in the regeneration process may be empowering, as it may illustrate the exercise of control over one’s life. In addition, being empowered from a local based community scheme, such as the SRB may not always be a positive experience.

Stewart and Taylor argue: “its [a locally based community scheme] small-scale, limited impact, its potentially competitive nature (as one initiative fights another), the absence of learning beyond the immediate experience, the exploitation (and burn out) of committed people (largely women), who give their all to sustain and support community life in the face of considerable odds. Indeed, for some, such modest local empowerment simply diverts attention from the more exploitative structures of power in society” (Stewart and Taylor, 1995: 67). An SRB officer recognises this, but nevertheless sees the advantages empowerment may bring:

“I think they have both been empowered and knackered. There are plenty of people that I’ve seen who have got involved in issues and decision-making over the last 3 years that previously weren’t ... And there are people involved in the management of things like the Maypole and FEDs<sup>2</sup> that have come through some other form of community development. They have either been through training schemes and then got jobs and worked part time or got involved in projects and so on and I think you can see a whole range of people across the board who have got involved, and then some people who have got burnt out by it as well” (SRB officer 1, 1998).

A third reason for not wishing to be empowered is recognised by Barr. He argues: “for the poor to be powerful is a contradiction - they lack organisational or social status

because they are the victims of predominant power distribution. Why should they trust the overtures of the state as an agency of empowerment?" (1995: 128). Some local residents may be unwilling to work in partnership with councillors and key officers in making decisions. Mavis, an older Norfolk Park resident explains: "I didn't vote for them during the election, I voted Liberal. I think a lot of people did because they are very sick of Sheffield city council, because they don't listen to the people" (1997). The reputation of Sheffield City Council being nebulous and changing decisions appears to have resulted in mistrust by some residents. Sheila also explains her lack of participation in 1998, despite her active position in 1997: "to be honest I am so disillusioned with Sheffield City Council anyway that I don't pay a great deal of attention. So I just like reading what's in the paper or hearing what is going off. I don't put myself out to find out because you get cynical. I have got cynical in my old age" (1998).

However, there are difficulties of communicating with residents, in particular at the start of the regeneration process. As a local councillor reveals: "we were never in a position to say what was happening, because if you said something one day it would have changed by the end of the week. So when we did make a statement and then make another one people said to us, 'you lied to us'. Well we didn't lie we were telling the position as it was. And I think there was a bit of a tendency to not say anything because it came back to haunt you" (Local councillor 1, 1998). From this it may be suggested that a lack of communication may not to be blamed solely on key officers and local politicians. Moreover, it appears that trust between partners is increasing over the lifetime of the SRB. As a community activist comments:

"I would say the community has become much more involved locally as things

have been done. And people have seen what they have said has actually been stuck to, and the trust between the agencies and the city council has been built up, which is a lot harder to break. If we have a little argument we are going to sort it out we are not just going to go back to our community and chunter away in the community” (NWICA community activist 1, 1998).

A local councillor also paints a more optimistic picture of community involvement: “I think there was some suspicion at first, but I think as we worked through it, they are then beginning to, the community, to see everybody is on the same side and I think that anything in any partnership there is the settling down period where people have to learn to be comfortable with each other and learn to trust each other” (Local councillor 1, 1998). From these comments, it appears trust is developing through the lifetime of the SRB, which may lead to the increased empowerment of residents.

## **5.5 EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TIME**

There is a clear perception from some community activists and local residents that they are able to exert a greater influence, as SRB projects develop through time. Local residents in partnership with key actors revised the decision-making process in NWICA, in order to be more responsive to local residents (see Chapter Four). A male community activist in NWICA explains: “we turned round and said right we want representation on the board, on the SRB Board and this hurts because it wasn’t known of, for community reps to be on a Board that is dealing with millions of pounds, and this is the voice of the community that is becoming a power now and they are having to recognise us and listen to us” (NWICA community activist 4, 1998). The presence of local residents on the main SRB Board may represent increasing influence, which they are being able to exert. A female community activist in NWICA offers a similar comment:

“it is much more community led now and it is not about servicing an SRB structure. So you go to the project groups now and that is where you work the project up to the funding proposal stage and the group would say yes or no. After that it goes to the partnership group for endorsement and you would expect it to be endorsed because we should be working with the same aims and priorities” (NWICA community activist 4, 1998).

Although the representation of community activists on the SRB Board appears to signal an increasingly community-led approach, there is still a tendency that key actors are making decisions with only limited input from community activists and other local residents. In a similar context, Hastings et al. explain: “there is also a suspicion that much of the current importance attributed to community involvement in regeneration is simply rhetoric, and that local people will not have any major say over what happens to their areas” (1996: 7). However, a male community activist in NWICA comments:

“now the council is having to recognise that the community voice is getting stronger and it is a voice that has to be reckoned with because we are making demands and we are actually taking power away from the council because the new structuring of Sheffield council now is meaning that they have got to consult with the community and a lot of this power is going to be handed over to the hands of community reps like myself” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998).

From this it is reasonable to infer that certain community members are becoming empowered, in terms of being able to influence and participate in decision-making. McArthur argues: “as communities obtain more influence or control over the definition of their needs and more influence or control over the response to them, so it is assumed that they are increasingly empowered” (1995: 123). A female community activist in NWICA makes a similar point: “we are allowed to make our own decisions, some of it doesn’t go with them. At the moment the Alliance is at a point where it is setting up a trust which means we by pass council totally and all the money, regeneration funding, will come to the community and the community will make decisions about how it is

administered” (NWICA community activist 5, 1998). As some of the community activists have successfully pushed for decision-making structures, such as the Community Alliance, this tends to imply these activists are increasingly being empowered, as the SRB appears to recognise their needs. A female community activist in Norfolk Park explains how this has been brought about: “it was more like us and them and I think it’s got better now. I think that is because we have got a scheme manager now who actually understands what the community wants as well as what SRB wants and who tries to marry them as much and at the beginning there weren’t scheme managers” (Norfolk Park, Community activist 2, 1998). She adds: “we are getting there at our own pace which is comfortable but we can’t do it all at once and that is the problem you have got with regeneration it demands everything to happen from day one and things are going to change and they don’t, it can take 3 years just to get the basics in place” (Norfolk Park, Community activist 2, 1998).

In addition to the above discussion, Lisa provides another example of how empowerment of certain local residents may be increasing through time: “well, local tenants are actually making sure that their voices are heard now. There is a lot of shouting out for what we’re wanting and what we don’t want” (1997). She explains how she has learnt to have an influence at meetings: “it comes down to being consistent in what you are saying and shouting loud enough. People have got certain people shouting them down all the time and expressing their opinions all the time (1998). Certainly, it appears that several residents (mainly community activists) are able to exert more of an influence in their areas as SRB projects continue to develop. However, whether these residents will remain empowered after the SRB funding has finished, and whether these residents are empowered in other aspects of their lives needs examination.

## Conclusions

There are three main conclusions, which can be drawn from this chapter. First, during the 1990s, urban regeneration initiatives have increasingly turned their attention towards community empowerment. However, evidence from this research in Sheffield illustrates there is difficulty in achieving or actually recognising empowerment. The literature suggests that there are three main ways of promoting empowerment: capacity building, community ownership and confidence building. This research illustrates that even if all three ways are adopted in regeneration projects, this does still not necessarily result in empowerment. In Sheffield, the regeneration schemes appear to be managed and controlled by the regeneration officers rather than the local residents.

Second, it appears that there is a necessity for recognising that not all residents actually want to be empowered. At least some of the ten residents who had no involvement with the regeneration schemes in 1997 or 1998 were not attracted by the increased decision-making and responsibility that empowerment can bring. Evidence from this research highlights that empowerment is not always a positive experience.

Third, power structures in the two Sheffield SRB areas tend to represent societal power structures, in that patriarchy may be preventing women from reaching SRB Board level (see Chapter Seven). In addition there is a dominance of certain community activists within Sheffield's regeneration schemes who appear to be hindering the empowerment of other residents (see Chapter Six).

<sup>1</sup> Since the election of a woman as leader of Sheffield City Council in May 1998, one woman had had a seat on the SRB board. However, her attendance at meetings does not appear significant. As a male community activist comments:

“the unfortunate thing about the SRB Board is it’s all male, there is only one woman who attends and she only comes because she is one of the administrators.

**ZA: There is a female leader of the City Council?**

Community activist: yes, but she hasn’t attended a meeting as such, but hopefully she’ll come on Wednesday [next SRB Board meeting] and then we’ll see how much input we get from her” (NWICA community activist 2, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Maypole is a children’s centre on Norfolk Park. FEDs is a local catering company, also in Norfolk Park (see Chapter Three).

## **Exclusion**

The previous chapter examined the empowerment of local residents in the regeneration process. This chapter discusses the relationship between women's exclusion and the SRB. It consists of five parts. First, social exclusion is defined and the ways in which the SRB is attempting to address it are discussed. Part two analyses how the SRB process may be promoting both inclusive and exclusive regeneration. Parts three, four, and five discuss the three main 'types' of barrier, which appear to exclude women from the regeneration process: SRB bureaucracy, women's attitudes and, circumstances.

### **6.1 SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND URBAN REGENERATION**

#### **6.1.1 The SRB and social exclusion**

"The SRB is one of the most useful tools for tackling social exclusion – pockets of need which may not be targeted in main programmes. But it has tended to be fragmented and unfocussed. The competition for resources without coherent regional strategy has become something of a beauty contest. I want to ensure that SRB funding is well spent, that it is based on priorities set locally rather than in Whitehall, and that it reaches those who most need it" (Richard Caborn, Dept. of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1997).

Social exclusion and economic development are viewed as two prerequisites for improvements in local conditions. The DETR believes the SRB has a significant role in tackling social exclusion. One aim of SRB Round Five is to: "address social exclusion

and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged” (DETR, 1998a). There may be two sides to this issue of exclusion: exclusion from the outcomes of urban regeneration and/or exclusion from the regeneration process, in terms of being excluded from decision-making. Social exclusion may also include growing poverty and material deprivation as well as discrimination, fear, insecurity and a lack of access to facilities. The aim of the SRB to address exclusion is partly premised on the belief that many residents of regeneration areas are socially excluded (Brownill and Darke, 1998). Problems of social exclusion appear to be most acutely experienced in inner city areas, which endured rapid economic and social change during the 1980s (see Chapter Three). Darke and Brownill argue tackling social exclusion through regeneration: “means recognising that regeneration and exclusion can mean different things to different people and therefore that there are a diversity of routes from exclusion both for particular areas and for the diversity of people who live within them” (1999: 12). From this it may be inferred that exclusion is a multi-faceted concept, which has a variable impact on individuals and areas.

Inner city areas often suffer from multiple deprivation. For instance, they endure high levels of unemployment, schools with low educational attainments and poor transport links. These problems can compound an individual’s social exclusion (Darke and Brownill, 1999: 5). Women are more likely than men to be spatially constrained in these excluded areas, especially if they have children (Brownill and Darke, 1998: 2). Furthermore, whilst establishing the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), Tony Blair defines exclusion as: “a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown”

(1997).

A second feature of exclusion, which is relevant to this thesis, is being excluded from the regeneration process. Walker (1995) argues that exclusion, generally, can be dynamic, in that people may become more or less excluded from society, or in this case urban regeneration, through time. This research in Sheffield highlights this dynamic element to exclusion. At the start of the SRB schemes in Sheffield, local residents were seen to be excluded from the regeneration process: “they’re involving the tenants now, but they wasn’t involving the tenants in the planning y’know” (Emma, 1997). However, as chapter five illustrates, local residents have increased their influence within the regeneration process. In addition, young people were seen to be excluded from the regeneration process, at the start of the SRB scheme in Sheffield. Nevertheless, the situation for young people now appears to be improving. As a community activist in Norfolk Park comments: “at one time I would have said young people [are excluded] but that is ten times better than it was three years since” (Norfolk Park community activist 2, 1998). However, nineteen year old, Helen explains her personal experience of being a young person trying to participate:

“it was like me and Serena [friend] were the token young people from the area and I remember this one meeting we were totally ignored all the way through until it came to having an event on the Ponder and then it was like, ‘oh we’ve got two young people they’ll know what we want’. And you can’t treat people like that and then I heard one of them say, ‘they only come to see what they can get out of it.’ What kind of attitude is that to encourage people to come along?” (Helen, 1998).

Some observers have argued that another excluded group consists of women, who are seen to suffer from poverty and social exclusion more than men (Lister, 1990; Christie, 1997). Debates in the exclusion literature are only now beginning to recognise that men

and women have different experiences of exclusion, as frequently these differences have been overlooked (Riseborough, 1997). Men and women are seen to respond to marginalised and excluded conditions differently (Brownill and Darke, 1998; May, 1997). When faced with economic decline, Campbell (1993) argues that generally women tend to work collectively, whereas men are more likely than women to respond through criminal activities. May (1997) blames this differential impact of poverty and exclusion on women and men on societal structures and inequalities in power. She argues women are more vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion than men, which in part may be due to their financial dependence on men, but also because their gender role (unpaid work and domestic care) may restrict access to the labour market. This social exclusion of women, in particular, within urban areas, is now receiving attention (see Lister, 1998 and Lister, 1990). However, the potential exclusion of women from the regeneration process is only beginning to be addressed, and it is this aspect of exclusion, which is concentrated upon in this thesis.

### **6.1.2 The SRB: tackling the excluded**

SRB bids are expected to bring about community involvement and “demonstrate that the local community, along with other private and voluntary interests is centrally involved” (McArthur, 1995: 62). One of the main ways in which the SRB is attempting to address social exclusion is through encouraging partnerships, which aim to promote holistic, social and sustainable regeneration (see Chapter One). An SRB officer defines what this means in Sheffield: “there needs to be a comprehensive approach to both the physical and the social. It is not just looking at the physical ... It is about quality of life, it’s about people, it’s about making sure that you have got a sustainable community.

that's not welfare dependent" (SRB officer 2, 1998). A local female councillor also comments: "you can't regenerate communities without taking a holistic view of the community and you can't address one area of needs without looking at the implications through other areas" (Local councillor 1, 1998). Similarly Emma, a young Norfolk Park resident, points to the importance of addressing different aspects of regeneration: "you're still going to have the same people living in these houses. It's not as though they're [council] moving 'em and kicking 'em out somewhere else. I mean I'm still going to have noisy neighbours and people that do drugs. It's only like a facelift for Norfolk Park" (1997). This comment suggests that if social issues are not addressed with physical problems, the area will not improve. However, a local councillor adds: "there was a sort of sense that it [the SRB] was more a physical regeneration of housing, rather than a complete holistic social regeneration of the whole population" (Local councillor 1, 1998). This comment from a councillor in Sheffield highlights how physical regeneration may tend to take precedence, despite the awareness of, and necessity for social and holistic regeneration.

An SRB officer describing the situation in Sheffield states: "I don't think anyone is deliberately excluded. Exclusion depends on how much effort you make in terms of including someone in the process. I think more effort could be made to include more people in the process but I think as the process develops more people will be involved and included (SRB officer 4, 1998). Some residents agree that the SRB is not directly excluding anyone in terms of sharing in the outcomes of the regeneration programme, although not all residents may participate in the process. Lisa, who participates herself thinks: "if it's worked out properly then everybody will benefit and from what I've seen it looks like most people are going to benefit" (Lisa, 1997). The following year she

clarifies who she thinks will benefit from the SRB: “the whole estate ... I think tenants will actually benefit most at the end of the day” (1998).

Some residents are rather less certain of who benefits from the SRB. As a female community activist in NWICA comments: “I haven’t seen any positive benefit from the SRB and I don’t think it will enhance my life” (NWICA Community activist 5, 1998).

If residents are not benefiting from the regeneration process or participating within it, they may be excluded. Andersen and Larsen outline the implications of being excluded:

“*social exclusion*, denoting exclusion from social rights and from participation in the economic, socio-cultural and political life of society, is often used instead of poverty ...

The concept of social exclusion is thus attached to concepts such as *social citizenship*, *participation* and *empowerment*” (1998: 243; original emphasis). Several key officers

in Sheffield believe residents’ exclusion may arise from not participating in the regeneration process. An SRB officer in Sheffield comments:

“social exclusion is an issue that is about people’s position in life and lack of education and everything else, but there is no exclusion as it were from the [regeneration] process. Everybody is entitled to participate either in the management or the running of the thing or the opportunities that are created in terms of training, housing or whatever. Everybody has got the same rights” (SRB officer 2, 1998).

Whilst, everyone may theoretically have equal rights to participate in the regeneration schemes in Sheffield, not everyone necessarily shares or takes up these opportunities. It is argued by Croft and Beresford (1988) that it is important not to ignore or underplay oppressions faced by some groups, which may result in differences in power between people, perhaps as a result of different material and other resources, which in turn can influence their ability to become involved in their neighbourhood. This view posits that power relations may have an influence on who is excluded from the regeneration

process. May points out: “poverty and social exclusion have a different impact on women and men, for reasons that are not individual, but to do with the structure of society, its written and unwritten rules, and the way power is distributed” (1997: 14). In similar vein, Lee et al., argue: “citizens should not passively expect society to ensure that their social rights are maintained by the institutions of the welfare state, but must in return be prepared actively to contribute to society” (1995: 41). The emphasis within this notion of exclusion is that people may be socially excluded, if they do not fully participate as a political and/or economic citizen. In this context, local residents may not simply expect to benefit from regeneration changes without participating in the regeneration process, either as beneficiaries, or within the process.

However, this research highlights that some residents in Sheffield tend not to be able, or find it difficult to participate. As an SRB officer comments: “perhaps not excluded, but I’d have thought that people with disabilities would find the process the most difficult, both in terms of participating, and participating in any structured way” (SRB officer 1, 1998). This SRB officer does not use the term exclusion to describe the relationship between disabled residents and the SRB. However, if some residents are finding it difficult to participate in the regeneration changes, this perhaps suggests at least, in part, that they are excluded from the regeneration process. For instance, Dorothy, an older disabled Norfolk Park resident, explains why she does not participate: “health wise it stops me because I am unable to. I would like more people coming round the house like you are, like the housing department to see what you need and that type of thing” (1998).

A local councillor summarises how different barriers causing exclusion may interact:

“the time of the meeting, childcare, whether or not it impinges on them. Whether or not they’ve got the confidence to go and this goes right back to capacity building and training people on how to go to meetings and take minutes and all that and it’s been very much officer led” (Local councillor 4, 1998). This Sheffield based research suggests there are three main types of barriers excluding some residents from the regeneration process: institutional, attitudinal, and circumstantial. These barriers, which are outlined below, may prevent residents, particularly women, ethnic minorities, young people and the disabled, from participating in their neighbourhood changes and benefiting from the SRB.

## **6.2 INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS OF THE SRB**

### **6.2.1 Organisational structure of partnerships**

SRB partnerships, in particular, have been criticised by a number of commentators, for not fully involving the community as the involvement of local residents is often considered as a token signature on the formal documentation (e.g. CURS, 1995; Nevin and Shiner, 1995b; Ward, 1995). Several key officers in Sheffield admit: “some people are already excluded because of the way society works, so SRB reinforces that. Because of the way it’s been set up and the strict conditions attached to the funding regimes and the emphasis on democracy and monitoring and forcing this structure on people” (SRB officer 5, 1998). This might suggest the SRB is not suitably organised to encourage the participation of all local residents, which concurs with findings by Brownill and Darke (1998). They propose that there are three features of the SRB, which may exclude certain interests: “timescales of bid preparation are too short to

allow meaningful consultation; many organisations do not have the capacity, information, or regeneration expertise to participate fully, particularly as key or lead partners; the concentration on strategic issues excludes many organisations concerned with race and gender who often concentrate on local level welfare and social provision” (Brownill and Darke, 1998: 16).

Fainstein and Harloe (1992) recognise there may also be a racial element to exclusion, which John Rex (1979) highlighted in America. Although racial segregation in British inner cities is much less distinct than in America, there is evidence from this research that ethnic minorities are partly excluded from the regeneration process. As a male community activist in the NWICA area remarks: “the ethnic minority voice is often the last one to be heard or it gets lost and the other is from the youth of the area, they are the 2 voices that are never there...” (NWICA Community activist 1, 1998). Since section 11 funds<sup>1</sup> are contained within the SRB, it is particularly important to include projects for ethnic minorities. However, it can also be argued that ethnic minorities want to be integrated into the regeneration process generally. As a male community activist in NWICA explains:

“with the ethnic minorities it gets sucked into the ethnic minority issues. And when we held the community conference what was said from the ethnic minorities is, ‘don’t set up a workshop just for ethnic minorities we want to plug into the other workshops, we want to talk to you about jobs and training, and the environment and care for the elderly. We want to talk to you about this and we have been sort of exclusive and excluded by the process’. They don’t feel that they can come along to the topic groups because they’re very white and dominated by the white people in the area” (NWICA Community activist 1, 1998).

Evidence tends to illustrate that white people dominate Sheffield’s SRB schemes, although there is a representative from the Black Community Forum on the main SRB Board. Moreover, this apparent exclusion of ethnic minority groups may be increased

by other factors, such as age and gender:

**“ZA: Why did they not listen to her [daughter] then?**

Janet: Because she is young and she is black, I am convinced about it. There is a lot of racism in this area. It's very hidden. Some people are afraid of voicing it and others aren't” (1997).

This finding parallels research by CURS: “social exclusion, therefore, incorporates structural inequality which is known to disproportionately affect ethnic minorities and women. And, the notion of citizenship is part of the meaning of social exclusion. To this extent social exclusion can be taken to mean the sum of experiences which move individuals away from being full social, economic and political citizens” (Riseborough, 1997: 19).

In an urban regeneration context, Ward argues the way regeneration actors work together, in terms of excluding some voices reveals how power is distributed in the urban arena (1997: 1504). In Sheffield men have assumed decision-making positions on the main SRB Board (see Chapter Five). As a female SRB officer comments: “I would like to see some targets specifically for women. I'd like to see more consultation with women because they're the ones that are beavering away in the voluntary sector, but the decisions are made higher up” (SRB officer 3, 1998). This complements what Riseborough suggests: “women are generally not benefiting because the evidence points to a lack of specific attention to women's needs for employment, training and other activities as virtually the same as men's” (1997: 38). However, by establishing particular ‘women-only’ projects in the SRB, women may remain excluded from the mainstream. This debate between universal or specific targeting is gaining interest as the discussion on social exclusion is transferring attention towards difference and diversity (Riseborough, 1997; Darke and Brownill, 1999).

### 6.2.2 Partnerships and exclusion by gender

Riseborough (1997) critiques the partnership approach of the SRB for systematically excluding women. However, residents interviewed for this research view the organisation of the SRB partnership as excluding residents' interests generally. A local councillor explains: "overall approval of [SRB] plans is at the partnership Board level" (Local councillor 1, 1998) where (male) residents have only recently been represented (see Chapter Four). Geddes suggests: "in many partnerships...the representatives of community and voluntary sector partners are often women. The majority of members of some project teams are also women. It is much less common for women to represent other partner interests, and to occupy powerful positions on management boards" (1997: 110). Surprisingly, some key officers interviewed for this study appear to suggest that the gender composition of the SRB Board is not necessarily an issue: "increasingly you have got women coming on to the Local Management Boards running projects **[ZA: and what about the SRB Board?]** Oh no, but that reflects the senior management of the organisations" (SRB officer 1, 1998). This may indicate the absence of women on the SRB Board is not noticed as problematic, as some men do not expect women to be there because they do not hold senior positions in the city. In this context, the SRB may be politically excluding women, as they have not, during the course of this research, been represented on the SRB Board, despite their organisation at the local community level.

### 6.2.3 SRB bureaucracy

Findings from this research in Sheffield also illustrate how local community groups may experience difficulties in accessing SRB funds. Local residents tend to have little understanding about the SRB process. As a local councillor explains: “you have to work within the parameters of the bid, so there is a certain amount set aside to work with ethnic minorities and so if you come in and say something else then you’re not likely to win. So you have to look at details of bids and you have to look at what the money is there for” (Local councillor 2, 1998). Not only do residents have to work within the parameters of SRB bidding requirements, but they may also have to change their working practices: “the fact that SRB money is not easy and people have to achieve outputs means certain smaller groups have to organise themselves in a totally different way from before. And that can be too big a barrier for some people to get across without a lot of resources” (SRB officer 3, 1998).

There have been several instances in Sheffield, which have confused local residents, in terms of not understanding the process or outcome of some decisions. As a local councillor explains: “when we attracted some more money for Norfolk Park, SRB money was withheld for six months and people can’t understand that ... you are trying to get them involved, and you have to say sorry you have to wait six months” (Local councillor 3, 1998). In addition, she highlights a further issue concerning the SRB bureaucracy:

“achieving the targets and the accountability is absolutely complex and it does frighten people. And the forms are off-putting and difficult, but we have to do that to achieve the funding, there has to be an accountable body and there has to be people checking that things are happening. I would like to think that we don’t do things quite as rigidly, but I am afraid we’ve got the system we have got at the

moment. But people are getting used to that and it's not standing in the way of things now, it did at first, but I think we have never had the right balance of people working on the ground and being able to help with the bureaucracy" (Local councillor 3, 1998).

Croft and Beresford find from their research on community participation that: "getting involved in community initiatives, which are, more often than not, the idea of outsiders, can involve you in activities and ways of working that are alien and uncomfortable, which are often heavy-going and without any clear likelihood of success, is unlikely to be the sort of additional responsibility that many people in the inner city will want to take on" (1988: 82). These 'alien and uncomfortable' way of working seems to frighten some residents. As an SRB officer explains:

"but, people on the ground in the areas, I think they do see it as an opportunity to do something, but they are a little scared with the bureaucracy ... We liaise formally and informally with the local community to try and get them to decide priorities for projects, but it is also getting them to understand this process, which is very complicated and frightens people to death ... It is not easy for communities, I won't pretend it is...In a sense community reps, I think get frustrated with the bureaucratic process" (SRB officer 3, 1998).

In other cases, this 'alien' and 'uncomfortable' way of working may result in boredom at community meetings. As Janet, an older NWICA resident, explains: "I find committees and committee meetings really boring. If I went to one of these things and there was a bit of lively debate going on that would be all right. But it doesn't tend to be like that, it's like oh what's next on the agenda then? And it's bit plodding" (Janet, 1997). It was perhaps Janet's boredom at community meetings in 1997, which partly contributed to her lack of participation in her new neighbourhood in 1998. This issue of not being interested in attending meetings in the community about the regeneration process appears particularly significant for the young persons in the area. As nineteen-year-old Tracy explains:

“I remember I went down to a meeting at St Stephens, it took me a long time to put my hand up and say, ‘Why don’t you get a youth club set up and actually run by the people who are in the area and obviously adult supervised, but you know to make them respect more’, and it was like, ‘ohhh like what?’ and it don’t exactly make me want to go and advertise to all the young people who sometimes knock about and say, ‘ why don’t you come to this meeting?’ Because I don’t want to go again” (Tracy, 1997).

Many of the younger residents interviewed share the views proposed by Tracy (above) and twenty year old Helen says: “a lot of the young people aren’t interested in being involved, but why should they because it is not appealing, it is right boring” (1998). Young people can be defined as those residents under twenty-five years old in line with what a female community activist suggests: “young people that is our difficult area, we have probably got one rep that is under 25 so that is a definite weakness” (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998).

Key regeneration officers and local politicians admit they have a problem attracting the youth of the area: “I think young people have very low interest in the whole process, so don’t take much part in it. But there is a youth project there and we have got youth workers, but they are perhaps the hardest community to say let’s talk about a strategy or ways of doing other things and getting them interested” (SRB officer 4, 1998). Another SRB officer adds: “I suspect that teenagers and young people might have difficulty in joining a group where there is this prejudice that it is the young people who are causing the problems on the estate and they may not feel welcome, so they may feel excluded” (SRB officer 5, 1998). Community activists also recognise: “the young people feel very put off by meetings. They don’t like meetings because they think they are rigid, board things and one way to get round that was to set up a young people’s forum and let young people get involved in that and let them set the agenda and what they talk about” (NWICA Community activist 1, 1998).

Although, youth forums have been established in Sheffield's regeneration areas, young people still do not appear to be fully included in the regeneration process:

“one of the things about community involvement is that you can set up forums and try and set up youth forums, because young kids don't generally seem to be interested in going to meetings. You can set up projects with involvement with the Wildlife Trust and art projects around Daniel Hill [school and youth club] and you'll get young people involved in that, but they'll never come to a meeting because they're boring” (SRB officer 1, 1998).

This comment highlights the difficulties of involving the youth in the bureaucratic side of the SRB. Besides, a younger NWICA resident argues:

“there is nothing for them to do, it must be so boring and so frustrating and it builds up on itself because people are slagging the kids off and they get a bad reputation for themselves, so they think well if you are going to shout at me for playing in the street, I am going to be naughty, so they get more naughty and people get more agitated with them and it is just snowballing and it's really not fair” (Helen, 1997).

It could be argued here that young people are not given opportunities to participate in the regeneration, although there is little else for them to do in the area. Many of the women interviewed for this research agree that: “at the end of the day I think the area should be focusing on the younger people because they're the ones that are going to be staying around here. They're the ones that they've got to captivate because there's loads of young people around here and they're the ones that need to get involved in things” (Tracy, 1997). However, this comment is from a nineteen-year-old NWICA resident, who adds: “I am too young to be doing anything like that [going to meetings]. Anyway, I don't think it is up to me to start it off” (Tracy, 1997).

The apparent exclusion of the young in Sheffield may be caused by a lack of communication between key officers and local residents. As Helen explains: “they're not even getting in touch with the people and saying, ‘do you want to do something?’

They're not getting in touch with all the young mothers in the area and saying, 'hey I hear you're frustrated do you want to set something up yourself or speaking to any of the young kids?'" (Helen, 1997: 15). This issue of communication can be exacerbated further by the language used by the regeneration officers.

#### **6.2.4 Jargon and language of SRB officers**

Several commentators recognise how the language and jargon used by key officers is generally unintelligible to most people (Braye and Preston-Shoot, 1995: 112; Smith, 1981: 17). Some key actors in Sheffield also recognise how this may prevent residents: "I think one of the biggest barriers that people tell me, is the jargon that's used is like a foreign language. The officers need to be careful because that makes people feel very inadequate and no one wants to feel inadequate" (SRB officer 3, 1998). Christie identifies that regeneration language is filled with: "jargon and technical speak, and it is often inaccessible to those not versed in it" (1997:4). Many women interviewed for this research suggested that they have difficulties with the language. An older NWICA resident explains what happened when she attended a community meeting:

"you put up a suggestion and they're talking in jargon all the time. Several times we said, 'please can you speak in plain English because we don't know what you're talking about', and they said, 'fair enough'. And they said, 'are there any points you would like to put in the minutes?' and we said, 'please don't speak in jargon'. We'd never been on a committee before and we didn't know what they were talking about and so they put it down in the minutes. Then you'd go along to the next meeting and they'd do exactly the same thing. And we have to stop them all the time and say, 'excuse me what does that mean?' Because they are all so used to it" (Janet, 1998).

In defence, a female community activist in NWICA comments: "we try hard not to go into jargon and to keep that open and to get new people gaining new skills. But, it can

be difficult at times. I mean I have sat there and I can lose the thread and so you know it is complicated” (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998). This finding parallels the description of the experiences of community activists in McArthur’s study, they: “have found it difficult to keep up with the pace of decision making and deal with the technical language employed by officials” (1995: 67). Furthermore, other residents point out: “if they [key actors] are not going to use plain English then straight away they are going to cut off most people because most people don’t know what they are talking about and are too embarrassed to ask” (Helen, 1998).

Language and jargon issues are likely to pose even greater problems for residents whose first language is not English: “up to a point there must be a language barrier because there are a certain number of families where English is a second language” (Jenny, 1997). This issue of English not being the first language creates difficulties for some ethnic minority groups to represent their views. As a key activist states: “I think it is more difficult to get the ethnic minorities on board because you need specialist language workers, but we have now got Somali and Yemeni youth workers with language skills as well” (SRB officer 4, 1998). This complements what Christie suggests: “information should also be provided in accessible formats and consider those who are disabled, or whose first language is not English” (1997: 4).

In addition, there appears to be a gender element to this exclusion by language. As a community activist explains: “there may be some language barriers. There is a mosque on the corner for the Pakistani population and I know some of the representatives that come to our meetings are always the same representatives and often not women because of the language barrier” (Norfolk Park Community activist 3, 1998). This might also

suggest that there are cultural issues affecting women's participation, such as certain religious beliefs may prevent some women attending meetings where men are present. A community activist states: "a lot of the ethnic minority groups exclude themselves because of their colour, creed, race and religion. Very often they won't travel and the women were offered to come to meetings to teach them about what was going off in the area, but because of their religion they weren't allowed to" (NWICA Community activist 2, 1998).

### **6.2.5 Lack of local residents' skills**

In Sheffield, there appears to be an issue concerning residents not having the necessary skills to participate in the regeneration process. As a male community activist in Norfolk Park remarks: "people haven't got the skills and so you can't involve them in reading all these reports if they haven't got any literacy skills. A lot of them struggle with basic skills and skills to discuss and debate and confidence measures, a lot of those things are lacking and to express yourself to someone who seems to be intelligent, the authority figure" (Norfolk Park Community activist 4, 1998). In similar vein, King et al. highlight how participation may be affected by a lack of knowledge and skills: "participation is hindered by a lack of education, both informally within families and communities and formally in the schools" (1998: 322). Vera, an older NWICA resident, defines what she thinks are crucial skills for participation: "I think you need to be able to speak to complete strangers and not be too upset if you find someone who is odd. I think you need to be a bit more outgoing and extrovert" (Vera, 1998). However, Vera herself does not participate, which perhaps indicates that she believes she lacks some of these crucial skills.

### **6.2.6 Lack of information for local residents**

Another SRB-related barrier causing residents' exclusion from the regeneration schemes in Sheffield concerns the availability of information. May argues: "barriers to participation such as short timescales, and a lack of resources and information to support community participation, are common across groups" (1997: 28). In a similar context, King et al. find from their study on public participation that many citizens believe they suffer from a lack of information (1998: 322). A lack of information appears to act as a considerable barrier for some interviewees in Sheffield. For example Janet points out: "it [a community meeting] is not publicised at all and it makes me wonder whether they don't want people to know because they don't want too many people to get involved and put their twopenneth in. And they don't want people to ask for money" (1997). Contrary to this perception that meetings are not publicised, key activists interviewed for this research, agree that a regular newsletter is distributed to all households in the regeneration areas informing local residents of forthcoming meetings and events. Hastings et al. (1996:18) suggest producing a newsletter is one way in which to involve more residents in regeneration schemes. However, many interviewees seem unaware of the existence of a newsletter. Interestingly, Janet who is actively involved in 1997 argues: "we need to know what's going on. As far as I know there isn't any kind of general letter sent out when there's a meeting, it's only to people who have asked about it in the first place or got to know about it somehow" (Janet, 1998).

In Norfolk Park there was acknowledgement that sometimes newsletters were not delivered on time: "we apologise for the delay in delivering the last newsletter which

meant some residents were not aware of meetings, until after they had taken place” (Norfolk Park news, Issue 3 October, 1996). However, other residents did receive newsletters, but thought they did not provide enough information: “we get a Norfolk Park newsletter every month, but basically it’s telling you which bits of Norfolk Park they’re doing up. They never name people if y’know what I mean, they only say this bit is getting done, the next phase is starting’ but other than that, that’s it” (Emma, 1997).

In contrast, by the second year of interviewing, some residents feel they are being bombarded with information. As Sharon, a younger Norfolk Park resident, comments: “I know everything I need to know through them letters. I am not really bothered either way. I know now that they’re going to knock ‘em [flats] down so that is the only thing I am interested in” (1998). Sharon has no apparent desire to be involved, as she knows that she has to move from her maisonette and nothing can prevent that. A further example of the problem of distributing newsletters is provided by Karen, another young Norfolk Park resident with childcare responsibilities: “well there are meetings but we tend to get leaflets through the door either the day before they’re going to happen, or the day that they’re actually going to happen. And it’s difficult to make child care arrangements or to actually go to these meetings” (1998). However, Karen does make the effort to attend some meeting, but this is perhaps helped as her husband can assist with childcare arrangements. It is likely that if local residents are consulted about locations and timings of meetings, they may be more likely to attend. This is consistent with the findings of Skelcher et al. who suggest that: “positive steps to widen access are important, including consideration of timing and location of events” (1996: 31) in order to overcome barriers faced by residents when becoming involved in their local area.

This research also illustrates how newsletters, when received and read, do not provide sufficient information on where meetings are held apart from the address. As Sharon points out: “I have never been to any of the meetings, I don’t know where they are. I know it says in that newsletter, but I don’t know I’m not into going to meetings where I don’t know anybody” (1998). Other local residents, who have participated, suggest: “I think it helps if you have got someone to go along with in the first place for a bit of moral support” (Helen, 1998).

Other residents recognise the value of being informed, but appear to question whether newsletters are the most appropriate method for receiving information. As Helen suggests: “people haven’t always got time to go and find out everything and they do not know where to go and find something and there is nothing like an information line, you phone this and we’ll tell you sort of thing” (1997). Helen tried to establish a telephone line for young persons in the area who were having social, personal, sexual or drug related problems. This failed due to funding problems, however, she suggests a “regeneration phonenumber” would be an ideal forum in which to help inform residents of regeneration changes. As Sharon illustrates the present situation: “if you do phone them [the council] up or go and ask ’em you should be told. A lot of the time they just say, ‘they don’t know or that’s not our department’, that’s their favourite phrase: ‘that’s not my department’” (1997).

### **6.2.7 Lack of local residents’ resources**

Millar notes: “at the end of the 1970s the two groups with the highest risk and the longest duration of poverty were both female: older women living alone and lone

mothers. As we move towards the end of the 1990s this is still true” (1997: 99). It is generally recognised that socially excluded residents, living in regeneration areas, have fewer assets and resources (May, 1997:15), which may inhibit participation. Atkinson and Cope argue that: “resources need to be made available to communities to facilitate their acquisition of knowledge and organisational skills, accompanied by the decentralisation of power, information and decision making” (1997: 218). Many commentators recognise a relationship between a lack of material resources (i.e. poverty) and the ability to participate in society (or in this case from the regeneration process). Geddes argues: “the term social exclusion is intended to recognise not only the material deprivation of the poor, but also their inability to fully exercise their social and political rights as citizens” (1997: 10). This research in Sheffield indicates that poverty may lead to exclusion. For instance, Helen suggests that: “do things in the area, but also remember that people haven’t got a lot of money in the first place, so you’ve got to make it so it’s accessible for everyone” (1997). She is talking about an annual festival held on the Ponderosa in NWICA, which charged £1 for each hot dog and another £1 for going on the bouncy castle. These prices are seen to exclude many residents with children. Duffy proposes: “social exclusion is a broader concept than poverty, encompassing not only low material means but the inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political, and cultural life” (Duffy, 1995 cited in Walker, 1997: 8).

Townsend (1979) claims there is a level of poverty below which people are unable to effectively participate in society and are therefore excluded. Some residents in Sheffield have low material means, but these do not seem to affect their ability to participate in the regeneration process. As Sharon comments: “he [partner] is always saying to me,

‘you can go out with your friends from work and go and enjoy yourself’, and I know I can do that, but it’s having the money. But, you don’t need money to go out and it sounds stupid, going out to tenants’ meetings and whatever” (1998).

However, these residents without resources may not be able to participate in an ‘effective’ way (see Chapter Seven). Ward argues a lack of money is seen to limit the exercise of power (1986: 33). And as Stone states: “those with fewer resources to contribute have a lesser voice” (1993: 11). However, local residents may bring non-material resources to the regeneration process, such as local knowledge. As an older Norfolk Park resident comments: “I would like a voice to say what we think should be done, rather than someone in an office what doesn’t even know area sat down there [in council] with a pen doing things that will just not interest us at all. Those people at top of council or whatever, they don’t live in areas like this, so they don’t know” (Dorothy, 1998). However, it is unlikely these ‘local knowledge’ type resources are valued as equally as material resources by regeneration officials, which may contribute to local resident’s exclusion from the decision-making processes (Ward, 1986). In addition, Geddes, when examining regeneration partnerships and their capacity to tackle social exclusion concludes: “resources - of both time and money - will be necessary to develop the skills of the project team” (1997: 110). Other residents appear to be excluded from the regeneration process by a lack of material resources. Charlotte, who actively attends a number of community meetings, explains: “I mean if they have [other residents] to pay the bus fare to get there or something that would be a drawback” (1997).

In Sheffield it seems the local residents in regeneration areas, are struggling to make an adequate contribution to the SRB partnership. This limited influence may be attributed,

amongst other impulses, to the fact that they do not bring substantial resources to the partnership. Local residents in Sheffield do not tend to know how to act within the regeneration partnership or to be especially well informed about the SRB, and its objectives (see Chapter Seven). However, other attitudinal barriers can exclude residents from the regeneration process.

## **6.3 ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS**

The second ‘type’ of barrier facing women considering participation, concerns issues surrounding their fear of attending meetings. Evidence from this research in Sheffield suggests many women tend to be unaware of how to engage within the regeneration process.

### **6.3.1 Lacking confidence**

It has been argued that participation within regeneration schemes may lead to increased self-confidence (see Chapter Four). In Sheffield, there appears to be a tendency for some residents, interviewed in this study, to not participate in the regeneration process as they lack confidence when faced with intimidating meetings. The following comment from a female community activist in NWICA typifies the feelings of many of the women interviewed who have participated: “when I have been to SRB Local Management Board, there were lots of male officers. I think not friendly and if you were unsure of yourself you wouldn’t feel comfortable and you have to be very assertive to get yourself across” (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998). This concurs with what May argues: “in many excluded areas women suffer from a low level of both skills and

self-confidence” (1997: 23). A key actor in Sheffield makes a similar association between social exclusion and confidence. He comments: “Norfolk Park is a sink estate and there is a high level of people who are socially excluded and people who are socially excluded quite often don’t have the confidence or interest” (SCCAU representative, 1998).

This lack of confidence may stem from feelings of not having anything to offer the regeneration partnership. As a community activist describes: “people feel, as though they can’t contribute because they’ll look silly if they say it, they are frightened to make a fool of themselves at a public meeting. They might say to you privately on a phone line but they’re very unsure of themselves to come and say it in a public forum” (NWICA Community activist 1, 1998). In addition, some regeneration officials recognise: “they [residents] do become involved, but unless they have the confidence to be able to go and sit in these meetings, I think they find it very off-putting ... They don’t feel welcomed” (Chamber of Commerce representative, 1998). This view is also confirmed by several local residents: “I don’t think I really have anything to offer, but I think that there are probably other people in the area that probably do” (Tracy, 1997).

### **6.3.2 Who do the regeneration projects target?**

Other residents are of the opinion that the regeneration process is not necessarily for them, because they do not live at the heart of the regeneration changes:

“I say it’s not, it’s not for us. It’s for like the people in the maisonettes and the flats that they’re doing up now. They want residents from like wherever. The phases they want them there. And as I say basically it’s like until we get more information, until someone says, ‘right people on Park Spring Drive, it’s your

turn, will you come?' Then, nobody is going to want to go because nobody wants to poke their nose in where it's not wanted" (Emma, 1997).

Mavis, an older Norfolk Park resident comments: well, I'd like to be [involved], but the only trouble is I don't like to tread on anyone's toes, you know what I mean, but some times you can do without meaning to..." (1997). Similarly, a senior council employee recognises: "some don't feel as if it's the area they belong, they pay rent and it's just somewhere to sleep. Others see the council as benevolent, and that is what should be done, so you are doing it, big deal" (Council employee 1, 1998).

Interestingly, many residents share the view that they have little desire to stay in the regeneration area after the changes are complete: "I don't think, at the end of the day I will stay here forever any way. I don't really want to do things too much unless it's what other people want. I don't think that I'll be here for the rest of my life" (Tracy, 1997). She was not in the regeneration areas in 1998. A community activist offers an explanation for this: "because of the housing situation in Norfolk Park, a lot of people can't wait to get off. They're not interested in getting involved they just want to know when it's going to happen, when am I moving off, how many points am I getting and what compensation<sup>2</sup>" (Norfolk Park Community activist 2, 1998).

Some women consider those residents moving from the regeneration areas as gaining most from regeneration initiatives. As Tracy explains:

"the people that are moving out [are benefiting most] because they can get anywhere they want now can't they? ... Because they can get a bigger property or they can get a nice property and I think great and I think they are the ones that are benefiting most ... I think everyone else around here that are in the ones [homes] that aren't being refurbished are just the same really" (1997).

This may indicate that those residents who have to move from the estates, either during or as a result of the regeneration changes appear to be benefiting most from the SRB

process. Many residents are either having to move permanently from the estates as their homes are being demolished, or be relocated temporarily as their homes are being modernised. Tracy moved permanently from the regeneration area between year one and two and still thinks: “everyone has [benefited]. All those that have moved off and all those that have had the opportunity to move out, but some haven’t, they’ve stayed in the area because they like it and they’ve moved in to the maisonettes. The ones that have actually benefited are the ones that have wanted to move out for ages and actually could” (1998).

It may be argued that population displacement from the two estates in Sheffield is making it more difficult for residents to become involved in the regeneration process. As a senior council employee explains: “if you have been moved out and you’re waiting to move back in, you’re unlikely to turn up to a monthly meeting to find out the progress, you will phone up and ask” (Council employee 1, 1998). In this context, the SRB may be unintentionally excluding residents by moving them from their homes. Thus the concept of community participation (to tackle social exclusion) may be impractical when a regeneration scheme involves large scale housing demolition. As a senior council employee suggests: “it was a struggle to keep the project group going and some meetings the only people there, resident wise, were actually from the tower blocks, do you know what I mean? Because we have scattered them to the four ends of the city, so it was people from the tower blocks and the Tenants’ Association officials” (Council employee 1, 1998). Similarly, a community activist states: “a lot of people have moved out of the area and it has had this churning affect on the population which makes it harder to involve the community because it has shifted so much since it started” (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998).

In addition to the population changes in the area, many women interviewed also perceive there is a geographical barrier, which excludes them from the regeneration process. As a community activist illustrates: “well there are physical barriers like people on St George’s and Edward street feel like they don’t want to cross Netherthorpe road and the ponderosa [open green area] is another barrier (NWICA Community activist 1, 1998).

### **6.3.3 Personality clashes**

“I know there is a tenants association, but I have only been about two or three times over the years and then it’s like we’ve done this and no one else has done anything and I tend to get a case of them and us. I should imagine there are a few that are doing this and that and no one else is interested in doing anything. I went to one meeting, one night and it was just a slinging match between partly council and partly tenants. And you’ve got some people who’ll work with somebody and not with someone else and they tend to fall out over trivial things instead of working as a group” (Barbara, 1997).

Many interviewees, such as Barbara, pointed to intimidation and antagonism between community activists and residents, which created conflicts in the community. Some residents feel intimidated by community activists and are consequently nervous about attending meetings. A female community activist explains: “you know they [community activists] just like to let you know that they have been involved right from the start” (NWICA Community activist 3, 1998). Skelcher et al. recognise residents may be excluded by others of established networks, in regeneration areas (1996: 28). Similarly, other community activists comment: “there is the not feeling happy there and there is also the question of who is already involved and they might not come because this person is involved and there are all sorts of reasons why people don’t come”

(NWICA Community activist 1, 1998). Other residents, such as Michelle a younger Norfolk Park resident, offer explanations for why they do feel excluded from attending meetings:

“I think it’s probably hard if this is something that has been going on quite a while. And you get the usual few that tend to chair the meetings or whatever and they have their views. And if someone new comes in who has not attended meetings before and wanted to take an equally active role, perhaps because they felt strongly about something in particular then I can see that sort of, ‘who do they think they are, they have just come here they have not worked their way up they have not gained our approval’ (1998).

From this it is reasonable to suggest that a number of individuals in Sheffield dominate community action, at the possible expense of excluding others, whether intentionally or not. As a key actor explains:

“you have got people like [x] who go to all sorts of meetings. And he is at every meeting and he is on most of the committees and eventually people just think well [x] does it and becomes reliant. And you end up with people in similar positions who think I’m not having them sitting on this because they’re going to challenge my position. And you can end up whereby it is a power struggle” (Local councillor 4, 1998)

Likewise, Janet comments: “it tends to be the same few hard core of people and you go down to a meeting and they’re all sat at the end of the table and you’re not quite sure who’s committee and who isn’t because they all sit together” (1997). This research suggests that the dominance of certain individuals can lead to fear and intimidation at community meetings.

#### **6.3.4 Fear or apathy?**

Evidence suggests local residents may not participate, as they are afraid of the commitment involved. As a community activist explains: “I think they [local residents] are frightened of what it [participation] involves and what they’re committing

themselves to, but I think if they knew beforehand that it is one meeting a month” (NWICA Community activist 3, 1998). This complements what Hastings et al. find from their research: “it [community action] is probably intimidating, at least for a while, and they choose to shoulder heavy responsibilities, alongside highly paid professionals, for no financial reward” (1996: 20).

Setterlund and Abbot argue: opportunities for involvement and participation are readily available in the community, and that lack of involvement lies in the inability of individuals to take up these opportunities” (1995: 279). Several residents, such as Vera, an older NWICA resident, agree with this: “I don’t think they [local residents] are prevented, I just think they’re not involved. I think it is up to them because a lot of people just don’t care” (1998). This might suggest that apathy prevents women more than actual fear of attending meetings. As Maureen, an older Norfolk Park resident, comments: “I don’t think anything prevents them but as I say people have lost interest” (1998: 3). Although, by definition this suggests that at one point people were interested. However, as Maureen has lived in the same area for fifty-six years, she has been witness to previous failures to regenerate the area and has herself lost interest. This finding complements work by Schübeler: “to the poorly served inhabitants of low-income residential areas, it may not be clear why they should participate in a government sponsored development process” (1996: 34).

Some residents may detach themselves from the regeneration process because they are indifferent about the changes. Janet, having moved from the area comments: “it sort of breeds apathy that place [NWICA] in a way because everybody feels that they can’t do anything about it and nothing is going to be done so they might as well not bother and I

mean I got infected with that as well, there didn't seem to be any point" (1998). Other residents may exclude themselves, as they see no benefits flowing from participation.

As Sheila, an older NWICA resident, states:

"partly because they [local residents] couldn't care less and they want other people to do the work for them basically, 'I want it to happen but I am not getting involved, I can't be bothered attitude'. I wouldn't go as far as apathy, but bloody bone idle basically, I think. Some apathy to the point of cynicism, 'in what is the point of trying when you don't get it anyway and the council don't take any notice, or whoever else, doesn't take any notice, so what is the point in trying?' and that sort of thing" (1998).

This feeling may be fuelled by the belief of several Sheffield women that the council is the main beneficiary of the regeneration programme: "I think all said and done it'll be council that benefits in the long run because they're going to put rents up. There's got to be a catch somewhere to get your house done up, it's going to be something and they're going to win anyway" (Emma, 1998). Other residents view the council as receiving an improved housing stock from the SRB programme, which they also see as benefiting the council. Janet, who in 1997 occupied a refurbished maisonette in NWICA states:

"because they've [the council] been able to put the rents up since we moved back in. So y'know their revenue is going up and didn't they get some kind of match funding or benefited in some way because they've got to have some money for the up-keep of the area or something? I'm not sure whether it was something someone said off the top of their head, but obviously it's in the council's interest to have a nice area that people actually want to live in" (1997).

Other local residents appear unwilling to participate, as their opinions are not seen to be taken on board: "sometimes you just feel like you're banging your head against a brick wall on minor things, so I think what's the bloody point. If they're not taking any notice of me on that then what is the point in trying to do other things?" (Sheila, 1998). Another resident adds: "they'll [the council] listen to what you've got to say, put it

forward and then it'll be like let's do it this way, let's do it save money way" (Emma, 1997). This might suggest that the limited power residents can command (see Chapter Five) may be a more significant barrier causing exclusion than residents' apathy.

## **6.4 CIRCUMSTANTIAL BARRIERS**

The third 'type' of barrier comprises limitations and conditions of the regeneration process, which may not always be convenient for women's lives, thereby preventing their participation and perhaps causing their exclusion.

### **6.4.1 Timing of meetings and time commitments**

There appear to be two sides to the barrier of time. First the timings of meetings may exclude certain residents. Second there is the issue concerning the amount of time community involvement may require for effective participation (see Chapter Four).

Many commentators recognise the pressures on women's time may be greater than on men's: "they [women] may have many other demands on their time, such as their job, or finding work, or bringing up a child in a one-parent household" (Hastings et al. 1996: 20). Similarly, Karl argues: "since women carry the major burden of child care and domestic work, they can often face severe time constraints on their participation outside the home" (1995: 3). She adds: "women who work outside the home are still responsible for the domestic work of the household and thus bear a double work burden, which is an obstacle both to better employment opportunities and to social and political participation" (1995: 3). May calls this demand on women's time a 'triple burden' as

women attempt to juggle housework, employment and community action. This Sheffield-based research suggests some women may have time available for community work, but are unwilling to use their time for participating in the regeneration changes (see Chapter Four). As a local councillor recognises: “it is not easy if you are quite poor and you have children. And at the same time you are trying to get involved with an outside body or your own community and are being asked to work. Because there is quite a lot of work attached to community work, and they are sometimes perhaps just so worn out” (Local councillor 3, 1998). Lisa explains that the effort needed to make a reasonable contribution at meetings may become a barrier for some residents: “they [residents] don’t have the time or the opportunity” (1997). In similar vein, The Women’s Design Service argue women cannot influence or participate in community action for a variety of reasons: “they [women] cannot come to events because of the time they are held ... they cannot make the commitment to attend ongoing meetings” (WDS, 1997: 5). Research in Sheffield also highlights how many women do not have time available. For instance, Karen declares: “if someone could find me another six hours in the day I might be [involved]. I know it sounds really apathetic and lame, but I am just too tired” (1998).

#### **6.4.2 Location of meetings**

Christie argues that the location and timings of meetings are particularly significant for women as: “evening meetings can inhibit women from attending because of fear for their personal safety or caring commitments; safe transport provision is an essential. Meetings should be held in fully accessible venues as a matter of course, to enable disabled women to participate” (1997:3). Booth makes a similar suggestion: “the

organisation and implementation of the consultation process must be *sensitive to women's needs*, the various roles they play in juggling the requirements of home, children, work and a family. There must be a sensitivity in the organisation of venues, locations, times, dates, childcare provision and access, as well as the use of different techniques to suit different groups of women" (1996a: 165; original emphasis).

However, a local councillor makes an important point:

"you can't have involvement of everybody because the timing of meetings and so on is a disadvantage to some people. Some of the meetings, housing topic groups and so on we have tried to alternate between day time and evening meetings, but the evening meetings in the winter aren't well attended, so during the winter we've actually stuck to daytime meetings. And where you have the meeting makes a difference, so we have had the meeting in different parts of the estate, but that tends to mean you go to one meeting and there's one group of people, and you go to the next meeting and it is somewhere else and it is different group of people, so you are not getting the co-ordination. There are disadvantages in doing that, but it does make it more inclusive" (Local councillor 1, 1998).

King et al. suggest: "one change may be to go where the citizens are rather than asking the citizens to come to them" (1998: 323). However, there is always likely to be a problem of attendance, as a male community activist in NWICA identifies: "people turn round and say well what day is the meeting on and you say such a day. Oh, I can't come on that day I've got relations coming or I've got to go and do my shopping. There were always excuses and they were really happy to get the benefits, but it was too much trouble for them to get off their back sides and do something for themselves" (NWICA Community activist 2, 1998).

In contrast, another community activist comments: "I don't think anything would prevent them because we try to be very flexible about things like the times of the meetings. So like if people need to leave for school or whatever and we try to work

round it” (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998). Nevertheless, an older NWICA resident represents the feelings of many residents: “a lot of them [meetings] are wrong times or on certain days when people are working. I don’t know there is nobody prevented from going, if they really want to go they will make the effort, but a lot of people just think why should I bother?” (Emma, 1998: 8). The point that Emma is making above relates to the issue of seizing the opportunity to participate, which is seen to distinguish different levels of participation (see Chapter Four).

Furthermore the actual time it takes to regenerate houses and the neighbourhood may prevent the participation of some residents, who feel excluded from the regeneration process. Sharon explains her lack of participation: “well it just seems like we’re going to be the last to get anything done to the flat and by then, it could take years, by that time we’ll probably have moved out anyway” (1997).

#### **6.4.3 Time involved**

Several residents point to time commitments associated with participating in the regeneration initiatives. Many women explain that their non-attendance at meetings is due to not having time available. As a younger Norfolk Park resident with childcare responsibilities explains: “I’m not going to get back by while eight, nine o’clock at night and can I really be bothered to go basically? Do I feel up to it after running about all day with her [daughter]? Do I really need to go and sit with a bunch of people that I know ‘nowt about talking about stuff about Norfolk Park?” (Emma, 1997). Another example of why women do not want to or cannot commit the time available for community work is provided by Karen: “I don’t find the time, I have a full time job and

when I come home, I have got Stephanie [daughter] to look after and when I have finished doing dinner and so on, all I want to do is sit down” (1997). However, by 1998 Karen decided to participate in her area as her direct childcare responsibilities decreased as her daughter started school in the area. In contrast, other residents recognise changes may not be made unless they are actively (see Chapter Four) involved: “I think it takes time if you are going to get really involved and do something” (Maureen, 1998: 4).

Many community activists also recognise community work may be very time consuming. Participating in the regeneration may also be challenging; an attraction for some, but a deterrent for others. As a male community activist in NWICA identifies:

“there’s about 220 pages [to this document for the next meeting]. And so consequently to be able to go through all that and to be able to digest it and to be able to challenge parts of it and to really have the time to read through it is a full time job on its own. And a lot of people will start reading something and get bored with them so put them down. But I’m used to them and I’ll go through them with a fine tooth comb because I know they’ll slip things in and if I don’t agree with things I will challenge them but as I say on that [meeting notes] I can spend a full day just reading it to get to grips with it, whereas some people have the tendency to get bored by it” (NWICA Community activist 2, 1998).

As this community activist suggests, the volume of work associated with participating in the regeneration process may equate with a full-time job. From this it is reasonable to argue many residents do not have this time available to give to community work, especially if they are employed.

#### **6.4.4 Employment**

A further pressure on women’s time is whether they are in paid employment (see Chapter Four). As a community activist comments: “I think it is very hard if people are very committed with their jobs to put in a lot. We struggle at our meetings, it is so

difficult and it sounds really trite, but it is extremely time consuming to be involved in more than coming to the odd meeting which obviously you can do" (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998). Interestingly, although these employed residents are seen to have less time to participate, they are still seen to benefit from the regeneration changes: "anyone who has any involvement in that area. Some are more important than others and perhaps the most important are the ones who will benefit from the regeneration and who the regeneration is all about, the people who live there, the people who work there..." (SRB officer 4, 1998). This comment might also suggest that one has to participate in paid or voluntary employment in their area to benefit from the regeneration programme.

Many residents in two of Sheffield's SRB areas are not active within the workforce or may be beyond retirement age. According to Fainstein and Harloe (1992), it is these people who may be excluded from participating in society. This also reflects the European definition of social exclusion, which concerns those out of paid work (Levitas, 1996: 5). This emphasis on economic exclusion being tackled through reintegration into the labour market militates against women who construct their identity in community or family work. May argues: "in many excluded areas women suffer from a low level of both skills and self-confidence: their sense of self-worth is more likely to come from being a mother" (1997: 23). Interestingly, this Sheffield-based research illustrates that residents not in paid work tend to be more likely to participate in the area, rather than those in employment who tend not to have time to attend meetings: "I work full time ... there's no way I'm going back out again, when I've got a sink full of dishes" (Karen, 1997). From these comments it may be inferred that residents who participate in the regeneration process, are by definition included within it.

In contrast, residents who do not participate in their neighbourhood and are out of paid employment are more likely to be excluded from society and the regeneration process. Walker, using Room's (1995) work, argues social exclusion: "derives from the idea of society as a status hierarchy comprising people bound together by rights and obligations that reflect, and are defined with respect to, a shared moral order. Exclusion is the state of detachment from this moral order" (1995: 103). In this context, not participating in social relations or networks (either employment or community-based) may result in a person's exclusion. For instance, Alcock (1998) identifies six social networks (political and civil, employment, community and family, voluntary sector, public services, private services). He argues that if a citizen is unable to be fully involved in any of these networks, they are excluded, which may also be extended to the regeneration process. Darke and Brownill also argue that these social networks may maintain exclusion, as well as cause it (1999: 3). However, participating in one's community may act as a form of an inclusionary network. As Janet comments about one of the people she participates with: "if she [elderly neighbour] doesn't go to a committee meeting and things like that she can go weeks and weeks without really seeing anyone for a conversation" (Janet, 1997).

#### **6.4.5 Domestic arrangements**

Evidence from this Sheffield-based research suggests the domestic circumstances of the women interviewed may play a significant part in whether they participate in the regeneration scheme (see Chapters Four and Five). As an older, divorced NWICA resident comments: "if I can get someone to look after the children like I have done,

then, yes I can get involved” (Sheila, 1997). There may be a distinction here between those interviewees with partners, and those without. However, she adds: “child-care: sometimes if the husband is on shift-work, or if they’re married, or if they’ve got a partner, and he’s not around to look after the children, then she’s got a similar problem to that as a single-parent” (Sheila, 1997). The provision of (cheap and accessible) childcare arrangements may even out women’s opportunities. Riseborough finds from the CURS study in Birmingham that a: “lack of appropriate and affordable childcare and nurturing responsibilities are barriers for all women” (1997: 20). In addition, Christie argues: “decent and accessible childcare is crucial if women are to be meaningfully involved in regeneration at all stages of the process” (1997:1).

Whilst, crèche facilities are provided at many of the community meetings on the estates, there is a reluctance for women to leave their children. As a younger Norfolk Park resident reasons:

“and it’s like, I’ve got Jade who’s now eighteen month and she’s walking. But, before I wouldn’t have like left her with anybody cos you can’t take children into these meetings y’see. They have to be in a crèche and there’s no way, with her being my first kid, there’s no way I was going to leave her with anybody else. And if it’s first time you’ve ever gone to one of these meetings, you don’t know who’s looking after your kid ... All you know is that there is a crèche and you put ‘em in there and by all accounts they’re supposed to be safe. But then while you’re in this meeting, ‘well is she all right, well is she playing ‘em up, is she doing this, is she doing that?’ And it’s not fair. It’s not fair on her to be bunged somewhere where she don’t want to be. Especially cos she cries when I go and it’s like she’s gonna be having a paddy when I’ve gone so it was like if friends and family couldn’t have her, then I didn’t go” (Emma, 1997).

This research in Sheffield illustrates how the assumption that women attend community meetings, if crèches are provided, is not necessarily true. Simply providing a crèche fails to recognise other aspects and interests in women’s lives. However, childcare arrangements may be negotiated as Lisa has already illustrated (see Chapter Four) from

her experience: “some of the meetings they provide a crèche and that, but when they provide a crèche, I ask them for a sitter instead and they usually do” (1998).

Some interviewees do not view childcare as only a woman’s issue:

“child care is always a barrier and that can be for men or women. It’s not necessarily a female thing so childcare is always a barrier. And something like full time employment. If someone is in full time employment it does not mean that they are not interested in their area it just means that they probably haven’t got the time that they would probably like to get involved” (Norfolk Park Community activist 3, 1998).

The evidence from Sheffield suggests that the provision of crèches may prevent some women from being excluded from the regeneration process, but for other women, their individual domestic circumstances are likely to have more significance on their exclusion.

The domestic circumstances of other residents are seen to impact on their ability to participate or be excluded. A younger Norfolk Park resident comments:

“a lot of the men round here tell their girlfriends to keep their nose out and keep yourself to yourself and you don’t talk to them lot. I know a lot of men that are like that with their girlfriends. And they say, ‘oh you don’t want to get in with that crowd because they are a load of bitches. You’ll never hear the last of them and you’ll never get any peace and they will be wanting you to do voluntary work’, and the stuff they come out with” (Sharon, 1998).

Indeed Sharon does not participate and perhaps this is because her boyfriend prevents her. This suggests some men do not want their partners to work (paid or unpaid) outside the home, even within the community, perhaps this may be because of fear that they will start to renounce their domestic duties in favour of community action.

## Conclusions

Urban regeneration is increasingly turning attention towards social exclusion issues, partly because of the numbers of residents living within regeneration areas who are seen to be socially excluded. This chapter, however, has examined the exclusion of local residents from urban regeneration, rather than from the wider effects of social exclusion. If local residents are being excluded from regeneration, either by not being beneficiaries of the programme, or by being excluded from participating in the process, then urban regeneration is not effectively tackling the major issues of social exclusion

In short, this Sheffield based research reveals a number of barriers excluding some women from participating fully in the regeneration process. This chapter has categorised these barriers into three types: institutional, attitudinal, and circumstantial. Institutional barriers are those, which the SRB appears to be creating for instance the nature of the regeneration partnerships. Attitudinal barriers consist of women's perceptions, such as some suggested they did not have the confidence to participate in the regeneration process. Third, circumstantial barriers consist of conditions of the regeneration process, which may not always be suitable for women's lives, such as the location and timings of meetings. These barriers are further considered in chapter eight, where suggestions are made of how the regeneration process could become more inclusive. The following chapter discusses the theoretical implications of the findings, presented in chapters four, five and six.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 11 Funds arose from the Local Government Act of 1966: “which empowered Central Government to provide grants to local authorities and educational institutions to enable them to provide assistance with specialist support programmes targeted at ethnic minorities... During 1994 the Government transferred the £60 million of Section 11 funding which was being spent in the UPAs to the SRB” (Nevin and Shiner, 1995: 4).

<sup>2</sup> Residents who have to move because their home is being demolished receive up to £1500 in compensation. This money is to cover the cost of moving and redecorating.

## **Theorising regeneration governance**

Observers have commented that the governance of areas, in terms of who influences and makes decisions, is significant in helping to determine participatory structures within urban regeneration (Brownill and Darke, 1998: 6; King et al., 1998: 319). However, little work has been conducted on who governs the regeneration process. With the emphasis within urban policy shifting more towards community development, an increased number of business, political and community actors have ostensibly attempted to work in partnerships to regenerate cities. Regime theory may be used as an explanatory framework to show how these partnerships form, operate and evolve.

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a reconceptualisation of regime theory based on a grounded theory approach (see Chapter Two), in order to provide greater understanding of the relationship between urban regeneration and governance in British cities. The first part of the chapter provides an introduction to regime theory, and outlines two of its central assumptions. In the second, the relationship between regime theory and urban regeneration is introduced. Part three challenges two assumptions, central to regime theory. Part four builds on these critiques using evidence from this research. In the fifth part, an alternative conceptualisation of regime theory is presented.

## 7.1 REGIME THEORY

It is often argued that economic and local state restructuring in the last fifteen years has resulted in a shift from government towards governance (Ward, 1995: 1). Goodwin and Painter (1997: 25) describe this shift as a shift from the primacy of directly elected local government institutions towards the exercise of authority by non-governmental institutions, coupled with claims to legitimacy. In order to help understand this shift, Stoker (1995) argues that regime theory has helped establish a new research agenda. Regime theory illustrates why this shift towards governance may have important implications for the arrangement of power relations in cities (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 198). In explaining how this move from government to governance has underpinned regime theory, Judd and Parkinson argue it has involved a change in the nature of control in the city and resulted in: “the emergence of an elite constellation or coalition that can speak for a city” (1990: 15).

The emergence of these “elite constellations”, more commonly referred to as regimes, involve public officials and private business interests coming together in order to govern a city, by attempting to bridge the gap between the state and economy (DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993b: 368). This is in line with Stone’s definition of a regime as a “set of arrangements by which the division of labour is bridged” (1993: 3). Regimes are generally informal, relatively stable groups usually with access to institutional resources (Stone, 1989). Stoker (1995: 59) also suggests that regimes do not usually operate on the basis of a formal hierarchy, and that it is unlikely that there will be a single focus of direction and control.

Regime theory is one of the main explanations in the Anglo-American literature for how cities and their redevelopment are governed (DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993b: 367; Lauria, 1997). Imbrosico (1998a: 233) traces its initial development to the mid-1980s, where it was informed by commentators in the US, such as Fainstein et al. (1983), Elkin (1985), and Stone (1987). One of the primary examples of regime analysis is Clarence Stone's study on Atlanta. Stone (1987) believes complexity is central to the regime perspective. He illustrates how institutions and actors are involved in an intricate web of relationships, and how the modern urban system is characterised by extensive patterns of "interdependence" (Stone, 1987).

Regime analysis provides an understanding of urban governance, as it questions how these patterns of "interdependence" impact on politics. Stoker (1995: 56) argues that regime theory takes as given a set of government institutions, which are subject to some degree of popular control, and an economy guided, but not exclusively controlled, by private investment decisions. DiGaetano and Klemanski propose: "regime theory can be employed to compare governance in cities that operate in substantially different systems of central-local relations and local government authority" (1993b: 382). However, there is an issue concerning the transference of regime theory from the US to the UK context.

### **7.1.1 Transferability from the US to the UK**

One of the main problems associated with regime theory is the appropriateness of transferring it from a US to a UK context. This issue has been widely debated (e.g.

Basset, 1996; Wood, 1996; Lawless, 1996). Stoker (1995: 12) outlines five key differences between the US and the UK relevant to this issue:

- The governmental structure in the UK is centralised, compared with the federal nature of the US state
- A more direct role is taken by central government in the UK, which reduces the scope for local action
- There is a much more fragmented structure of local government in the US, which encourages economic competition amongst localities
- There is the lack of a local executive in the UK, compared with the elected mayor system in the US
- The fiscal culture in the UK may reduce incentives for local government initiatives.

In similar vein, Basset (1996) identifies factors, which could explain how regime formation in the UK may not occur, or may take a different form, from those prevalent in the US: “the lack of strong mayors in the UK system, the increasing number of hung councils, strong divisions on party political lines, the powerful role of central government departments operating through regional offices, and the dominance of professional ideologies in different policy arenas” (1996: 550). Lawless also outlines a number of characteristics of the UK government, which may not easily lead to regime formation:

“The UK remains a far more centralised and administratively uniform society; local government is usually a more important player in regeneration than is the case in the US; direct business involvement in regeneration is limited; the role of the Labour party is crucial in understanding the political agendas set by most urban authorities; and the public sector still remains crucial in terms of, not just the funding, but also the delivery of many services” (Lawless, 1996: 15-16)

As a consequence, regime theory may not sit at ease with what is happening in UK cities. Stewart (1998) argues that British regimes are much more susceptible to influence from central government than is the case for many American regimes. Basset suggests that: “we need many more detailed case studies in different contexts” in order to

develop the theory (1996: 553). Basset (1996) does not rule out the formation of regimes in an UK context, but concludes that the structuring of power and discourse within policy arenas is more important in analysing policy outcomes in a British context. Similarly, DiGaetano and Lawless (1999) suggest regime theory needs to be situated in a more explicitly comparative political economy perspective.

However, despite these caveats, several commentators have begun to develop regime theory within a British context. The use of UK cities as empirical examples, as has been undertaken by DiGaetano and Klemanski (1993a; 1993b), DiGaetano and Lawless (1999), Valler (1995), and Peck and Tickell (1995), begins to address some of the problems associated with the American origins of the theory. These studies give credence to the view that regime theory may be relevant to the British context. “The recent transference of urban regime theory to contexts outside the United States and its use in cross-national research also attests to its dominant position in urban political scholarship” (Lauria, 1997: 2). Moreover, DiGaetano and Lawless conclude from their comparison of three cities in the US and UK: “national institutional contexts appear to set certain parameters in defining urban regimes” (1999: 572). Despite the “undertheorised character” of regime theory, due in part to its fairly recent origins (Cox, 1993: 436 cited in Wood, 1996: 1283), and differences in the modes of governance between the US and UK, DiGaetano and Klemanski (1993b) still consider that it can be used in empirical research: “regime analysis indeed has application in the comparative study of urban politics” (1993b: 383).

### **7.1.2 Assumptions within regime theory**

Regime theory emphasises the interdependence of governmental and non-governmental forces in meeting the economic and social challenges of development, by focusing attention upon the problems of co-operation and co-ordination amongst the actors involved. It is founded on a number of assumptions concerning, *inter alia*, the influence of, and rationale for, regime participation, composition, and formation. This thesis will consider the last two of these in helping to reframe aspects of regime theory. Stone discusses one aspect of regime theory: “how they are formed, reinforced, modified, and, on occasion, displaced” (1998: 251). Two distinctive features of regime theory can be seen as determining who regimes consist of, and examining the ability for regimes to form (Stone, 1989). Each of these is discussed below.

### **7.1.3 Regime Composition**

One key debate within regime theory, which is of relevance to this thesis, concerns the composition of regimes. Stone argues that regimes: “are to be understood in terms of (1) who makes up the governing coalition and (2) how the coalition achieves co-operation” (Stone, 1989: 240).

Two groups are generally seen to be key participants in most US cities: elected officials and business members. Stoker and Mossberger argue that business investment in regimes is necessary, because economic activity is “crucial to maintaining societal wealth and popular support for the government” (1994: 198). However, community, technical and professional officials can also be drawn into coalitions (Stoker, 1995: 60).

Regimes generally, therefore, consist of local formal and informal alliances, which can be either business or community based, on the one hand, and local and central government officials, who can be either elected or non-elected, on the other (DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993b). Regimes are arrangements through which policy decisions are made in urban local governments with actors in the governing process, such as business leaders (Keating, 1991: 93- 94).

#### **7.1.4 Regime formation**

The second aspect of regime theory considered here is the degree to which the effectiveness of local government is dependent upon the involvement of non-governmental actors in city-governing arrangements. One of the strengths of regime theory is its concern with the mechanisms through which coalitions of interests come together to form governing regimes. Non-governmental actors are encouraged to form regimes together with governmental actors in order to influence city governance (Stoker and Mossberger 1994: 197; Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989). Urban regime theory, whilst assuming regimes will form, seeks to explain how and under what conditions, these developing regimes emerge (Lauria, 1997).

A critical issue within regime theory is its consideration of the extent to which actors are able effectively to co-ordinate actions (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 197). Painter proposes: “there is an assumption (albeit sometimes an implicit one) that all, or at least most, cities have regimes” (1997: 129). From this it may be inferred that regime theory assumes regimes, as informal governing alliances, will automatically form amongst private sector business actors, government officials, community leaders and others (e.g.

Higher Education Institutions) in order to govern cities. However, Judge argues that power in regime theory is structured to gain certain outcomes (1995: 55).

There are convincing reasons to suggest that regimes often do form. Regime formation and maintenance may transform cities by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by political (state) and market (economy) forces (DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993a: 79). Elkin also makes a strong case for the rationale behind regime formation: “the combination of a concern to induce businessmen [sic] and the fact that land use politics produces a stream of benefits useful for producing a successful career in city politics, virtually guarantees that any enduring pattern in city politics - what we have called urban regimes- will revolve around an alliance between city politicians and the array of businessmen concerned with land use in the city” (1985: 25). Equally, DiGaetano and Klemanski argue: “regimes are formed and maintained because members receive material and symbolic benefits for their participation in governing-coalition activities” (1993a: 57). Regimes can develop through an amalgamation of groups, which have formed independently in order to mobilise their own interests, such as business coalitions, which want representation on the governing coalition.

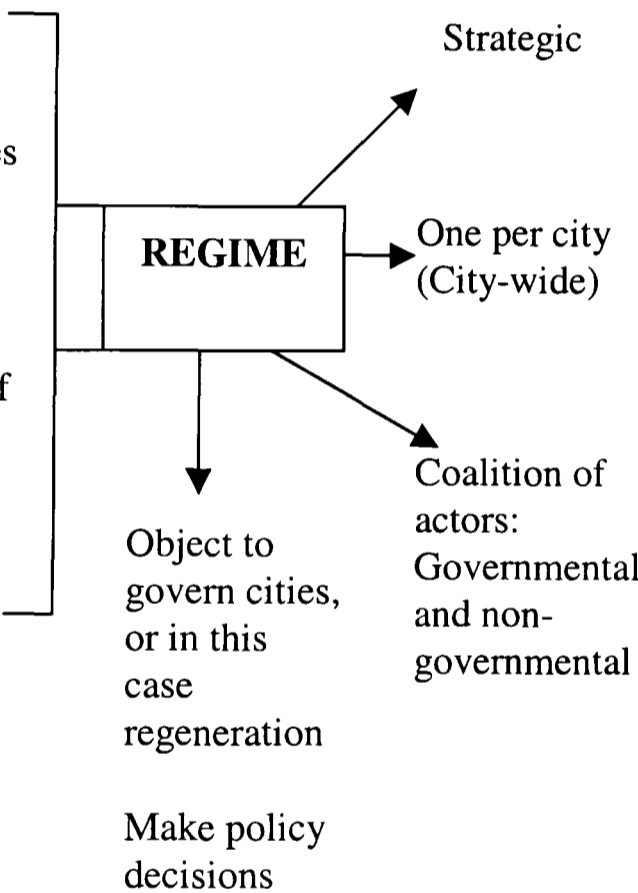
Painter proposes that: “one task of the urban political scientist is to categorise regimes into different types” (1997: 129). Several commentators have constructed typologies of regimes (Stone, 1993; Stoker and Mossberger, 1994; DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993a; Elkin, 1987). Stone, for instance, (1993: 18-21) identifies four main types of regimes in US cities, which differ in the difficulty of the governing tasks for which their policy agendas call. However, Stoker and Mossberger observe only three regime types. Stoker and Mossberger (1994: 199-201) base their typology on the premise that particular

contexts produce different regime types, which vary in their purpose, quality, and relationship with the environment. Broadly these two typologies are rooted in similar considerations and may be viewed together as outlined below (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Overview of regimes

**REGIME TYPES:**

- I. *Caretaker/Maintenance/Organic*: no major change, routine service delivery requires “straightforward” relationships.
  - II. *Pro-growth (government or market led) Development/instrumental*: need more resources to take positive action to promote growth or to counter decline.
  - III. *Growth management/Middle class/ progressive/ symbolic*: seeks environmental protection and growth control. Complex form of regulation as a core governing task.
  - IV. *Social reform/Lower class opportunity expansion/ symbolic*: Requires substantial mass mobilisation resource and co-ordinate pre-requisites, which may often be absent.
- (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994; Stone, 1993)



Regimes vary in their approach to city governance. For instance, maintenance and organic regimes form in order to sustain the status quo, whereas development and instrumental regimes organise to revitalise urban areas. Swanstrom (1988) argues that the type of regime, which evolves, may be determined by economic pressures, capital accumulation, and class composition.

## 7.2 REGIME THEORY AND URBAN REGENERATION

Stoker (1995: 54) claims regime theory holds substantial promise for understanding the complexity of responses to urban change from actors involved in the regeneration process. It emphasises how political factions which command power may amalgamate for a “publicly significant result - a policy initiative or development” (Judge, 1995: 58). Stoker and Mossberger suggest regimes may form in order to encourage regeneration: “the need to regenerate a local economy in crisis may bring together regime partners with highly conflicting interests, and little history of co-operation and exchange” (1994: 207).

Since 1990 most observers would suggest that urban regeneration programmes have changed their foci and funding arrangements from the physically led regeneration programmes of the 1980s, to the more socially oriented initiatives of the 1990s (see Chapter One). The SRB reflects this change in urban regeneration. It has also encouraged partnerships to form amongst actors in order to bid for money from the SRB Challenge Fund.

As previous chapters have examined within the context of Sheffield, SRB partnerships involve a number of actors and agencies with different objectives and varying resources working together to achieve broader policy goals. Quasi-public agencies, such as TECs, central government departments, and non-governmental agencies, including business and community actors, bring together public and private funds to help sustain, what could be termed an “SRB regime”. The focus of regime theory on building more stable and intense relationships in response to the increasing diversity of urban problems may

help to explain the form of regeneration partnerships. One of the few commentators to make a similar association between the SRB and regime theory is Ward (1995; 1996; 1997). He argues that: “the creation of the UDCs and EZs, the imposition of the Training Enterprise Councils (TECs) and the various rounds of competitive bidding for funding (City Challenge, City Pride and the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)) have imposed ‘entrepreneurial regimes’ on localities. These regimes have been forced to compete in ‘games’, where the discourse of competition and challenge has been used to drive through a (central government) ideological agenda at the (local) level” (1995: 5).

In this context, it is possible to perceive regeneration partnerships, such as those forming to bid for SRB funds, as regimes. As outlined in Chapter One, Bailey et al. consider that a partnership is: “a coalition of interests, drawn from more than one sector in order to prepare and oversee an agreed strategy for the regeneration of a defined area” (1995: 1). They continue: “we use the term “partnership”, throughout [the book] because it is used most frequently by Government and practitioners. The term “coalition” and “urban regime” are more often used in the academic literature, but for our purposes these words are interchangeable” (1995: 1-2). Similarly, Cochrane et al. see a similarity between a regime and a regeneration partnership. They argue: “it is deemed necessary to mobilise key actors outside the state and to involve them in developing strategies for renewal and regeneration, implying a fundamental re-imagination of what urban politics is or might be” (Cochrane et al., 1996: 1320). Oatley goes further in associating a regeneration partnership with a regime and actually calls the SRB a: “competitive bidding regime” (1998: 16). In this context, the SRB may be seen as a mechanism through which regime formation is likely to be encouraged as it brings together a number of actors with institutional and private resources. If SRB

partnerships are viewed as regimes, they could represent a combination of regime types two, and three (Figure 7.1). Stoker and Mossberger propose that: “the *urban revitalisation regime* purports to change the city’s image in order to attract investment ... As for progressive regimes, symbols portend future possibilities...” (1994: 201, original emphasis). The redevelopment of existing housing stocks and the regeneration of local environments may pose as central government “symbols” of SRB achievements.

Another similarity between regimes and regeneration partnerships is the emphasis placed on the involvement of business actors. Fainstein et al. argue that one of the central roles of regimes is: “in establishing the collective pragmatic interests of the business class in redevelopment” (1986: 257). In urban regeneration, business interests may occasionally be the dominant actors. This was especially the case during the 1980s when business groups tended to play a key role in many regeneration policies and projects (Imrie and Thomas, 1993). In a similar context, Boyle (1989) has argued that business partners and central Government were two of the main partners in British urban regeneration. Keating notes: “in several cities central government went further, displacing local government in the development role by appointing urban development corporations (UDCs) which were responsible to central government and had strong business representation on their boards” (1993: 386; see Eisenschitz and Gough, 1993). Others also point out that the role of the local authority in urban regeneration should not be under-estimated (e.g. Boyle, 1989; Lawless, 1991). Nevertheless, some commentators emphasise how business actors and private investment within regimes and regeneration partnerships may be dominant (Stone, 1989; Fainstein et al., 1986). This leads Cochrane et al. to pose the question: “are we moving towards forms of urban politics which are entirely dominated by business?” (1996: 1320).

## **7.3 CHALLENGING SOME ASSUMPTIONS TO REGIME THEORY**

Two aspects of regime theory: regime composition and formation, discussed above, have been subject to criticism from a number of commentators. One issue revolves around the role of the community, particularly within urban regeneration regimes. A second consideration focuses on the issue that regimes may not always form in cities.

### **7.3.1 Regime composition**

Although regimes tend to consist largely of governmental and non-governmental actors, it may be considered that there is often an implicit assumption that local residents will participate within regimes. Regime theory emanating from the US has tended to assume that business partners are lead actors within regimes, whilst local residents have the lesser input. Imbrosico (1998a) takes issue with the assumed role of the community within regime theory. He argues the third sector, by which he means non-public and non-private bodies, may significantly contribute to developments in cities.

A significant issue within the composition of regimes is the bringing together of resources and the impact these can have on the influence of regime participants (Painter, 1997). Participation within regimes may be influenced by the availability of resources (Painter, 1997). Stone also argues that in order to achieve policy outcomes it is necessary for a regime to mobilise resources (1993: 17). Regime theory acknowledges that resources can be unevenly distributed between regime members. Some groups in society are more capable of assembling resources than are others. This leads Stoker and

Mossberger (1994: 197) to argue that societal structures, and an uneven distribution of resources, contribute to imbalances of power. On the one hand, business actors are likely to have the ability to contribute financial resources and are therefore involved in regimes because they may already have a financial stake in the area. On the other hand deprived communities are often the least able of participants to mobilise any sort of resource and may therefore be marginalised in regimes by business actors. However, Ward argues that: “each partner is empowered by the regime and has access to the resources that alone they would not have” (1995: 5).

Stone comments on the effect that such an uneven distribution of resources can have on regimes. “*Regime politics* provides an account of how the city’s business sector, to borrow a term from Robert Dahl (1961), has pyramided its resources so as to gain a strong voice in public decision making, provide wide protection to investor prerogatives, and make itself a highly attractive partner in the governance of the city” (Stone, 1998: 253, original emphasis). Similarly, Painter suggests: “business elites control resources that make them both more attractive to local governments as coalition partners and better placed than less resource-rich groups to negotiate regime membership” (1997: 132).

Partners such as business, governmental, community and voluntary institutions, may bring forward two types of resources: material and non-material. Stone argues: “resources, then, are not purely material, but are themselves a mixture of the ideal and the material ...Governance is a matter of being able to bring together enough resources to pursue community wide efforts to provide for needs, meet challenges, or alter social and physical conditions...Therefore it matters quite a lot who is or is not in the

governing coalition to choose the corrective actions to be advanced” (1998: 256). In other words, resources such as knowledge may be significant for some actors in regimes (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 198). However, participants within regimes have more than simply different levels of knowledge. Painter asserts: “they [regime participants] also *know in different ways*, and these different ways of knowing bear heavily on decisions about whether or not to participate in any particular governing arrangement” (1997: 137).

This variable level of resources may have an influence on whether groups are included or excluded from regimes, and consequently from the governing process. This raises the issue of the composition of regimes. Stoker and Mossberger (1994) assert that regimes can adopt a strategy along a spectrum ranging from inclusiveness to exclusiveness. Regimes may ‘exclude’ certain interest groups to ensure they are not provided with access to the decision making process (Stoker, 1995: 60; Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 198). Stoker and Mossberger contend: “regimes which focus on tangible results, and selective incentives are likely to have highly developed strategies of exclusion” (1994: 207). They explain that: “the cost of spreading material benefits may be great, and the highly selective nature of benefits is by definition the reward of being an insider” (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 207). They continue: “all regimes are likely to practise a degree of exclusion as regime politics is focused on elite coalition-building and the management of a wider local political community,” (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 207).

In this context, Elkin has examined excluded groups: “those excluded from participation in the regime or allowed only a marginal role were generally the newer immigrant and

racial groups” (1985: 19). He adds: “over time, such groups gained a more substantial place in the regime but at the price of not challenging its essential arrangements” (op cit). Despite this apparent marginal position of some regime actors, local residents are likely to have greater influence within the regime than outside of it, and so remain within it, if only in a ‘token’ role. Stone asserts: “for those on the outside, gaining membership in a governing coalition possesses considerable appeal” (1993: 9). This is because of the governing capacity and rewards, which regimes can achieve. Likewise, Stone (1993) considers that if groups are not involved in coalitions, they may have to forego opportunities, particularly if one co-ordinating agency, such as the business sector, dominates the civic scene (Stone, 1989: 235).

In like manner, it is possible for regeneration partnerships to exclude certain interests. Strange finds: “the language and rhetoric of business participation in urban regeneration partnerships stresses that business leaders bring with them to partnership working qualities of leadership, dynamism, strategic thinking and the ability to see a big picture or vision” (1996: 150). The argument that business actors bring certain qualities and resources to regimes more than is possible for many communities interests within regeneration partnerships, such as the one in Sheffield. Far from *empowering* the local community, regime theory could help to explain how the SRB, as an institutional regime, may marginalise local residents by encouraging them to join in unequal regeneration partnerships, where their influence is likely to be limited.

### 7.3.2 Uncertainty of regime formation

A second major critique of regime theory is that coalition building (regime formation) may not necessarily happen. Elkin contends: “there are no guarantees that local politicians and businessmen can find ways to advance their common interest or to devise ways of serving them that are politically feasible” (1985: 18). This uncertainty in relation to regime formation is highlighted by DiGaetano and Klemanski’s (1993b) study of Detroit and Birmingham. They suggest regimes may be cyclical, in that Detroit’s regime appeared to be weakening. They conclude that in order for a regime to survive it must be constantly adjusted and renewed, as in Stone’s Atlanta regime (DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993b). Nevertheless, once a regime is established it can be seen as: “a powerful source in urban politics. Opponents ‘have to go along to get along’ or face the daunting task of building an effective counter- regime” (Stoker, 1995: 65). However, Stone (1989) views regime formation from ‘scratch’ as not feasible because the costs of co-ordination would be too high.

In other studies the probability of regime formation is not always certain. DiGaetano and Klemanski claim to have identified an “anti-growth” alliance in Bristol. However, Basset (1996) took issue with this perspective. He argued Bristol has an economic and locational advantage, which is more relevant to the growth witnessed during the 1980s rather than prompted by a governing regime (Basset, 1996: 549). It is more likely the New Left Planning Committee channelled growth into certain areas and questioned: “whether there is a coherent regime at all” (Basset, 1996: 550). Stewart also examined the existence of a regime in Bristol and commented: “what is at stake is not so much whether public and community interests do or do not hold power but rather whether

power is changing hands and what are the impacts of a shifting distribution of power?” (1996: 133). Fainstein et al. also noted that New Orleans redeveloped without any state action or business coalition (1983: 247) and that therefore regime formation may not be central to urban regeneration in all US cities. Similarly, in the UK context, Cochrane et al. (1996) are of the view that “grant coalitions” can come forward to bid for grants, but may have little ability to sustain power.

A number of observers criticise regime theory on the basis that it apparently fails to recognise the existence and influence of extra-local forces on the formation and influence of regimes (Stone, 1998; Lauria, 1997 Orr and Stoker, 1994). Those holding this view argue that this has made regime theory too localist (Painter, 1997; Ward, 1997). Strange argues: “non-local factors, such as the wider political environment, impact on, and influence, the relationship between the public and private sectors in regeneration coalitions” (1996: 155). Likewise, Elkin recognises the influence of external forces on regime formation, but does not elaborate on what these may be: “regimes need to be maintained and they may be buffeted by a variety of internal and external factors” (1985: 14). Painter (1997) also recognises that a number of extra local forces can impact on regime formation, such as the global economy. Regimes can also be influenced by different sources of power. Keating (cited in: DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993b: 369) identifies five such sources, which can affect the capacity of regimes to govern cities:

- Legal powers of the local state.
- Authority of national and higher sub-national governments.
- Knowledge and skills (public or private).
- Privately controlled resources.
- The ability of any actor to withdraw support or interfere with the governing process.

Another reason why regimes may not always form relates to the potential for neighbourhood conflicts between community activists and business leaders. These conflicts may be so strong, that despite efforts to create regimes in the form of regeneration partnerships, these may not form, or may merely reflect societal conditions with business actors taking the lead roles. One regime outlined by Stoker and Mossberger, is “competitive agreement” (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 206), which has the following characteristics: “there is a relatively low congruence of interest between partners, but still a requirement to work together and achieve a common objective ... There may be considerable conflict within the regime and competition to influence its direction. Some partners may be relatively unwilling participants. Others may enter the regime recognising that they do so as unequal partners” (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994: 206-207).

The marginalisation of some neighbourhoods, because of factors, such as a lack of community cohesion, may leave business actors free to take lead roles and to form regimes in association with local politicians, in order to submit bids for regeneration funding. Stoker and Mossberger note that regimes can be highly volatile and unstable and are: “never a foregone conclusion” (1994: 207). Ward (1997) also questions the sustainability of any regimes which form due to regeneration funding requirements. A further reason for an uncertainty over regime formation may be due to a perceived lack of incentives for actors to come together to participate within regimes. Incentives may need to be offered in order to achieve collaboration of interests across different actors and agencies and to reduce free riding within regimes. In collective action it has been recognised that there is always likely to be a free rider problem, in which ‘non-joiners’

may reap the benefits of other people's action, without contributing anything to the process themselves (Stone, 1989).

Stone argues that in order to overcome the problem of 'free riding', selective material incentives can be offered: "a system of individual rewards and punishments administered so as to support group aims" (1989: 186). Selective incentives may help provide a powerful instrument for developing a common sense of purpose (Stone, 1989; Stoker and Mossberger, 1994). Olson (1965), an early proponent of the idea of selective incentives, argues that a sense of belonging may act as a selective incentive to encourage collective action and regime formation. It could be argued that those residents with a strong attachment to their neighbourhood might be encouraged to participate in regimes. Stoker and Mossberger argue: "urban regimes in the United States may be particularly prone to management by selective material incentives. The legitimacy and hegemony afforded to privately controlled systems of allocating incentives and small opportunities may be less easy to establish in countries with a stronger anti-business and pro-welfare culture than the United States" (1994: 204). However, in England, the competitive bidding nature of the SRB, and the way it encourages partnerships to form, may provide a necessary incentive for regime formation.

Painter (1997) believes the concept of selective incentives makes regime theory too rationalist and intentionalist. Instead, he argues 'habitus' may be a more useful concept in the reworking of regime theory. He states: "the notion of habitus provides an alternative approach to understanding the processes by which political participants in a regime come to join the coalition (or not, as the case may be). Focusing on the ways in which particular groups of actors make practical sense of their political world it

problematise the idea of rational decision making” (1997: 137). Habitus originates from Bourdieu (1977) and refers to the set of ‘dispositions’ that feed into a person’s anticipation about what they want, and what they can achieve in their inter-personal relations (Layder, 1994).

In response to Painter’s critique, Stone suggests: “a political actor’s intentions may be founded on an extremely limited understanding of the situation. Unsophisticated players may be almost totally unaware of underlying processes at work and simply protest outcomes they do not like” (1998: 257). He adds: “although selective incentives are important, their place in any local regime is situational and also potentially an object of struggle” (1998: 258). The main thrust of Stone’s argument is that the notion of habitus does not allow insight into how regimes are formed, in terms of why certain individuals come together. Rather it merely highlights how individuals may be socialised into institutional roles. In this context, Stone (1998) argues people participate for a perceived benefit, such as a safer neighbourhood, rather than because they are socialised to participate.

The evidence, from this thesis broadly supports the position developed by Painter. Habitus appears a useful device for explaining the roles actors adopt within regimes. For instance, Painter argues: “because co-operation involves the expenditure of time and effort, and the subordination of immediate interests to long-term and possibly rather uncertain future gains, individuals have little incentive to co-operate, especially if any longer-term benefits that are produced are likely to be distributed widely” (1997: 133).

However, the concepts of “selective incentives” and “habitus” (Stone, 1989; Painter, 1997) do not appear sufficient explanations for the rationale behind the participation of certain actors in regimes. Many residents in Sheffield appear able to ‘free ride’ the regeneration process and to receive benefits from it, in terms of improved living conditions, without actually having to participate. For instance, the only incentive Sharon currently has to attend community meetings and participate in the regeneration programmes is that she can decide on where to move to, when her maisonette is demolished in the year 2000. She cannot, however, have a say in major decisions, such as whether her maisonette is demolished, as that has already been decided. Likewise Karen comments: “I don’t find the time, I have got a full time job and when I come home I have got Stephanie [daughter] to look after and when I have finished doing dinner and so on, all I want to do is sit down” (1997). Tenants and residents in Sheffield do not appear to be given enough incentives to participate.

This research also suggests that incentives may become issues of conflict because different interest groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, and young people, have potentially contrasting expectations of the regeneration process. In addition, there are likely to be varying incentives amongst individuals, which would affect their willingness to be drawn into community action. For instance, as discussed in chapter four, financial rewards may encourage some to participate, whereas training programmes may encourage others. The following was asked to respondents: **If people were paid to be involved, do you think that would encourage you to be involved?**

Sheila: “Not particularly, the money wouldn’t interest me. I have enjoyed what I have done before, I have enjoyed the involvement of trying to help people, so to me it wouldn’t be an incentive, it might be to some, but to me it isn’t” (1997).

However, as stated earlier (see Chapter Four), in response to the same question, Lisa remarks: “Well of course, what do you think! I mean, y’know, even if it’s just the £15 a week that you’re allowed to earn whilst on benefits, then of course it would be a great incentive. No question!” (1997).

## **7.4 DISENTANGLING REGIME THEORY**

The critiques of regime theory discussed above, concerning the composition and formation of regimes, can be further illustrated with evidence from this research. In particular, evidence presented here suggests that regime theory is gender blind as it does not appear to acknowledge the influence gender relations can have on decision-making within cities. This thesis, therefore, argues that it is important to assimilate within regime theory the characteristics of individuals who make up regimes and to recognise the social context within which regimes form.

If indeed regime theory is gender blind, then interpretations of how cities are governed may prove partial, as they do not address the influence of gender on governing relations. A regime theory incorporating questions of gender could help explain women’s unequal place in the governing process of cities and within regeneration programmes. In this context it is interesting to note that Stoker (1995) argues that there needs to be an enlarged research agenda further to refine regime theory. The inclusion of a gender variable in regime analysis could transform the theory and contribute further to our understanding of how women participate in the governing of regeneration regimes, such as the SRB.

A regime theory, which considers the influence of gender, could explain more comprehensively who governs the regeneration process and who decides priorities in UK cities. Simultaneously a refined regime theory could recognise that decisions are made in an environment, which is imbued with social and gendered power relations.

#### **7.4.1 Individual characteristics of regime participants**

This research suggests, that in order to be more inclusive, regime theory needs to acknowledge the characteristics of individuals who make up regimes, in terms of gender, age, class, ethnicity and so on. A regime may take on a particular direction depending on the composition of individuals within it. Feldman argues: “regime theory often treats groups as unitary bodies rather than as amalgamations of diverse individuals sharing common situations but differing in many ways (e.g., by age, personal history, etc)” (1997: 47). For instance, the dominance of local politicians in Sheffield’s regeneration partnership has inevitably introduced a Party Political element to the regeneration process, in that some regeneration projects can, assume the role of Party Political campaigns (see Chapter Three). This dominance of local politicians may at times hamper the achievement of the regeneration partnership goals. In Sheffield conflicts between Labour and the Liberal Democrats councillors over regeneration priorities may be linked to national policy objectives rather than to demonstrable local need: “in somewhere like the North West area [NWICA] you have got particular characteristics that overlay community involvement. One is the kind of rat-fighting

between Labour and the Lib Dems and you have got activists on the ground who will use any situation as part of a political football” (SRB officer 1, 1998).

Regime theory also fails fully to acknowledge the varying levels of influence on the part of regime actors on governing coalitions. If an individual is not a representative on the governing regime, or managerial agent, such as the SRB Board in this case, then traditional regime analysis implies that they will have little or no influence on the governing process. It seems useful to examine the composition of the SRB Board in Sheffield to explain the degree to which both the governing process and regime theory is highly gendered.

On the SRB Board in Sheffield, organisations, such as the council, rather than individual actors, are represented, as is the case for other regeneration partnerships. However, the name and status of the organisation gives little indication as to the gender or particular interests of the individual representative. Regime theory pays little attention to the individual characteristics of business, governmental or community representatives within regimes and therefore issues such as gender can go unnoticed. However, when individual characteristics, such as gender are explored further, as in this research, the exclusion of women from the regeneration process becomes apparent. Woolf argues: “women’s position in any organisation is inseparable from women’s position in society” (1977: 7).

The way in which the SRB Board remains gender blind has parallels with Acker’s work (1992) on organisational theory. In explaining how organisations are gendered, she distinguishes between an “abstract” and a “concrete” worker (1992: 257). The main

thrust of her argument concerns the role of the abstract worker who she argues has no obligations outside the demands of the job. She asserts: “to fit such demands, the abstract worker does not eat, urinate, or procreate, for these activities are not part of the job. Indeed, the abstract worker has no body and thus no gender” (1992: 257). In this context, women may be seen as concrete workers in the community, but represented by abstract (male) workers on the SRB Board. She continues:

“the concept of a job is gendered, in spite of its presentation as gender neutral, because only a male worker can begin to meet its implicit demands. Hidden within the concept of a job are assumptions about separations between the public and private spheres and the gendered organisation of reproduction and production. Reproduction itself, procreation, sexuality, and caring for children, the ill, and the aged, unless transferred to the public sphere, are outside job and organisational boundaries. Too much involvement in such activities makes a person unsuitable for the organisation” (1992: 257).

From this it may be inferred that because women are involved in caring for children and the elderly more often than are men, they are less likely to be involved in public affairs, at a level which would demand time away from their domestic duties. This dichotomy between an abstract and concrete worker may explain why women do not generally reach beyond the status of concrete workers within the community.

This lack of recognition of an individual’s characteristics within organisations, or regimes, such as the SRB Board means gender is not recognised and gender neutrality tends to be assumed. Although regime theory recognises that some actors have more influence than do others, it does little to distinguish between how actors from similar backgrounds, such as the community, may have different levels of power.

#### **7.4.2 The role of the community within regimes**

Another way to recognise the individual characteristics of regime participants may be to challenge the assumptions underpinning regime composition. There is often an implicit assumption that the community sector will participate in governing regimes because of the gains it can receive from participation. This raises a consideration with regard to the degree to which residents are willing or able to participate in the regeneration process. Some community members do participate in regeneration projects, and in some cases receive significant personal gains, such as trips to foreign conferences (see Chapter Five). However, this research also suggests participation cannot simply be expected to happen. In some instances certain residents may be excluded from the regeneration and governing process, whilst others may be more dominant (see Chapter Six).

Regime theory does not overtly discuss the composition of community representatives. Darke (1996b: 70) argues that men have claim over the public realm, in terms of political, social, and public areas, and are therefore “assumed” to represent the community interest. She argues: “where residents are organising to improve their areas, women are invariably in significant roles, the hope for run-down areas lies in women’s co-operation, but this cannot succeed in the long term without changes to the housing system as a whole designed to create better balance. A community needs skills in which women excel: negotiating, conciliation, persistence, neighbourliness, explaining a problem in writing, understanding the benefits system” (1996a: 54). Results from this thesis tend to suggest that women organise at a local level, but that men tend to represent the community voice (see Chapter Five).

In Sheffield it appears that certain local residents have tended to gain more influence within the governing regime than have others. For instance, two male community activists, one from NWICA, the other from Norfolk Park, have become representatives of the community on the main SRB Board in Sheffield. Other residents, such as ethnic minority groups and women (see Chapter Six) are not generally represented at the decision-making regime level. Booth explains the lack of women's organisation at a strategic level, may be because: "women are not a unified interest group" (1996a: 156).

In contrast to the above, some commentators argue men are increasingly being excluded from participation at a local level, as their traditional gender roles do not encourage them to take on domestic chores or organise in the community (May, 1997; Campbell, 1993). May suggests: "one of the most marginalised groups in urban estates appears to be young men, many of whom may have been brought up in households where no one has a paid job" (May, 1997: 24). The apparent marginalisation of men at this local level may also cause some of them no longer to maintain their role of traditional "breadwinner". Gender roles may, therefore, be reversed in such situations where the woman's income has to be relied upon. The existence of female-heads of households, and those that do not contain men, may serve to strengthen women's position, making them more self-reliant. This position for some women may also make them more willing to participate in the regeneration process but, perhaps paradoxically, less able to commit the time and effort to have a significant role within community action because of their other commitments.

Also of relevance here, is a debate concerning the extent to which individuals participate in their neighbourhoods. This may have implications for the level of overall influence accorded to them within, or outwith, a regime. For instance, women may have more influence outside the regime, operating within their local neighbourhood, than inside the regime as a potentially marginalised member.

Furthermore, consideration of an individual's motivations for becoming involved in local community affairs (see Chapter Four) may help identify factors influencing participation. Although some residents are excluded from Sheffield's regeneration regime, or at least from influential positions within it, evidence also suggests that some residents choose to be excluded, or not to take on influential positions (see Chapter Five). In the two Sheffield SRB estates, there appears to be an ostensible lack of interest, from the residents interviewed, in participating within the regeneration process. This parallels Stoker and Mossberger's (1994) claim that although community groups are tied to their locality much more than is the case for business partners, this does not offer any guarantee of participation within regimes. Regime theory needs to acknowledge this apparent lack of desire, or ability, to participate within the regeneration process, in order to illustrate how regimes are not necessarily inclusive. Non-participation within the regeneration process may lead to a kind of self-imposed exclusion.

#### **7.4.3 Failing to participate effectively**

Non-participation within the regeneration process can arise from a lack of any benefits being perceived as deriving from participating. Some women are under the impression

that they would not be granted any decision-making powers and thus see no reason to participate. In part, this opinion is premised on the past experience of local residents when they have generally had little influence over council activities and had few opportunities to participate. However, this is now changing, as a male community activist in NWICA comments: “local people now are actually starting to get much more say about what services they get, what facilities they build and what they want than they did before and there has been a long history of the Council coming and doing x, y and z” (NWICA Community activist 4, 1998). This finding has parallels with Hart et al. who argue: “previous programmes gave residents little or no say in how redevelopment should occur” (1997: 196).

Even with the introduction of the SRB, it appears many residents are oblivious to the fact that they are actively encouraged to participate in the governing process (see Chapter Eight). This may go part way towards explaining their “exclusion” from decision-making roles in the regeneration process (see Chapter Six). However, without participating in the regeneration process, residents are unlikely to effect significant changes in regeneration programmes, such as influencing where, and when, developments take place.

#### **7.4.4 Bureaucracy and participation**

Another reason for non-participation in the regeneration process or governing regime, is that of bureaucracy (see Chapter Six). The bureaucratic process impacts variably on different regime actors. Business actors in the governing process in Sheffield appear to understand the bureaucracy involved, but comment that it is frustrating and

acknowledge that it may intimidate some residents (see Chapter Six). For example a local councillor says: “it is a problem sometimes in achieving the targets and the accountability is absolutely complex and it does frighten people and the forms are off-putting and difficult, but we have had to do that to achieve the funding” (Local Councillor 3, 1998). Not only is bureaucracy and decision-making arenas seen to be dominated by business actors in Sheffield, but Grant and Tancred (1992) suggest Western bureaucracies generally appear to be male centred. Having explored this issue within the Canadian state, they argue that women are in all but the lowest rungs of the ladder. They suggest this dominance of males in the most senior decision-making positions has led to a situation where male interests are inherent to bureaucratic thinking (Grant and Tancred, 1992). Hearn and Parkin argue there are a number of ways in which women may be excluded from organisational discussions, a tendency, which can be seen to complement the exclusion of women from the governing regime. They suggest the pub and the golf course are often used as exclusionary meeting places, which can prohibit women’s attendance (Grant and Tancred, 1992). The use of pubs to discuss community affairs in Sheffield is noted by a community activist in Sheffield: “I think with some of the committee most of the business happens in the pub as far as I can gather and as I say that bugs me because you think shall we have **our** meetings in the pub?” (NWICA Community activist 3, 1998; emphasis added).

Furthermore, power relations within communities become evident in examining the level and depth of women’s participation in Sheffield. Currently, regime theory pays little attention to these. There are three main explanations for women’s participation in local communities, which may provide an explanation for the low levels of influence and token position women generally have within regimes. First, women tend to invest

large amounts of time in their neighbourhood as they have generally brought up children and looked after the home. This time investment appears to result in commitment, personal attachment and loyalty to the area. Many women may also have built up significant relationships in their area with neighbours and family. Second, many have also constructed part of their identities through their work in the community. Although, moving from an area, such as Norfolk Park, may offer women improved living conditions, emotional attachments can make it difficult to leave it behind. Thus, women sometimes become active within campaigns to help ensure that changes to the estate are appropriate for them. As Lisa explains why she is involved: “because of my kids, because I am happy, because I belong on Norfolk Park, and I don’t want to move off” (1998).

A third factor in explaining women’s participation, and which may help account for their often limited role, is that of family commitments. On the one hand, the presence of children in some households acts as an incentive to participate. On the other hand, however, children can become an obstacle to participation (see Chapters Four and Six). The local community may be seen as an extension of the private sphere of the household, traditionally the “woman’s domain”. Some women carry out tasks in the community as an extension to their domestic role, such as maintaining a safe environment for their children (see Chapter Four).

This Sheffield based research suggests that women do not often reach the strategic or active level of participation because in part, they do not have the time, or inclination, formally to commit themselves to community participation. Moreover, whilst findings indicate that some women participate as an extension of their domestic role, this can

lead to a contradiction because of their domestic circumstance (see Chapter Four). Some have argued that women's participation can lead to a triple time burden (May, 1997). Evidence from here suggests however, that it can actually cause a quadruple burden: family, home, employment, and environmental responsibilities and interests. The importance of domestic roles and circumstances may help explain why women do not easily reach decision-making at the regime level.

In contrast, in some instances, several women have assumed influential positions within the local area. This is true, for instance, in respect to those women involved in the Women and Children's Centre at Norfolk Park (see Chapter Three). These women are actively aware of how structures for participation and decision-making operate. They also have well-developed contacts with officials and residents across the neighbourhood, which can be used in an attempt to influence decisions. However, this "pseudo-powerful" position virtually disappears outside the confines of the neighbourhood, because they rarely become wider community representatives, preferring instead to focus their time and efforts within the Women and Children's Centre.

Regime theory also fails to consider fully how women, such as those in the Women and Children's Centre described above, can be powerful outwith, as opposed to within, regimes, in terms of the support that they can provide to enable regime formation. This research indicates that women play a supportive role in sustaining the regeneration partnership. In like manner, Bondi and Peake recognise a number of support networks, which women provide, such as enabling people to return to work each day, clothed, washed and fed, and further to be replaced from one generation to the next (1988: 22).

Equally, Smith argues, women provide: “a service organisation to the productive enterprise” (1977: 22). These ancillary networks provided by women may be seen as crucial in maintaining the formation of regimes by helping to provide the necessary conditions for regime formation. Consequently, regime theory needs to acknowledge the influence women can have in supporting the formation and maintenance of regimes. For regime theory to provide a fuller account of how British cities are governed, the patriarchal forces, which may inhibit women from occupying senior positions in organisations, also need to be recognised

#### **7.4.5 Social context for regime formation**

A further reason why regime theory could be regarded as gender blind stems from the propensity for regimes to become imbued with patriarchal social relations as they form. Regime theory does not address the mechanisms through which unequal power relations arise amongst actors within regimes. It is not adequate for regime theory to assert that influence and power within regimes emanates primarily through access to resources. Although, resources bring influence, there are other factors at work, which may help explain unequal power relations and differential influence within regimes. Power relations between local residents and other regime actors need to be incorporated into a dominant paradigm of urban governance as well as a consideration of the different power relations between men and women. Business actors and government officials, in general, and men in senior management roles, have more power and influence than community members do at a city-wide decision-making level. Darke points out: “men

have always been the dominant gender in cities, as rulers, decision-makers, generals and cultural leaders” (1996c: 91).

The main power relation explaining behaviour between men and women is patriarchy. A woman’s position in a patriarchal society needs to be explored fully in order to understand the nature of gender in urban governance. This is illuminated through Walby’s work: “the concept of ‘patriarchy’ is indispensable for an analysis of gender inequality” (1990: 1). She argues: “there are six main structures which make up a system of patriarchy: paid work, housework, sexuality, culture, violence and the state. The interrelationships between these create different forms of patriarchy” (1990: 16). She distinguishes between public and private patriarchy. Private patriarchy uses the household as the main site of women’s oppression. Public patriarchy is based primarily in sites of employment and the state. It assumes all arrangements benefit men as individuals while institutions represent public patriarchy.

Patriarchal theory may be applied to this study and to regime theory to help explain why the regeneration process appears to exclude women from the more active levels of decision-making. Using Walby’s argument, the SRB, has: “a systematic bias towards patriarchal interests in its policies and actions” (1990: 21). Whilst regime theory can explain power relations in cities, patriarchy helps explain the dominance of men over women within such regimes. What follows is a reconceptualisation of regime theory based on this critique.

## 7.5 REGIME THEORY: A RECONSIDERATION

This thesis argues that it is important to recognise the individual characteristics of regime participants and to understand the context within which regimes form. In the light of this critique, regime theory could be reconceptualised. Two issues need to be addressed: acknowledging the social characteristics of individuals in the composition of regimes, and understanding women's participation outwith the regime. With these points in mind, *integrated regime theory* may offer a fuller account of the governance of British cities, and their regeneration.

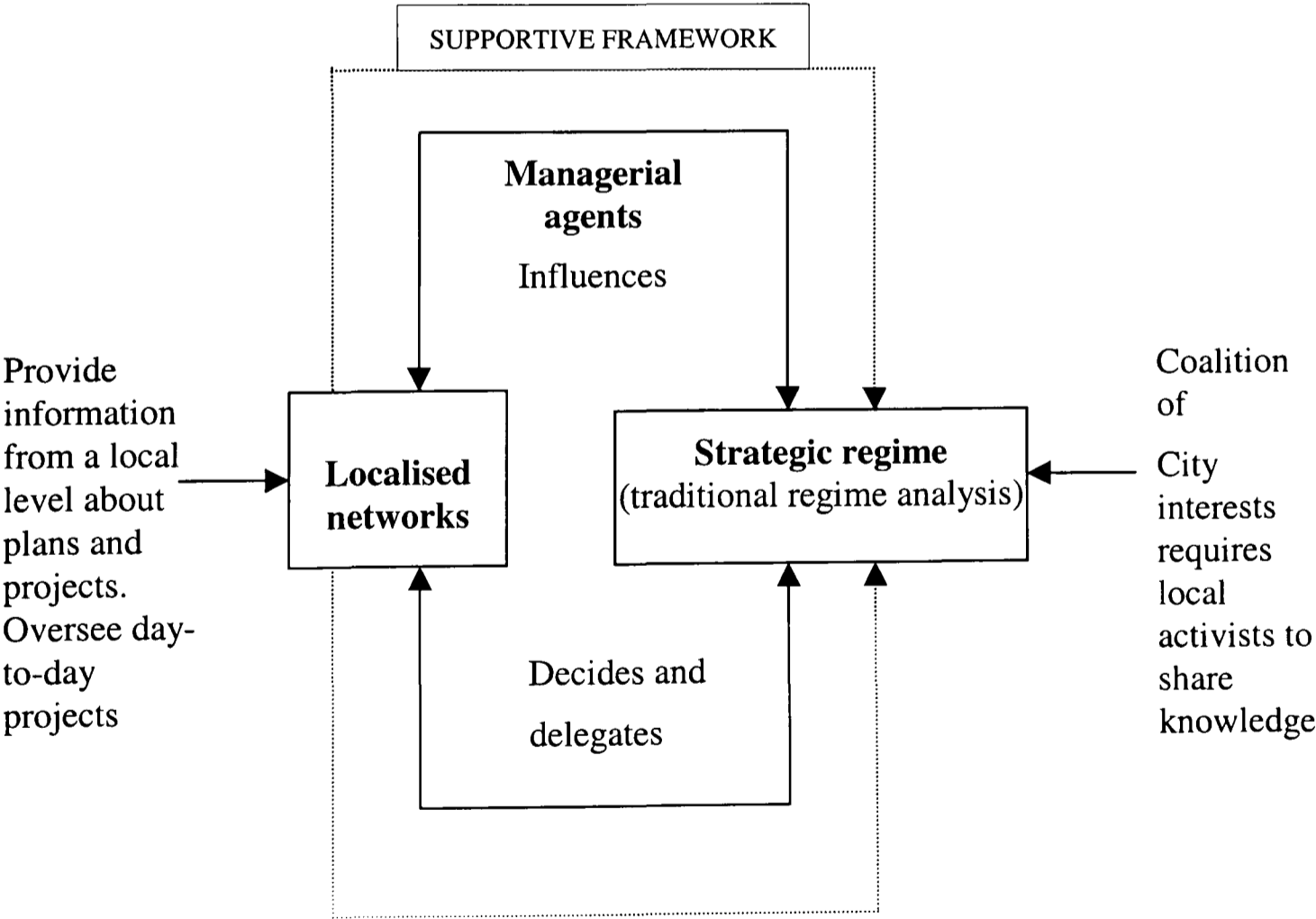
Integrated regime theory explains how urban regeneration is governed from a more inclusive standpoint. Women are implicitly and explicitly involved within, and outwith, regimes. Integrated regime theory provides an understanding of women's position within community action, and recognises that they can be explicitly influential at a local level, and, implicitly effective at a strategic level. Findings from this research suggest that women are generally concerned with their neighbourhood and tend therefore to organise at that level, a process which traditional regime analysis fails to recognise. However, if regeneration were to embrace localised networks, as well as "traditional" strategic regimes, then the influence of women becomes more apparent. Figure 7.2 provides a reconceptualisation of regime theory.

Integrated regime theory may be seen as multi-layered, involving a number of networks operating at both the local neighbourhood scale, as well as at the strategic city wide level. This thesis supports the assertion that strategic regimes control power relations in

cities. However, it aims to develop this further by emphasising a gender element. It does this by recognising the existence of localised networks, which provide a supportive framework for the strategic regime.

These localised networks, which arguably are represented by the Local Management Boards in Sheffield (see Chapter Three) operate within parameters set by the strategic regime and have no decision-making powers of their own, but can influence the managerial agents and strategic regime.

Figure 7.2: Integrated regime theory



The remit of these localised networks is to provide ancillary services, such as communication and information. It is possible, therefore, to perceive that around each strategic regime, there is a form of supportive framework, consisting of managerial agents and localised networks, providing a range of functions (table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Characteristics of strategic and localised regimes and managerial agents

	Localised network	Managerial agents	Strategic regime
Example	Women and Children’s Centre, Norfolk Park	Sheffield’s SRB Partnership	Sheffield City Liaison Group
Timescales of operation	Daily	Weekly	Long term
Size of projects being managed	Local, small-scale, neighbourhood level	City-wide	Large, regional
Financial dealings	Small budgets	In charge only of SRB funding	Large, in charge of city funding overall
Accountability	To local residents, and to managerial agent	To strategic regime and localised networks	To localised networks, managerial agents, and to Regional Development Agency
Communication style	Informal: Newsletters, phone calls and door knocking	Mixed formal and informal	Formal: Board meetings, email, fax

It is also conceivable to imagine a city having a number of strategic regimes working to achieve various objectives, such as regeneration, commerce, tourism, or entertainment. Ward (1997) recognised that in Leeds other quangos, apart from the SRB, could be identified. Likewise in Sheffield, as table 7.1 indicates, the City Liaison Group (see Chapter Three) could be considered as a strategic regime.

This integrated three-tiered regime system, consisting of localised networks, managerial agents, and strategic regimes, appears to be dominated, respectively, by women and

men. The working styles associated with the different regime levels appear to reflect female and male qualities. If the more flexible working practices, including the informal communication style, associated with localised networks were transferred to the strategic regime then women may also become more involved at the managerial and strategic levels. This does not suggest that men and women have different ways of working, but highlights the dominance of men at the managerial and strategic levels and a prevalence of influential women at the localised level.

By emphasising these three different arenas for participation within regime theory, the influence of gender in regime formation and composition may be recognised. It is important to note here that localised networks do not simply perform the tasks of the managerial agents or strategic regimes at a local level, but are likely to perform a different role in maintaining and supporting regime formation at a regional level. In Sheffield it appears the respective tasks of the three tiered regime system represent those illustrated in table 7.2.

Localised networks witnessed in Sheffield carry out the functions outlined below in order to support the operation of the managerial agents, which in turn feed through information to the strategic regime. Integrated regime theory, as outlined here, illustrates not only a spatial dimension to regime level, but also an inter-connectedness of regimes, in addition to the inter-dependence of regime actors.

Table 7.2: Possible tasks for localised networks, managerial agents and strategic regimes

Localised networks	Managerial agents	Strategic regime
Provide meeting points for local residents to discuss local priorities	Act as a mediator between strategic regime and local residents	Decide long term priorities
Set local priorities	Provide funding for individual projects	Innovate projects
Establish community-based groups	Implement individual regeneration projects	Agree regeneration plans
Involve local residents in schemes	Ensure community participation is taking place	Implement plans at a city-wide level
Track day-to-day progress	Evaluate outcomes	Integrate all regeneration programmes in the city, including European funded regeneration programmes
Hold fund-raising events	Write bids for further funding	Devise strategies for the long term future for Sheffield

Conclusions

Ostensibly, urban regeneration appears gender neutral. However, everyday structures of organising and managing regeneration programmes, for instance, SRB Boards, reproduce dominant gender relations within wider society. Acker argues: “it [gender relations] is hidden within abstract, objectifying, textually mediated relations and is difficult to make visible” (1992: 259). These points have been considered in the light of evidence presented in chapters four, five, and six. Regime theory is used as an underlying theory for explaining power relations in cities. It helps describe how a shift from government to governance has increased the numbers of actors involved in the governing process. This research highlights how this parallels how urban regeneration has evolved to involve an increasing number of actors in regeneration partnerships. These two studies of community participation in Sheffield illustrate how current theory

on urban governance fails to recognise gender relations, and the influence women can have on the governing process.

This chapter has reformulated regime theory to explain more fully how regeneration is governed in cities, such as Sheffield. The governing strategic regime predominantly consists of white, middle-class, and middle-aged males, coming from a number of backgrounds: business, council, TEC, Chamber and local communities. It is entirely possible that regime formation in the UK is likely to increase due to the rise, and increasing complexity, of urban problems, and future regeneration policies are likely to involve more and more varied actors in the governing process. This further emphasises the need to generate a more inclusive theory of urban governance through in part, the incorporation of the gender dimension.

## **Lessons for future regeneration policies**

The previous chapter discussed the theoretical implications of this Sheffield based study for regime theory. This final chapter examines the relevance of the research findings for future regeneration policy. First, a brief overview of the thesis is presented, in order to pull together the main conclusions emerging from the research. Part two relates the main findings of the thesis to future directions in urban policy. Finally suggestions for further research are given.

### **8.1 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

This thesis has explored women's participation within urban regeneration in Sheffield. The three empirical chapters of the thesis looked at different aspects of participation from empowerment to exclusion. Numerous studies have explored the concept of local residents' participation and why it has been introduced into urban regeneration, and the benefits that may flow from it (see Chapter Four). This research adds to these studies, but has examined participation from a different viewpoint to that adopted by most others. In particular it has specifically examined the participation of women within the SRB. Several studies of participation within urban regeneration (Atkinson, 1997; Brownill and Darke, 1998) have argued that participation can lead to holistic, social,

inclusive and sustainable regeneration, which has been one of the general aims of 1990s urban policies. Other studies on participation within urban regeneration (Collins, 1996) have highlighted the potential problems it can cause, in creating conflict and tensions within and between community groups. The implicit assumption within most of this literature (see Chapter Four) is that local residents will become involved in schemes, but are unlikely to be lead actors.

One of the main findings from this thesis, which may be used to inform future policy, is the generally low participation rate identified amongst women in two of Sheffield's SRB schemes. As explored in chapter four, the women interviewed for this research tend to relate to the SRB in one of four ways: non-participants, token participants, active participants, and activist participants. A strong majority (fifteen out of nineteen women in 1997 and 1998) are either none or token participants. This finding of low participation rates has strong parallels with the work of Skelcher and Lowndes. They argue that despite the necessity for community involvement in SRB projects, this does not always happen (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998: 327). Evidence here illustrates the need to improve the participation of residents within regeneration schemes. This may be achieved by, *inter alia*, recognising barriers, providing training, capacity building, and examining the nature of regeneration partnerships. Each of these is discussed below, in the context of more recent regeneration policies.

## **8.2 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The stated aim of regeneration policies, such as the SRB, is to benefit local residents and enable them to contribute to the regeneration process (<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/>). In the post 1991 period, following the introduction of City Challenge, regeneration policy has made attempts at promoting more inclusive, social and holistic regeneration, to be achieved, in part, through involving local residents in regeneration schemes. Demonstration of community involvement in regeneration schemes is now a prerequisite for funding in SRB Round 5 (DETR, 1998a) and the New Deal for Communities (DETR, 1998b). Regeneration partnerships are now promoted with the aim of including a plurality of interests. Working together in partnerships may promote sustainable regeneration for local residents, however, evidence from this research also suggests that the role of local residents within regeneration schemes can be limited. Female residents, in particular, appear further marginalised than male residents from involvement in decisions concerning the regeneration of their neighbourhoods.

### **8.2.1 Participation within urban regeneration**

In general, this thesis confirms the view that participation within the regeneration process can make the whole process more inclusive, and holistic, because local residents can gain a stake in, and some ownership of, their neighbourhood. The DETR (1998b) also presents evidence which shows solutions that are imposed on communities rather than developed with them, will not deliver lasting, sustainable change. The participation of local residents in regeneration schemes is therefore seen as necessary by

the DETR. SRB Round 5 Guidance Notes propose that: “community involvement enhances the effectiveness of regeneration programmes by encouraging better decision making, fostering more effective programme delivery, and helping to ensure the benefits of regeneration programmes are sustained over the long term” (DETR, 1998a: annex E). In Sheffield, there appears to be mutual benefit arising from local residents’ participation in regeneration schemes. Local residents gain from being informed about regeneration projects and having some influence over the decision-making processes affecting their areas. And, lead partners in the regeneration process also benefit by gaining an insight into the area’s problems and priorities from the perspective of its community.

The present Government considers the community to be one of the most important resources in achieving effective regeneration and is further promoting its potential contribution within more recent regeneration programmes, such as the New Deal for the Communities (NDC) (DETR, 1998b). The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) Report, *‘Bringing Britain Together’*, argues: “the most powerful resource in turning around neighbourhoods should be the community itself. Community involvement can take many forms: formal volunteering; helping a neighbour; taking part in a community organisation. It can have the triple benefit of getting things done that need to be, fostering community links and building the skills, self-esteem and networks of those who give their time” (SEU, 1998: 68). To this end, the NDC, one of the outcomes of the SEU report, has the aim of encouraging all residents to participate in improving their communities. Seventeen Local Authorities were initially invited to submit Pathfinder Partnerships in 1998, with more to follow in 1999 (DETR, 1998b). The DETR suggests

that NDC Pathfinder Partnerships should aim to advance partnerships, which will: “involve the whole community through this process, secure their participation, listen to and act on their views, and gain their support” (DETR, 1998b). The aims of the NDC of reducing crime, and improving the health and environment, of local residents involves a further shift in Government policy from area-based social regeneration programmes, more towards improving the lifestyles of local residents. With this in mind there is an acute need to engender local active participation at the grassroots, if local residents’ lives are to be improved by these more recent regeneration policies.

In a recent interim evaluation of the SRB, commissioned by the DETR, it was found that the involvement of the voluntary and community sector varied widely (DETR, 1998c). In five of the twenty schemes researched there was “token involvement”, in six, there was high and effective community involvement, and in nine, there was some involvement from community groups. In Sheffield, participation not only differed between the two neighbourhoods studied in terms of level and depth of resident’s involvement, but also varied within the individual schemes in each area. Respondents in this research also stress a lack of a ‘framework’ for participation can exacerbate feelings of exclusion from the regeneration process. With this in mind, it seems that the involvement of local residents in regeneration schemes needs further support to allow them to participate in an effective manner. However, this research examining the regeneration process in Sheffield illustrates that the participation of residents within urban regeneration schemes cannot necessarily be predicted by age, the presence or absence of children, or the existence of a partner. Whether someone participates in a regeneration project is very much based on individual preference which makes it

difficult for policy makers to design programmes aimed at promoting the participation of local residents. This research highlights the importance of actively encouraging the participation of residents, but also suggests that there needs to be a general recognition that not all members of the community can, or would want to, be involved in the regeneration of their neighbourhoods, although they may still be seeking to benefit from SRB outcomes (see Chapter Six).

Community participation within urban regeneration is partly encouraged through “genuine local partnerships with stronger local involvement” which are a key issue in Round 5 of the SRB (<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk>). The DETR argues that the partnership approach enables a more holistic and strategic approach to tackling problems at the local level (<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk>). However, there are bureaucratic issues concerning the representation of local residents on regeneration partnerships.

Evidence from the areas studied here emphasises the need for local residents to be represented on the main Partnership Board, in order to secure effective community participation. This approach to participation is endorsed in the Guidance Notes for Round 5 of the SRB, which argues for: “community representatives sitting on partnership boards and by creating representative structures to allow the community view point to be heard”(DETR, 1998a: annex E).

What the Guidelines do not recognise fully is that whilst seats on the SRB Board may be taken by community representatives, this does not necessarily guarantee that they can have an influence on the regeneration process per se (see Brownill and Darke, 1998). This tends to be the experience of community activists in Sheffield. Furthermore, the experience of the nineteen women interviewed here suggests that they have been awarded a secondary role in the regeneration process, when compared with the primary role occupied by officials. This is primarily because many of the lead partners for the SRB bids in Sheffield tend to be from the council, and the TEC. The issue of lead partners coming from similar backgrounds is partly being addressed by the NDC (DETR, 1998b). The NDC is encouraging Pathfinder to be led by other actors than the TEC or local council (DETR, 1998b). With lead partners coming from different backgrounds, the participation of local residents in the regeneration process may, or may not, be more prevalent.

Given the arguments for encouraging participation within urban regeneration, and recognising that the regeneration partnership alone does not always provide an appropriate opportunity for participation by the local community, it seems reasonable to suggest that local residents' participation within urban regeneration needs further examination. Attempts to improve participation rates within urban regeneration have often concentrated on the establishment of Community Forums and Community Alliances bringing together residents and council members in order to prioritise neighbourhood requirements. Although, these arenas do not generally have a significant influence over funding priorities, they may offer local residents a forum in which to voice opinions and to identify issues of concern. In Sheffield, the Community Alliance

in NWICA appears to offer a lesson of good practice to policy makers, in terms of being a representative body for many interests in the area, including tenants' associations, women's groups, and ethnic minority groups, such as the Somalis.

In addition to Community Forums and Alliances, this research suggests that there is a need for small-scale, street size, local meeting forums for residents to meet and discuss areas of concern. These could provide areas within which people can first meet and discuss regeneration issues, and which can be initiated and managed by local residents themselves. These small groups could go some way towards helping residents to build their confidence, whilst at the same time giving them an understanding of regeneration issues. They can also provide the added benefit of reducing fear and anxiety of attending formal meetings. Paradoxically the establishment of such forums could, however, reinforce the low participation rates of local residents from the main regeneration arena, where decisions are made. By increasing the number of arenas where residents can participate, but maintaining real decision-making powers at SRB Board level, local residents may be no more likely to achieve a decision-making or influential position.

The Government appears to be recognising that regeneration needs to be more local in scale. The NDC Pathfinders are expected to be implemented within small-scale neighbourhoods. This is in fact to help ensure that community members are able to identify more closely with the programme and will become actively involved in it (DETR, 1998b: 8). The emphasis on enabling residents to identify with regeneration changes appears significant, in view of the findings from this research, which indicates that many of the residents interviewed do not participate, partly because they do not

think it was their “place” to be involved (see Chapter Six). The increased significance now being placed by the Government on small-scale locally based regeneration schemes, with accompanying real local representation regarding decisions and/or budgets could help overcome some of the problems of identifying, and strengthening, sustainable regeneration.

New Deal “Pathfinders” can contain as few as 1000 households, whereas SRB schemes generally accommodate around 6-8,000 households (DETR, 1998b). More small-scale area-based regeneration schemes may help residents to identify the parameters within which the regeneration policies are taking place. However, some of the women interviewed for this research illustrate that there is always likely to be an issue with those residents living on the borders, or just outside, of the regeneration areas who are unsure whether the regeneration will impact on them.

Since coming to power in 1997, the Labour Government has introduced several other “area-based programmes to test out the most promising ideas for turning around deprived areas” (SEU, 1998: 54). In addition to the NDC, ‘Zones’, which aim to tackle social exclusion, reduce inequality and promote regeneration and development, have been designated. These include Health Action, Employment, and Education Zones (<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk>). Amongst other initiatives are eighteen SEU Action Teams, which aim to cut across ten Whitehall departments and which have been developed in an effort to establish a national strategy for urban regeneration (Appendix 1).

This research also illustrates the critical dimension of time. Many of the women interviewed were under the impression that key decisions had been made prior to them being invited to participate at community meetings (see Chapter Five). Furthermore, it took over eighteen months for the Community Alliance to be established in NWICA, and several months for a mutually compatible structure between local residents and regeneration officers, for the participation of the local residents to be formed in Norfolk Park. The latter also suffered from delays at the start of the regeneration process because of complications surrounding ERCF and the Local Housing Company (see Chapter Three). This situation parallels the findings of an interim evaluation of the SRB, commissioned by the DETR. This evaluation found that 40% of the twenty SRB schemes researched had experienced significant delays in getting projects underway (DETR, 1998c).

Delays at the start of the regeneration process raise issues concerning the maintenance of residents' participation and interest in SRB. There has, however, been a recent and interesting development in the SRB programme, which goes part way towards recognising that it takes time to develop structures for the participation of local residents. SRB partnerships can now opt for a "year zero". In this year no project spending occurs, thus allowing regeneration partnerships time to develop structures for the participation of residents and to establish management arrangements (DETR, 1998a: Chapter 11). In like manner, bidders to the NDC are given: "enough time and money available to analyse what needs to be done, and draw up a detailed plan involving local people" (SEU, 1998: 54). In Sheffield, both SRB schemes would have benefited from having a "year zero". However, evidence from the city also suggests that one year is not necessarily sufficient in order to develop community participation structures. Allowing

partnerships to decide for themselves, albeit within certain limits, how much time to set aside for the evolution of management and administration structures may be a more helpful approach.

Moreover, this research illustrates that there is not always sufficient time to involve local residents because of tight deadlines imposed by the Government Offices for the Regions. This situation may change now that SRB partnerships, since April 1999, are administered through the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The Government created RDAs: to “promote sustainable economic development and social and physical regeneration and to co-ordinate the work of regional and local partners in areas such as training, investment, regeneration and business support” (SEU, 1998: 52). However, this thesis indicates that, in order to involve local residents in regeneration schemes, more flexible working practises may need to be introduced, to increase the understanding of the regeneration process on the part of local residents and to allow them to participate on an informal basis, as little or as much as they desire.

The long-term nature of urban regeneration requires long-term solutions (<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk>). The Government recognises that, for the SEU Action Teams to prove successful in terms of achieving a national regeneration strategy, “they require a strong, and long-term commitment from the Government, rather than a succession of short-term initiatives. They also require the engagement of business in providing jobs and services and reintegrating deprived communities into mainstream markets, as well as the engagement of the voluntary sector. And they require a willingness on the part of people living in poor neighbourhoods to take up new

opportunities” (SEU, 1998: 79). Similarly, John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister announced on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1998 that: “the key message from this report [interim evaluation of SRB] is that regenerating local neighbourhoods cannot be achieved overnight”. In recognising that regeneration changes generally require time to be developed, it therefore seems important for them to have a clear strategy and inclusive framework for action. Acknowledging that it can take time for regeneration changes to occur, it is important to develop a vision of where local regeneration is moving towards, and within what timeframes it is to achieve these targets.

Evidence from Norfolk Park illustrates that without such a vision, conflicts may arise because local residents often feel information is being withheld. In reality regeneration officers may not always be entirely clear as to where the programme is going. A community activist answered the question, how do you think you could encourage local people to get involved?:

“Give people a vision, a dream if you like. I don’t think they [SRB officers] have done that very well. They’ve tried, they had that massive masterplan weekend, but even there it didn’t get to saying this is what you’ve said, is this what you want? People are still wondering what we’re aiming for. They know something is going on, but they don’t know what the end product is” (Norfolk Park Community activist 4, 1998).

It is significant to note here that Guidance notes for the NDC indicate that the Pathfinder projects: “should have a clear focus on their task... They must make a firm commitment to the partnership and to the development and delivery of its long term vision” (1998b: 15).

In Norfolk Park, there was a belief amongst respondents that the SRB was one more programme to be imposed on the area, which would fail. There is a general lack of willingness to be involved in the regeneration process in Sheffield. The regeneration scheme appears to lack vision, and there seems to be a lack of co-ordination, amongst individual projects within the area. The women interviewed expressed a desire to understand what the regeneration programme was about. However, due to the lack of a co-ordinated approach at the local level, it was complex and complicated for regeneration officials to inform residents about the progress of the regeneration changes (see Chapter Four).

This research highlights the necessity for regeneration programmes to be more effectively co-ordinated at a micro or local level. Regeneration policy, as it has evolved over a thirty-year period has increasingly begun to recognise this requirement. To co-ordinate projects at the local level, the NDC proposes to: “make one person responsible for pulling services together so they work better to meet local needs” (1998b: 11). One of the SEU Action Teams (Housing Management) is examining the possibility of employing ‘super caretakers’ who “would be responsible for cleaning, repairs, maintenance, care-taking, managing public areas, and supporting new and vulnerable tenants” (SEU, 1998: 64).

Even whilst promoting a Vision, recognising the spatial and temporal constraints inherent to the regeneration process, and providing neighbourhood managers, there are still likely to be barriers, preventing the participation of local residents in the regeneration process. Although every resident has the right to participate in regeneration changes, chapter six outlines a number of barriers that face residents

considering participation in regeneration. Three types of barrier are outlined. First, there are institutional barriers, such as the nature of the regeneration partnership. Second, attitudinal barriers, such as a perceived lack of confidence, can face some residents and the third type are circumstantial barriers, including the locations and timings of meetings. The experiences of women interviewed in this study suggest that the SRB has introduced and reinforced barriers, which can operate to restrict access to the benefits of the regeneration programme. Those who may be more excluded from society than others, including women and ethnic minorities, may be failing to participate in the regeneration process. This issue is addressed in NDC in that proposals for Pathfinder projects are assessed upon them having: “identified the fundamental problems and obstacles facing the community” (DETR, 1998b: 23).

Chapter six argues that one of the main barriers faced by the women interviewed is apathy. Many of the women expressed little or no interest in participating, or in being empowered by the regeneration process. Regeneration initiatives need to recognise the fears and anxieties some residents may have about potentially being empowered. One of the main reasons why local residents are not willing to participate in, or be empowered by, the regeneration programme, is that they are not comfortable working with authority figures in partnerships, with whom they cannot always trust or communicate (see Chapter Six).

A further reason for non-participation and non-empowerment within the regeneration process, is a lack of understanding with regard to the decision-making processes. Residents need to understand what is, and is not, happening and the reasoning behind

decisions. Otherwise, if there is little understanding, there will be a tendency for residents not to trust regeneration officials. However, understanding of the regeneration process can at times be complicated by the bureaucracy involved, which tends to be symptomatic of the accountability of regeneration programmes. This research suggests that there is simultaneously too much and too little accountability. There appears to be too much accountability up to the RDAs, in terms of output measurement, and too little accountability down the line to community groups, in terms of them being consulted fully about project priorities and targets.

### **8.2.2 Capacity building**

Given the experience of the women respondents, it is clear that engendering a greater level of participation is a complex task. For effective participation within regeneration schemes, the removal, or at least recognition by Government, of a number of barriers is paramount.

A pragmatic and achievable solution to encourage community participation is to expand the skills capacity of the local community. The SEU states that: “residents should be encouraged to contribute as much or as little as they feel able and strategies should be flexible enough to accommodate changing levels of participation” (1998: 82).

The Government recognises that the capacity of communities needs to be increased and, that by involving local people, this may lead to more sustainable regeneration in the long-term. One of the aims of the eighteen SEU Action Teams is to consider

mechanisms through which to maximise the contribution of community members themselves and that capacity building is needed in order to promote greater involvement (SEU, 1998: 57). Similarly, in Round 5 of the SRB, up to 10% of funds can be used towards capacity building projects (DETR, 1998a).

Brownill and Darke (1998: 31) have also outlined how training could encourage the participation of women. However, evidence from this thesis highlights the fact that regeneration policy needs to be aware of the skills contained within local communities, and to realise that some residents may only require encouragement and persuasion in order to realise these skills. Several women comment that they do not require training on participation in the regeneration process. However, there is a strong belief from some community activists, and from residents, that council and business actors may need training on how to involve local residents, and how to operate regeneration partnerships in an efficient and equitable manner. A number of interviewees strongly advocate training and information packs for both local residents and regeneration officers to enable the participation of local residents.

The provision of information on the possible roles and responsibilities of local communities is seen by residents as another way in which to promote their participation. Most of the key actors interviewed cited newsletters as a way of keeping the local community informed with regard to regeneration changes. However, as discussed in chapter five, there are inherent problems in newsletter distribution and readership. The Government recognises the importance of providing information and the NDC sets out as one of its main aims: “access to information – improving access to information

technologies, so that communities are not excluded from the information revolution and people get the opportunity to develop key skills” (1998b: 12). There is a crucial need to provide residents with basic information, such as when works will commence, their duration, and nature. Local residents state that more information about regeneration changes would be beneficial to their understanding of the overall process. Access to information technology was not, however, mentioned as important by these respondents. That may of course change through time.

The Government has recently recognised that there is also an urgent need for improved mechanisms through which to spread knowledge and understanding, in order not to repeat past mistakes (SEU, 1998). One of the SEU Action Teams is exploring the issue of “learning lessons” and this team aims to promote more awareness within Whitehall on how policy impacts on local residents. Evidence here also indicates that local residents need to be more aware of activities in Whitehall departments. Another of the SEUs Action Teams aims to provide “better information” for the local authority. However, there is no service to provide more information to local residents. This research suggests that there needs to be a mutual exchange of information between local residents and regeneration officers.

Moreover, in order to enhance residents’ participation, more SRB funds could go directly to them, and not simply at the start of schemes, as is proposed in Round 5 Guidance Notes (DETR, 1998a). Mayo et al. suggest that an increased proportion of SRB funds should go directly to community groups (undated: 10). Although giving local residents responsibility for some SRB funds may increase problems of accountability

and legitimacy. Trust and respect may, however, be built up between them and other partners. Currently, only limited proportions of SRB funds go direct to the community, whereas future SRB Rounds may consider providing a small budget for residents to organise local based meetings and to effect other local initiatives.

### **8.2.3 Promotion of Inclusive, holistic and social regeneration**

Above all, this thesis suggests that there needs to be a total re-appraisal of how to make more inclusive the process, of setting priorities for, and implementing regeneration projects, at the local level. This will involve recognising the heterogeneity not just of regeneration areas, but also acknowledging that the involvement of all aspects of the community, including residents, local businesses and so on, is crucial if regeneration policy is to impact widely and deeply enough to cause real change. The DETR states that the main objective of regeneration policy is to enhance economic development and social cohesion by effective regional action and integrated local regeneration programmes (<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk>). Urban policy makers are now recognising that a “joined up problem has never been addressed in a joined up way” (SEU, 1998: 9). The NDC also aims to promote inclusive regeneration. One of its aims is: “to bring together investment in buildings and investment in people” (1998b).

The NDC aims to promote “fair and equal opportunity” (1998b: 10). However, there is still no mention of gender specific targets in the guidance notes (1998b), which means regeneration policy may be failing to acknowledge gender. Gender issues need a more

central scrutiny in policy making if the framework for widening participation in regeneration schemes is to be enhanced. Booth points out: “women are not an homogeneous group: we must recognise individual difference as well as those created by social position, cultural heritage, ethnicity, income and disability” (1996a: 165). Benchmarks and specific targets in order to monitor progress over time could be set for women and other marginalised groups to examine how they benefit, or otherwise, from the regeneration process. One way to address the problem of too few women on SRB Boards may be to use “positive action” and purposely appoint a proportion of women. This process seems to have been undertaken in the appointments to the Boards of RDAs where on all Boards there are at least two, and in some cases three women present. However, there may be disadvantages to this approach in that positive discrimination methods may result in tokenism (Brownill and Darke, 1998: 24). A further mechanism through which gender issues may be introduced into the British regeneration agenda is through the influence of EU Structural Funds. It is possible to speculate that British regeneration programmes will have to meet the criteria, such as gender mainstreaming, which have become central to EU funding arrangements. This push at the EU level for gender mainstreaming may place pressure on SRB by challenging it to rethink gender considerations. Furthermore, European examples of gender mainstreaming, such as the Fundacio project in Spain (Booth, 1999) can offer potential frameworks for how gender mainstreaming can be incorporated at all levels and all stages of the policy process. In short, criteria for EU Structural Funds may prove a driver for change at the national level. Projects funded through the EU will not receive support unless they meet this criteria and adopt a more gender sensitive approach. This is of particular importance in the South Yorkshire region as it becomes an Objective One priority region in 2000.

In the guidelines for SRB 5 (DETR, 1998a), there has been a shift from specific targeting of ethnic minority groups, to a more universal targeting of excluded groups within a broader social exclusion agenda. Whilst this shift may now recognise that people have multifaceted identities and ways in which characteristics may intersect to cause multiple exclusion, there is a possibility that universal targeting may dilute race and gender issues. However, in general this mainstreaming of race and gender issues within the regeneration arena ought to be regarded as a more inclusive process than simply introducing separate targets for the involvement of women and/or ethnic minority groups. It is argued here that regeneration policy must be more sympathetic towards gender relations and gender roles in respect of how these affect power relations in the city and impact fundamentally on the effectiveness of regeneration programmes (see Chapter Seven).

At a local level, this thesis has also highlighted the patriarchal nature of policy making within Sheffield. Industries which have helped create Sheffield's cultural and political history have generally been male dominated, notably steel and engineering. A major strand of local government work in economic development during the 1980s and early 1990s was driven by the imperative to restructure these industries in the wake of economic decline. This restructuring emerged out of the male experience of job loss, since men predominated in these industries. A focus on women's work was introduced by the local women's movement but was given only token attention and resourcing by the local council (Flannery & Roelofs 1983). The historical and socio-political context

can be seen to have influenced a wider range of policy making processes, to the extent that women have rarely held important roles in Sheffield's political structures.

This issue of patriarchal policy making within Sheffield can be illustrated by the findings from this research. Many of the predominantly male SRB Board members, interviewed for this research, did not generally notice an absence of women from Board level decision-making. Patriarchal assumptions appear to have been implicitly built into the ways in which the SRB Board operates and remain partially invisible to those who work within it.

### **8.3 FUTURE RESEARCH**

Through the longitudinal analysis of women's involvement in the regeneration process, it has been shown that participation is a complex issue influenced by a range of determinants, and experienced at a variety of levels. It has also been noted that empowerment of local residents in regeneration schemes reflects power relations in society. And, the study has highlighted the existence of a number of barriers, faced by residents considering participation. These findings could be developed through additional research in four significant ways.

First, other policy initiatives to encourage participation, both nationally and internationally could be examined to see if the model of none, token, active and activist participation is applicable elsewhere. In particular, it would be revealing to compare a

regeneration scheme in the UK, such as the SRB with a development scheme in a Third World country. A scheme, which has the aims of improving health or education in Third World villages, could be explored in an attempt to examine the respective roles of men and women. SRB schemes could also be compared and contrasted with the frameworks devised by Government agencies in the US to encourage participation in neighbourhood projects in major cities. In addition, it would be of particular interest to research, and to evaluate, the impacts of European funding on the British urban regeneration scene.

Second, further studies on participation could research the basic determinants of participation, to provide fuller understanding of those factors which may be influential in encouraging or inhibiting participation. This could help policy makers understand the rationale for participation, in order to allow them to analyse more effectively what factors motivate some people to become involved in regeneration schemes and others to remain passive. If the belief is that sustainable regeneration must be neighbourhood based, involving as a matter of course local people, then it is crucial to understand how the most effective environment for this participation can be encouraged.

In addition, the focus of this research on two age groups of women has revealed the need for further research into how other age groups of women participate in the regeneration process. It may be that particularly low participation rates identified in this study are due to the two age groups selected. In addition, the research is based on the experiences of nineteen women within one city. This indicates a need for further research into how women engage with the regeneration process in other cities, especially

bearing in mind the particularly male dominated nature of Sheffield's cultural and political history.

Third, the longitudinal nature of this study revealed significant changes in women's participation between years one and two (see Chapter Four). It would be useful to undertake similar research, over a longer time period in order to explore the degree to which further additional changes occur. It would also be worthwhile for subsequent follow up studies to be undertaken in Sheffield, once SRB funding has expired. Issues such as the sustainability of regeneration changes could be examined with a view to compare the level of success in achieving target outcomes with the scale and structure of local participation and/or empowerment by women.

Fourth, evidence presented in chapter six illustrates that there is a need for a fuller explanation of the numerous barriers to participation faced by residents. It would be advantageous to examine how these barriers, in terms of skills, resources, familiarity with administrative processes and so on (see Chapter Six), might be removed through formal and informal training in order to inform effective future regeneration policies.

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**APPENDIX ONE**

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **Area Based Regeneration Initiatives in England (July, 1999)**

Employment Zones: to improve the employability of the long-term unemployed.

New Deal for the Long Term Unemployed: to examine new approaches to helping long-term unemployed people into sustained employment.

New Deal for Lone Parents: to encourage lone parents into work.

New Deal for 18-24 year old Unemployed People: to help people find work and improve their prospects for remaining in employment.

New Deal for Partners of Unemployed People: to give unemployed partners of jobseekers access to employment programmes

New Deal for Disabled People: to discover what works best in helping disabled people move into work after a long period away from employment.

New Deal for Musicians: to enable young musicians to move from welfare into work and stay in work by providing specialist music industry advice, an open learning route under the New Deal Full Time Education and Training Option and flexibilities when following the self-employment route.

ONE: to increase the sustainable level of employment by getting more benefit claimants into work.

New Deal for Communities: to tackle multiple deprivation in the poorest areas.

Health Action Zones: to deliver measurable improvements in public health and in the outcomes and quality of treatment and care.

Education Action Zones: to harness new skills, experience and funding to raise educational standards.

Early Excellence Centres: to achieve a range of centres or networks offering high quality, integrated education and care provision, family support and training services

for the 0-5 year olds.

Sure Start Trailblazers: to promote the all-round development of pre-school children to ensure they are ready to thrive when they get to school.

Healthy Schools: to create a healthy ethos within schools, improving the health and self-esteem of the school community, enabling children to make healthier choices and improve their educational achievement.

Excellence in Cities: to raise standards in city areas, establishing new opportunities for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities and tackling barriers to learning.

New Start: to reengage 14-17 year olds who have dropped out of learning or are at risk of doing so.

Coalfields Regeneration Trust: to support initiatives identified by Coalfields Task Force as being key to restoring healthy and prosperous communities.

Coalfields Enterprise Fund: to support small firms with high growth potential in the coalfields.

Single Regeneration Budget: to support local initiatives to make a contribution towards the regeneration of their areas.

LGA New Commitment to Regeneration: to establish a new relationship between central and local government and local partnerships to marshal the totality of public expenditure in an area in support of regeneration strategies.

(source: DTI web page: [http://www.dti.gov.uk/assistedareas/annex\\_g.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/assistedareas/annex_g.htm))

## **APPENDIX TWO**

## **Interview guide for SRB residents.**

### **- Women's involvement in regeneration.**

Good morning/afternoon, thank-you for helping me with my project. As I said in my letter, I am examining how an urban policy affects the lives of women who live in the local area. I expect this interview will last about an hour. You do not need to answer a question if you do not want to, but all information will be treated in the strictest confidence. I will ask you some questions and would like you to speak as freely and for as long as you feel necessary. Feel free to ask me any questions.

### **Life history/ biographical data.**

- Why did you move to NP/NWICAP?
- Do you know people who live around here? - such as next-door neighbours?
- Have you got friends in the area?
- Do you socialise in the area?
- Are you employed?
- (**only** if employed) Where do you work?
- What do you think about living here? - Why?
- What do you like about living here?
- What do you dislike about living here?
- How do you feel about living here compared to 12 months ago?
- Can you describe the local community living here?
- Do you feel part of the community that you have just described? why?
- Are you involved in any community or neighbourhood groups here? (if **yes** which ones?) - social clubs/school PTAs.... In what from?
- What problems do you think this area suffers from?
- Do you think any of these problems (concerns) have been solved in the last 12 months?
- Do you think the area has got better, worse, or there has been no change?
- Do you think the area has changed at all for women in particular?

### **2. Awareness of regeneration/ changes.**

As you may or may not know the Single Regeneration Budget is paying for the changes that are taking place in this area. I am now going to ask about the changes that are taking place.

- How have you seen this area change

- How do you expect the area to change further?
- What would you like to see change in the area?
- Do you know of anyone involved in the changes that are taking place?
- Are you directly or indirectly involved in any of the changes, however big or small?
- Do you read information that is sent to you about the changes?
- Do you read the Sheffield Star or Sheffield telegraph about what is happening in this area?
- Can you tell me when you last heard about the Single Regeneration Budget? (was it from me last year?!) )
- Have you recently been sent any information about the changes taking place here?
- What do you think about the changes taking place in this area? - positive/ negative change? Why? tenure change?
- How do you see this area looking in five years time? - a better or a worse place, and why?
- Do you think there will be any bad effects from the changes? What?

### **3. Impact of the regeneration.**

I would now like to talk to you about how you think you will be affected by the changes that are taking place.

- How do you think you will be affected by the changes that are happening in the area? - you , your family, and the local “community”? Why?
- Do you think you will be affected by the changes differently to men?
- How do you think that will affect the impact the SRB will have?
- Can you give me an example of how your life may be different after the changes have taken place?
- Who do you think will benefit most from the changes? - Women? single people?
- What about people staying in the area/ moving out of the area?
- Do you think the changes will benefit everyone in the area? - Why?
- (if **no**) Who do you think will miss out on the changes that are taking place?
- In what ways do you think these people will lose out?
- In general, how do you think the changes will affect the area?

#### **4. Involvement in regeneration - what factors prevent/encourage involvement?**

I would now like to ask about your involvement in the changes that are taking place in this area.

- What is your relation to the changes taking place? - involved?
- Have you been to any tenants' meetings?

##### **If involved:**

- In what ways are you involved?
- What do you get out of being involved?
- To what extent can you actually change anything in the local neighbourhood by being involved? - Why?
- Do you think that by working in a local group you have the power to actually change anything by being involved? - Why?

##### **If not involved:**

- Do you have any objections to being involved?
- (if yes) What are these objections?
- What prevents you from being involved?
- If people were paid to be involved do you think you would get involved?
- Who do you think is involved in the changes that are taking place?
- If child care was provided, how would this effect your involvement?

##### **For everyone:**

- Who do you think is in control of the changes that are taking place? - Why?
- How much influence would you like the local community to have in the changes that are taking place? - Why?
- Can you give me an example of when the local community was consulted about the changes?
- What position do you think local people have in the changes that are taking place?
- Is it up to you to involve yourself?
- What do you think the role of women is in the changes that are taking place?
- What do you think about women being involved in the changes?
- What affects a woman participating in the changes that are taking place?
- Do you think women are more or less likely than men to be involved in determining the changes that are taking place? - Why?

Thank-you very much for taking part. I would be very grateful if I could contact you again in about twelve months to follow up these questions, would this be all right?

## INTERVIEW GUIDE 2

### General questions to begin the interview:

- How long have you lived here?
- How have you seen the area change since I last spoke to you?
- How have any of these changes affected you (or your family)?
- Why have you moved out of the NWICAP/ Norfolk Park area?
- How is your life different now than it was 12 months ago?
- Why is it different/ Why hasn't it changed?
- What do you like about living here?
- How do you think the area may have improved (or be improving)?
- What do you dislike about living here?
- How do you think the area may be getting worse?
- Why is this?
- What problems do you think this area suffers from?
- How have these problems changed in the last twelve months?
- Are there any problems that you suffer because you are a woman living here?
- Have you been affected by any of the changes that have already taken place?
- Can you tell me about these?
- Who do you think has benefited most from what has happened around here?
- Do you think anyone has missed out?

### Section 1:

#### Aim: To discover the nature of involvement

- Would you say you took an interest in your area?
- What do the changes in your area mean to you?
- Does what happen around here bother you?
- Are you involved in any of the changes that are taking place around here?
- In what ways are you involved?
- How would you like to be involved in what is happening here?

- In what ways do you think people can be involved?
- What encourages you to be involved?
- Why do you want to be involved?
- Why are you not bothered about being involved?
- What would encourage you to be involved more?
- Do you think it is a good or a bad idea for local residents to be involved?
- How do you think you could encourage more people to take an interest in the area?
- What affect do you think local people becoming involved would have on what happens around here?
- How are the tenants meetings run?
- How would you like to see the meetings run?
- How do you think you could change how the meetings are run to encourage more people to be involved?
- Do you think local residents should be involved in what happens?

## **Section 2**

**Aim: To asses the barriers to involvement.**

- What prevent you form being involved in any of the changes?
- DO you not want to be involved in what goes on in your area?
- Who do you think is involved in making decisions around here?
- What would make it easier for you to be involved?/
- Why is it difficult for you to be involved?
- Do you think women find it more difficult than men to be involved?
- Why did you think some women are prevented from being involved?
- Why do you think some men are prevented from being involved?
- Did you feel you have the capability to be involved?
- Why do you feel as if you are not capable of being involved?
- Do you feel as if you have the knowledge and skills to be involved?
- How do you think you could acquire the relevant knowledge and skills to be involved?
- What do you think are the necessary skills and knowledge that are needed before people can be involved?
- DO you think you need certain characteristics to be involved?
- What do you think these certain characteristics are?

- Do you think the timings of meetings is suitable for you?
- Who do you think is prevented from being involved?
- Why do you think these people are prevented from being involved?
- How do you think you could encourage them to be involved?
- What barriers, do you think, prevent you from being fully involved?
- How do you think these barriers could be broken down?

### Section 3

**Aim: Empowerment or mere involvement.**

- Would you consider yourself to have enough confidence in yourself to be involved?
- How do you think being involved may build up your self esteem?
- Do you think being involved offers certain benefits, what are these?
- Do you feel you are not able to be involved?
- Why is this?
- Can you tell me why you do not feel as if you have the ability to be involved?
- How could this be changed?
- Are you employed?
- Are you a member of any other groups or social activities?
- Do you socialise with friends?
- Do you dispute things when they are wrong, for example would you take something back to a shop if it was not right?
- Can you speak up for yourself and make your voice heard?
- Would you consider yourself to be a shy person?
- What do you think you have got out of speaking to me about your experiences of living here?
- Have you found it difficult speaking to me? Why?
- How much say do you think local residents should have in their area, and why?
- What would you like to hear being discussed at tenants meetings?
- Do you think an elected body of local residents representatives would make it easier for local people to get their voice heard?
- Do you think the council and the SRB partnership should try and involve everyone in the area, even those who do not have time or commitment?

## **Section 4**

**Aim: Involvement through time.**

- Did me speaking to you last year encourage you to be involved and go and find out what is going on?
- Are you more likely to become involved now that I have spoken with you again?
- Thank-you very much for speaking with me again about what is happening in your area. Is there anything else you would like to tell me, or think that I ought to know about what is going on around here?

### **Interview guide 3: Community activists**

This interview will be centred around four broad themes - involvement, empowerment, exclusion and the decision-making process. I would like you to tell me about your role within the SRB process and describe how you are involved. In addition I would like to discuss the importance of involving local people in the changes that are taking place.

I expect this interview will last about an hour.

- What are you involved in?
- Can you describe what you understand by the SRB?
- What affect do you think the SRB is having on your area?
- What can you see changing around here?
- What does the SRB mean to you?

#### **Involvement**

- Who is involved?
- At what level are local people such as yourself involved?
- What sort of characteristics do people involved have? Gender and age?
- Are women more or less likely to be involved than men? Why?
- How are local people involved?
- Is it a good or a bad idea to involve local residents?
- Why?/ Why not?
- What skills do you think people need to be involved?
- How do you think you can encourage more people to be involved?

#### **Empowerment**

- What do you get out of being involved?
- What do you feel you can achieve from being involved?
- Can you tell me at what level you are involved?

- What affect do you think you have on what happens around here?
- Do you feel you can really change anything by being involved?
- How?

### **Exclusion**

- Who is not involved?
- What barriers do you think prevent people from not getting involved?
- How do you think these barriers can be broken down?
- What would make it easier for local people to be involved?
- Do you think women or men are more likely to be prevented from being involved?
- How do you think the interests of local residents can be best represented?

### **Decision-making process**

- How do you think local people can be part of the decision-making process?
- Can you describe how local decisions are made?
- What is your relation to the SRB partnership?
- Can you explain how the SRB partnership works?

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## **Interview Guide 3 - Key actors**

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I expect this may take 45 minutes. I hope you have no objections to the interview being tape recorded? Anything you tell me will be treated in the strictest confidence, and all comments used will be anonymised. Please feel free to ask me any questions and to stop me when you want. I hope you can be as open and detailed as possible with your answers. The interview will be broadly divided into four sections: discussion around the SRB in general; then about the SRB in Sheffield; followed by local community involvement in the SRB; and women's involvement in the SRB process.

### **Section one: The SRB in general**

- Comparison with previous approaches?
- Social regeneration?
- Who is important in the SRB process?
- SRB money and why?
- Decision-making process?

### **Section two: The SRB in Sheffield**

- Why Sheffield's success?
- Why NWICAP/ NP?
- Priorities?
- Outcomes?
- Results?

### **Section 3: The SRB and local involvement**

- Who is involved?
- Decision-making process? - gender split?
- How are local residents involved?
- Examples of local involvement?
- What measures promote involvement?
- What prevents?
- Who is excluded?

- Exclusion?
- Who?
- Influence?
- Examples of when local residents may have influenced something that has happened in connection with the SRB?
- When?
- How much involvement? Why?
- Why involvement - importance?
- Encouragement - necessary? Why?

#### **Section four: The SRB and women**

- Women or men?
- Why is this?
- Women are more caring?
- Why women?
- How?

#### **Conclusions?**

- What should I be asking the tenants?
- Who else do you think I should talk to?

**APPENDIX THREE**

### Appendix three: Short profiles of residents interviewed

**Barbara** is a 45 - 60 year old NWICA resident. She lives with her husband and grown-up son in a house. She works full time as a classroom assistant.

**Charlotte** is a 45 - 60 year old NWICA resident, living in a terraced house on the edge of Upperthorpe. She is single and has no children. She does voluntary work in her local area.

**Dorothy** is a disabled 45 - 60 year old. She lives in a bungalow on the edge of the Norfolk Park estate with her husband. She does not work due to her ill health.

**Emma** is an 18 - 25 year old Norfolk Park resident. She lives in a Vic-hallam house with her three-year-old daughter. She has a partner who works nights. In 1998 she was part-time employed.

**Helen** was twenty years old in 1998 and lived with Tracy in NWICA in 1997. In 1998, she also lived in another part of Sheffield. In 1997 and 1998 she was training to be a youth worker in NWICA and was heavily involved in the youth groups in the area.

**Janet** is a 45 - 60 year old NWICA resident, who lived in a maisonette in 1997 and then moved to another part of Sheffield in 1998. She has a grown-up daughter. She lived alone in 1997 and her daughter moved back in with her in 1998. She has retired from employment due to ill health.

**Jenny** is a 45 - 60 year old resident living in Norfolk Park. She has lived in the area for over twenty years, but desperately wants to move away now her two children no longer live at home. She is not in employment.

**Karen** is an 18 - 25 year old resident living in Norfolk Park. She lives with her three-year-old daughter and husband in an older terraced property. She works full-time for a publishing company.

**Lisa** is an 18 - 25 year old Norfolk Park resident, living in a Vic-Hallam house with her four children (aged three, twins of five and eight in 1998). She is single and not in employment

**Margaret** is a 45 - 60 year old. She lives with her husband in one of the tower blocks in NWICA, which had been renovated with Estate Action funding. She was re-located from the demolition of the Kelvin flats. She worked part-time in a shop in Broomhill.

**Maria** is a 45 - 60 year old. She lives on the edge of the Norfolk Park estate in a house with her husband and grown-up son. She has always lived in the area and she does not work.

**Maureen** is a 45 - 60 year old Norfolk Park resident, who has lived in the area all her life. Her children are all grown up and left home. She works in her mum's corner shop and baby-sits her grandchildren.

**Mavis** is a 45 - 60 year old Norfolk Park resident, living in a maisonette, which is to be demolished in the year 2000. She is married and has grown-up children. She works in a nursing home part-time out of the area.

**Melanie** was a nineteen-year-old in 1998. She had only recently moved to Norfolk Park to live with her boyfriend in a maisonette. In 1997, she was unemployed, but in 1998 she was employed in a shop in Sheffield.

**Michelle** was twenty-four years old in 1998. She lived in a shared dwelling as a PhD student in the Norfolk Park area. She did not expect to stay there beyond the duration of her studies.

**Sharon** is an 18 - 25 year old Norfolk Park resident. She lives in a maisonette with her four-year-old daughter (1998). She has a partner, who spends lots of time in her maisonette. In 1998 she was in full-time employment.

**Sheila** is a 45-60 year old NWICA resident, who moved from her maisonette in Nethethorpe between year one and two of interviewing. She is single and has two boys aged nine and ten (1998). In 1997 she was in employment, but not in 1998.

**Tracy** was twenty years old in 1998. In 1997 she lived in a maisonette in NWICA, but in 1998 had moved to another part of Sheffield to live back with her mum. She was in full-time education training to be a make-up artist in 1997 and in 1998, she had temporary employment.

**Vera** is a 45 - 60 year old NWICA resident. In 1997 she lived in a house with her husband. During the twelve months, he had died and she was living alone, but looking to move away from NWICA. She was not employed.